

# *Philosophy 205: Philosophy for Children*

## ❖ *Syllabus Fall 2015* ❖

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*Instructor:* David Shapiro  
*Office Hrs:* By appointment  
*Phone:* 425-352-8118

*Meets:* Monday/Wednesday 9:30-11:20 Savery 408  
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### **I. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

This course is a workshop in doing philosophy with children. Students will be introduced to the methods and practices of doing philosophy with young people, eventually enabling them to facilitate philosophy for children sessions in elementary, middle, and secondary schools. Philosophy for Children is an instructional theory and methodology for bringing philosophy into the lives of pre-college students. It emphasizes “doing philosophy” over “studying philosophy;” instead of reading Plato, for instance, young people explore the same sorts of questions that intrigued Plato through the creative use of literature, classroom games, and collaborative exercises. Philosophy for Children stresses the development of a “community of inquiry” in which budding philosophers are encouraged to ask their own relevant questions, to develop their views and articulate reasons for them, and to listen and learn from one another. In many ways, this course is an introduction to philosophy through children’s literature and classroom activities. Students successfully completing this course will have explored many of the perennial concerns of philosophy in a manner that is consistent approaches used to introduce pre-college students to philosophy and philosophical inquiry.

**Learning Outcomes:** This seminar will give students:

- A general understanding of ways to facilitate philosophy sessions in K-12 classrooms;
- An awareness of the philosophical content of children’s literature;
- Experience in the K-12 world by being involved in a Seattle public school classroom; and
- Skills and experience participating in philosophy discussions.
- An understanding of the philosophical content of children’s literature and the pedagogical and philosophical issues involved in teaching philosophy to children using children’s books;
- Engagement in the philosophical and pedagogical questions raised by children’s philosophical propensities and the community of philosophical inquiry;
- Experience creating a philosophy lesson plan for pre-college students; and
- Skills and experience leading philosophy discussions and mentoring undergraduate students.

### **II. TEXTS**

- Photocopied and other handouts and electronic reserve materials.
- **All of the assigned readings are on electronic reserve.**

### **III. TOPICS AND READINGS**

#### **TOPIC 1**

❖ *What is philosophy & philosophy for children? What is a community of philosophical inquiry?*

#### **READINGS AND ACTIVITIES IN CLASS**

- “The Schoolroom” from *Stuart Little* by E.B. White
- *The Three Questions* by Jon Muth
- Activity: Keep The Question Going
- Activity: Good News, Bad News

## TOPIC 2 :

### ❖ *Logic/Critical Thinking with Children*

#### READINGS AND ACTIVITIES IN CLASS

- *Albert's Toothache* by Barbara Williams
- *If You Give a Mouse A Cookie* by Laura Joffe Numeroff
- Activity: What's Your Reason? (Shapiro)
- Activity: selection from *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*

FIRST PAPER DUE 10/13

## TOPIC 3:

### ❖ *Metaphysics with Children*

#### READINGS AND ACTIVITIES IN CLASS

- "On the Verandah" by Philip Cam
- *The Big Orange Splot* by Daniel Manus Pinkwater
- *Harry and Hopper* by Margaret Wild
- Activity: "Little Shop of Curiosities" from *The If Machine* (Worley)
- *Let's Do Nothing* by Tony Fucile
- *Harold and the Purple Crayon* by Crockett Johnson

#### READINGS FOR 595 STUDENTS (FOR 10/20):

## TOPIC 4:

### ❖ *Epistemology with Children*

#### READINGS AND ACTIVITIES IN CLASS

- "The Mirror of Erised" from *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by J.K. Rowling
- Experience Machine (Robert Nozick)
- *The Bear That Wasn't* by Frank Tashlin
- *Morris the Moose* by Barbara Wiseman
- Activity: How many of these do you know to be true?
- Activity: Knowledge and belief
- Activity: Self-knowledge

SECOND PAPER DUE 11/10

## TOPIC 5:

### ❖ *Ethics with Children*

#### READINGS AND ACTIVITIES IN CLASS

- "Dragons and Giants" from *Frog and Toad Together* by Arnold Lobel
- *An Angel for Solomon Singer* by Cynthia Rylant
- *The Rainbow Fish* by Peter Catalanotto
- Activity: Is life fair? (Shapiro)

## TOPIC 6:)

### ❖ *Philosophy of Art with Children*

#### READINGS AND ACTIVITIES IN CLASS

- Selection from *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison
- *Ish* by Peter Reynolds
- *The Ugly Duckling* by Hans Christian Anderson
- Activity: What is beauty? Beautiful and ugly songs

FINAL PAPER DUE 12/3

## TOPIC 7:

### ❖ *Questions about the Meaning of Life with Children*

#### READINGS AND ACTIVITIES IN CLASS

- *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein
- Selection from *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbitt
- *Why?* by Lindsey Camp and Tony Ross
- Activity: What's worth doing? (Shapiro)

## IV. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SESSIONS

You will be observing and/or participating in elementary school philosophy sessions during our scheduled class time at some point during this quarter. This is a requirement of the class. We will work out transportation issues as needed.

