

Philosophy 495/595: Philosophical Inquiry in Schools

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will provide an in-depth exploration of both the theory and practice of philosophical inquiry in K-12 schools. We will examine theoretical literature in the field, develop lesson plans for facilitating philosophy sessions in schools, create a community of philosophical inquiry in the seminar through the consideration of various philosophical questions, and collaborate to broaden and improve our work in schools.

Each student is expected to spend time in an elementary, middle or high school class engaging in philosophical inquiry with young people. U-Cars, if needed, will be available for transportation to schools.

Students enrolled in 495 must be undergraduate philosophy majors or minors or undergraduates with some experience in philosophy for children (completion of PHIL 205, PHIL 398, or other experience).

Students enrolled in 595 must be graduate students.

II. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

FOR 495: This seminar will give students:

- A solid introduction into the theoretical literature about philosophical inquiry in schools;
- An understanding of ways to facilitate philosophy sessions in K-12 classrooms;
- An awareness of the philosophical content of children's literature;
- Experience creating philosophy lesson plans for pre-college students;
- Skills and experience participating in philosophy discussions in the seminar and with young people.

FOR 595: This seminar will give students:

- A solid introduction into the theoretical literature about philosophical inquiry in schools;
- 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 philosophy lesson plans for pre-college students; and
- Skills and experience participating in philosophy discussions with young people.

III. TEXTS

- *Seen and Not Heard: Why Children's Voices Matter*
- *Philosophy in Education: Questioning and Dialogue In Schools* (Mohr Lone & Burroughs, 2016)
- **All other assigned readings are available on the Canvas course.**

NOTE:

Each week students should come to class with at least one question the readings raised for you.

IV. TOPICS AND READINGS

WEEK 1

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

Chapters 3-5 in *Philosophy in Education*

“Guiding a Philosophical Discussion,” from *Philosophy in the Classroom* (Lipman, Sharp & Oscanyan)

“Are philosophy and children good for one another?” (Gregory)

WEEK 2

❖ *Philosophy of Childhood: Ageism and Childhood*

Chapters 1-2 in *Seen and Not Heard*

“What is a child?” *Ethics* (Schapiro)

“How Should Children Be Heard?” (Brighouse)

WEEK 3

❖ *Philosophy of Childhood: Children’s Philosophical Selves*

Chapter 2 in *Philosophy in Education*

“Can Children Do Philosophy?” (Murrell)

“Philosophical Thinking in Childhood” (*Routledge Handbook on Philosophy of Childhood*) (Mohr-Lone)

“Philosophy and Childhood: Possibilities of an encounter” (*Childhood, Education and Philosophy*) (Kohan)

****FIRST PAPER FOR 495 STUDENTS DUE APRIL 19****

WEEK 4

❖ *Philosophical Recognition, Identity, and Children*

Chapter 9 in *Philosophy in Education*

“The Epistemic Challenge of Hearing Child’s Voice” (Murrell)

“Learning to Listen: Epistemic Injustice and the Child” (Burroughs and Tollefsen)

“How Is This Paper Philosophy?” (Dotson)

WEEK 5

❖ *Philosophical Inquiry and Social Inequalities*

Chapters 10-11 in *Philosophy in Education*

“The Elephant in the Room: Picturebooks, Philosophy for Children and Racism” (Chetty)

“Who Talks? Who Listens? Taking ‘Positionality’ Seriously in Philosophy for Children” (Reed-Sandoval and Sykes)

“Philosophy for Children in Native America: A Post-Colonial Critique” (Rainville)

WEEK 6

❖ *Epistemology with Children*

“*Morris the Moose*: Teaching Epistemology,” in *Big Ideas for Little Kids* (Wartenberg)

“Knowledge and Belief: Thinking About Epistemology,” in *The Philosophical Child* (Mohr-Lone)

“Knowledge,” from *Dialogues with Children* (Matthews)

****SECOND PAPER FOR 495 STUDENTS DUE MAY 10****

WEEK 7

❖ ***Ethics with Children***

Chapters 3-5 in *Seen and Not Heard*

“Morality and How to Live: Thinking About Ethics,” Chapter 5 of *The Philosophical Child* (Mohr-Lone)

“Ethics” in *Dialogues with Children* (Matthews)

“Can Moral Education Be Divorced From Philosophical Education?” (Lipman/Sharp)

WEEK 8

❖ ***Metaphysics with Children***

Chapter 6 in *Seen and Not Heard*

“Death, Reality & Identity: Thinking About Metaphysics,” in *The Philosophical Child* (Mohr-Lone)

“A Philosopher’s View of Childhood” in *The Philosophy of Childhood* (Matthews)

“The Ship” in *Dialogues with Children* (Matthews)

WEEK 9

❖ ***Philosophy of Art with Children***

“Art and Beauty: Thinking About Aesthetics,” in *The Philosophical Child* (Mohr-Lone)

Guernica Comes to School: Art, Philosophy and Life (Leckey)

“Child Art” in *The Philosophy of Childhood* (Matthews)

“The Aesthetic Dimension of the Community of Inquiry” (Sharp)

WEEK 10

❖ ***Listening to Children***

Chapter 7 in *Seen and Not Heard*

“Listening to What Children Say” (Paley)

“Getting to Know Derek” (Paley)

“Good Listening” (Beatty)

FINAL PAPERS FOR ALL STUDENTS DUE BY 5 PM JUNE 7

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. **Attendance is important in this class!**
- Grading for the course will be as follows:

For 495:

- Involvement in seminar discussions and in philosophy sessions with young people (15%)
- Completion of the two short papers (3-4 pages each) (40%)
- Completion of the final paper (6-8 pages) (45%)

For 595:

- Facilitation of a seminar discussion of at least one reading (15%)
- Involvement in seminar discussions and in philosophy sessions with young people (15%)
- Completion of a detailed lesson plan suitable for website publication (25%) (see separate document for 595 requirements)
- Completion of a final paper (12-15 pages) (45%) (see separate document for 595 requirements)