PHIL 399 Sp St Teaching Children Philosophy  
CRN 27000 - 4 Credits

Course Time and Location  
MW 4:00-5:50 p.m.  Cascade 202.  
NOTE: Beginning week four of the term, one class each week will take place on a Monday or Tuesday at a designated elementary school in District 4J where individual students or student teams will co-lead philosophical discussions in a 4th or 5th grade classroom.

Instructor  
Paul Bodin, adjunct instructor, Philosophy and College of Education  
Invited guest speakers from the Philosophy department and other university disciplines.

Contact information  
Email: pbodin@uoregon.edu  
Students may also contact the instructor by phone for emergencies:  541-686-9270

Consultation hours  
Before or after class, or at a time arranged between student and instructor.

Course Overview  
In this seminar, we will explore various methods for bringing philosophical ways of thinking into a community of discourse in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. The seminar will focus on methods for inviting children to employ critical thinking, inquiry and empathy as they participate in focused discussions that university students will co-lead around philosophical topics.

In order to model this process, we will explore an interdisciplinary curriculum linking philosophy and education studies at the elementary level. We will focus our attention on key questions that can be found in children’s literature and short dramatic dialogues; questions like, What is friendship? Why should we be moral? What does it mean to be brave? Do all categories of work have the same value? What is beauty? Do animals have rights? and other topics that connect to the experiences and concerns of children.

Required Texts


2. Lobel, Arnold  Frog and Toad Together  (children’s picture book)
3. Catalanotto, Peter  Emily’s Art  (children’s picture book)
4. Choi, Yangsook  The Name Jar  (children’s picture book)
5. Lobel, Arnold  Owl At Home  (children’s picture book)
6. Lionni, Leo  Frederick  (children’s picture book)
7. Swope, Sam  The Araboolies of Liberty Street  (children’s picture book)

8. Selected handouts and dramatic dialogues from the instructor.

Written Assignments and Evaluation

There are five ways that students in this course will apply their study of philosophical thinking to the dynamics of elementary school classroom learning communities. Each will be evaluated by the instructor based on the level of quality, thoughtfulness, creativity and completeness.

1. Seven revised lesson plans.  (20% of the course grade)
   Students will work independently or in two-person teams to prepare seven lessons that will be used to lead weekly circle discussions with children--weeks four through ten of the term.
   Lesson plan preparation means that:
   • Students will revise the philosophical guidelines and question sets for each of seven lesson plans given by the instructor.
   • They will develop introductory remarks or activities that spark the children’s interest in each week’s topic.
   • Lesson plans will include possible extension activities, action plan ideas or thought problems.
   • Optional: Students may also choose to create an original dramatic dialogue for two child actors to present to the classroom as an alternative to using a children’s picture book for discussion.
   • All seven lesson plans will be sent by email to the instructor as a PDF file by 6:00 p.m. the Friday evening before each week’s classroom discussion.  See the syllabus grid of weekly activities and assignments.

2. Weekly communication with children using Edmodo.  (20% of the course grade)
   Edmodo is a secure social learning network set up by District 4J schools for use by classroom students and teachers. Undergraduates in this course will invite children to post their ideas, opinions and questions online, and will reply each week to children’s postings with thoughtful responses.
   Undergraduates will also write a Letter of Introduction to the children and their families, to be distributed by each classroom teacher prior to the first circle discussion.

3. Creating one original lesson plan.  (20% of the course grade)
   Each student will create an original lesson that links a philosophical concept with either a published illustrated children’s book or a story found in a 4th or 5th grade literacy curriculum. The original lesson plans will be final drafted for submission to the existing book modules in the Teaching Children Philosophy website at Mt. Holyoke College in Massachusetts.
   Link: http://www.teachingchildrenphilosophy.org/wiki/Main_Page
   Refer to the handout, “Original Lesson Plans” for details.

4. A final reflection paper.  (20% of the course grade)
   Students will prepare an end-of-the-term final paper discussing their experiences, insights, frustrations and successes during the past term preparing and leading philosophical discussions with children. (Three to five double-spaced word processed pages.)
   Refer to the handout, “Final Reflection Paper”.

5. Participation.  (20% of the course grade)
   Finally, students will be evaluated on their active participation in university class discussions, their ability to collaborate with peers, and to participate as volunteers and discussion leaders in an elementary classroom setting.
Classroom Outreach

- Students will visit their assigned 4th or 5th grade classroom to introduce themselves and brainstorm rules with the children for conducting effective circle discussions: During week 3.
- Students will visit their assigned 4th or 5th grade classroom on a Monday or Tuesday during weeks 4 through 10 to lead 40 to 45 minute discussions, each focused on a philosophical theme. (*Specific days and times will be determined by students and classroom teachers, weeks 2-3.*)
- Students will visit and observe two circle discussions led by other members of the class, and evaluate their lessons. Evaluations completed by week nine of the term.