## V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES

- A successful philosophy class is a shared enterprise, a community of inquiry, so please come to class, having done the readings and prepared to discuss the material. ***Unless special circumstances apply, you won't get credit for the class if you miss more than 4 sessions.***
- This is a credit/no credit course. In order to get credit, you must complete all of the following:
  - Attendance and participation in the course (50%)
  - Observation of four philosophy sessions in a local elementary school (10%)
  - Completion of the two short papers (2-3 pages each) (25%)
  - Completion of the final paper (4-6 pages) (15%)

**UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY  
INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS**

**COURSES, GRADING, ACADEMIC CONDUCT**

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is defined as the use of creations, ideas or words of publicly available work without formally acknowledging the author or source through appropriate use of quotation marks, references, and the like. Plagiarizing is presenting someone else's work as one's own original work or thought. This constitutes plagiarism whether it is intentional or unintentional. The University of Washington takes plagiarism very seriously. Plagiarism may lead to disciplinary action by the University against the student who submitted the work. Any student who is uncertain whether his or her use of the work of others constitutes plagiarism should consult the course instructor for guidance before formally submitting the course work involved. (*Sources: UW Graduate School Style Manual; UW Bothell Catalog; UW Student Conduct Code*)

**Incompletes**

An incomplete is given only when the student has been in attendance and has done satisfactory work until within two weeks of the end of the quarter and has furnished proof satisfactory to the instructor that the work cannot be completed because of illness or other circumstances beyond the student's control. (*Source: UW General Catalog Online, "Student Guide/Grading"*)

**Grade Appeal Procedure**

A student who believes he or she has been improperly graded must first discuss the matter with the instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the instructor's explanation, the student may submit a written appeal to the chair of the Department of Philosophy with a copy of the appeal also sent to the instructor. The chair consults with the instructor to ensure that the evaluation of the student's performance has not been arbitrary or capricious. Should the chair believe the instructor's conduct to be arbitrary or capricious and the instructor declines to revise the grade, the chair, with the approval of the voting members of his or her faculty, shall appoint an appropriate member, or members, of the faculty of the Department of Philosophy to evaluate the performance of the student and assign a grade. The Dean and Provost should be informed of this action. Once a student submits a written appeal, this document and all subsequent actions on this appeal are recorded in written form for deposit in a School file. (*Source: UW General Catalog Online, "Student Guide/Grading"*)

**Concerns About a Course, an Instructor, or a Teaching Assistant**

If you have any concerns about a Philosophy course or your instructor, please see the instructor about these concerns as soon as possible. If you are not comfortable talking with the instructor or not satisfied with the response that you receive, you may contact the chair of the program offering the course (names available from the Department of Philosophy, 361 Savery Hall).

If you have any concerns about a teaching assistant, please see the teaching assistant about these concerns as soon as possible. If you are not comfortable talking with the teaching assistant or not satisfied with the response that you receive, you may contact the instructor in charge of the course. If you are still not satisfied with the response that you receive, you may contact the chair of the program offering the course (names available from the Department of Philosophy, 361 Savery Hall), or the Graduate School at G-1 Communications Building (543-5900).

For your reference, these procedures are posted on a Philosophy bulletin board outside the Department of Philosophy main office on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of Savery Hall.

## **POLICIES, RULES, RESOURCES**

### **Equal Opportunity**

The University of Washington reaffirms its policy of equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, or status as a disabled veteran or Vietnam-era veteran in accordance with University of Washington policy and applicable federal and state statutes and regulations.

### **Disability Accommodation**

The University of Washington is committed to providing access, equal opportunity and reasonable accommodation in its services, programs, activities, education and employment for individuals with disabilities. For information or to request disability accommodation contact: Disabled Students Services (Seattle campus) at (206) 543-8924/V, (206) 543-8925/TTY, (206) 616-8379/Fax, or e-mail at [uwdss@u.washington.edu](mailto:uwdss@u.washington.edu); Bothell Student Affairs at (425) 352-5000/V; (425) 352-5303/TTY, (425) 352-5335/Fax, or e-mail at [uwbothel@u.washington.edu](mailto:uwbothel@u.washington.edu); Tacoma Student Services at (253) 552-4000/V, (253) 552-4413/TTY, (253) 552-4414/Fax.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is defined as the use of one's authority or power, either explicitly or implicitly, to coerce another into unwanted sexual relations or to punish another for his or her refusal, or as the creation by a member of the University community of an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment through verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

If you believe that you are being harassed, seek help—the earlier the better. You may speak with your instructor, your teaching assistant, the undergraduate advisor (363 Savery Hall), graduate program assistant (366 Savery Hall), or the chair of the Philosophy Department (364 Savery Hall). In addition, you should be aware that the University has designated special people to help you. They are: University Ombudsman and Ombudsman for Sexual Harassment (for complaints involving faculty members and teaching assistants) Susan Neff, 301 Student Union (HUB), 543-6028; and the University Complaint Investigation and Resolution Office, 616-2028. (*Sources: UW Graduate School, CIDR, Office of the President*)

### **Office of Scholarly Integrity**

The Office of Scholarly Integrity is housed in the Office of the Vice-Provost. The Office of Scholarly Integrity assumes responsibility for investigating and resolving allegations of scientific and scholarly misconduct by faculty, students, and staff of the University of Washington. The Office of Scholarly Integrity coordinates, in consultation and cooperation with the Schools and Colleges, inquiries and investigations into allegations of scientific and scholarly misconduct. The Office of Scholarly Integrity is responsible for compliance with reporting requirements established by various Federal and other funding agencies in matters of scientific or scholarly misconduct. The Office of Scholarly Integrity maintains all records resulting from inquiries and investigations of such allegations. University rules (Handbook, Vol. II, Section 25-51, Executive Order #61) define scientific and scholarly misconduct to include the following forms of inappropriate activities: intentional misrepresentation of credentials; falsification of data; plagiarism; abuse of confidentiality; deliberate violation of regulations applicable to research. Students can report cases of scientific or scholarly misconduct either to the Office of Scholarly Integrity, to their faculty adviser, or the department chair. The student should report such problems to whomever he or she feels most comfortable. (*Sources: UW web page (<http://www.grad.washington.edu/OSI/osi.htm>); minutes of Grad School Executive Staff and Division Heads meeting, 7/23/98*)