Week-by-Week Calendar of Activities and Assignments
Note: Please treat this grid as a work-in-progress, where activities and assignments may change based upon the instructor’s goals and weekly input from undergraduates.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Themes/Activities</th>
<th>Assigned Reading</th>
<th>Other Assignments</th>
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| **Week One** 1/7 | - Introduction to teaching philosophy for children curriculum.  
- How to create a philosophical lesson plan from a picture book. | - Wartenberg, Preface, Ch. 1-3.  
- First picture book for Practice Discussion #1 |  
Final draft a lesson plan focusing on a philosophical topic related to your **first** picture book. Bring a print copy to class. |
| 1/9 | - Overview of different philosophical themes and approaches.  
- Practice Discussions #1 led by students in class. Followed by peer evaluations. | - Wartenberg, Ch. 4-5  
- Second picture book for Practice Discussion #2  
- Katie Wood Ray on the role of Read Alouds. |  
Final draft a lesson plan focusing on a philosophical topic related to your **second** picture book. Bring a print copy to class. |
| **Week Two** 1/14 | - Practice Discussions #2 led by students in class. Followed by peer evaluations.  
- Effective reading of picture books; how to use dramatic dialogues. | Wartenberg, Ch. 6-7 | Prepare a final draft Letter of Introduction to children and families. Bring a print copy on Monday to give to your classroom teacher. |
| 1/16 | **Visit by classroom teachers.**  
- Placements are determined; days and times for weekly discussions; directions to the school; contact information exchanged.  
- Letters of Introductions given to teachers.  
- Day and time is set for a first visit to the classroom next week. | - Third picture book for Practice Discussion #3 |  
Final draft a lesson plan focusing on a philosophical topic related to your **third** picture book. Bring a print copy to class.  
Prepare for first visit to assigned classroom. |
| **Week Three** 1/21 | - Practice Discussions #3 led by students in class. Followed by peer evaluations.  
- Master schedule given out for classroom discussions.  
- First visit to classroom: Introductions; brainstorming rules for circle discussions. | Wartenberg, Ch. 8  
*Dragons and Giants* by Arnold Lobel | Prepare a working draft of Guidelines and Questions for Philosophical Discussion: *Dragons and Giants*. |
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| 1/23       | - Philosophical theme #1. Teaching Ethics:  
  *What does it mean to be brave?*  
  *What does it mean to be a hero?*  
  Revised lesson plan #1 due by Friday, 6 p.m. |                                                                                   |                                |
| Week Four  | - Undergraduates lead circle discussion #1 with children.                   | Wartenberg, Chapter 13  
  *Owl and the Moon* by Arnold Lobel;  
  EDMODO postings are received during the week from the children; responses written and sent by undergraduates. |                                |
| 1/28 or 2/1|                                                                            |                                                                                  |                                |
| 1/30       | - Philosophical theme #2. Teaching epistemology:  
  *What does it mean to be friends?*  
  *What do we know to be true?*  
  Revised lesson plan #2 due by Friday, 6 p.m. |                                                                                   |                                |
| Week Five  | - Undergraduates lead circle discussion #2 with children.                   | Wartenberg, Chapter 15  
  *Emily's Art* by Peter Catalanotto  
  EDMODO postings are received during the week from the children; responses written and sent by undergraduates. |                                |
| 2/4 or 2/5 |                                                                            |                                                                                  |                                |
| 2/6        | - Philosophical theme #3. Teaching aesthetics:  
  *What is art?*  
  *What is beauty?*  
  *Are there objective standards for judging good art?*  
  Revised lesson plan #3 due by Friday, 6 p.m. |                                                                                   |                                |
| Week Six   | - Undergraduates lead circle discussion #3 with children.                   | Paul’s dramatic dialogue,  
  “A Difficult Choice”  
  EDMODO postings are received during the week from the children; responses written and sent by undergraduates. |                                |
| 2/11 or 2/12|                                                                           |                                                                                  |                                |
| 2/13       | - Philosophical theme #4. Teaching ethics:  
  *Is lying always wrong?*  
  Revised lesson plan #4 due by Friday, 6 p.m. |                                                                                   |                                |
| Week Seven | NOTE: Monday February 18 is an elementary school holiday.                   | Wartenberg, Chapter 9  
  *Frederick* by Leo Lionni  
  EDMODO postings are received during the week from the children; responses written and sent by undergraduates. |                                |
| 2/19       |                                                                            |                                                                                  |                                |
| 2/20       | - Philosophical theme #5. Teaching social and political philosophy:  
  *Should we place more value on certain kinds of work?*  
  *Is work different than play?*  
  Revised lesson plan #5 due by Friday, 6 p.m. |                                                                                   |                                |
Attendance and Absence Guidelines

Most of the activities each week are driven by class discussions and presentations that cannot be duplicated by reading over another student’s notes. It is imperative that you make a commitment to attend every class. Excused absences will be made for sickness or family emergency. Other school or social functions that conflict with attendance in this class will not count as excused.

More than one unexcused absence during the term will result in a failing letter grade or no pass.

Students are expected to let the instructor know in advance of class that they will be unable to attend. A simple email or phone message is sufficient. Because many students are working together in teams, students anticipating an absence must contact the team member and classroom teacher as soon as possible. Absent students will need to help with any changes or revisions of lessons and discussions.

Regarding sickness, winter term is high flu and cold season, especially for students spending time in elementary school classrooms. Periods of high work load create additional stresses. Therefore students need to take care of themselves. In this regard, please do not come to class sick.

Representing the University as a Guest in the Public Schools

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<tr>
<th>Week Eight</th>
<th>- Undergraduates lead circle discussion #5 with children.</th>
<th>Wartenberg, Chapter 12 The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein. Paul’s dramatic dialogue, “The Science Project”</th>
<th>- EDMODO postings are received during the week from the children; responses written and sent by undergraduates.</th>
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<tr>
<td>2/25 or 2/26</td>
<td>2/27 - Philosophical theme #6. Environmental philosophy: Do animals have rights? Do we have an obligation to care for the environment?</td>
<td>Revised lesson plan #6 due by Friday, 6 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Nine</td>
<td>- Undergraduates lead circle discussion #6 with children.</td>
<td>The Araboolies of Liberty Street by Sam Swope</td>
<td>- EDMODO postings are received during the week from the children; responses written and sent by undergraduates.</td>
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<td>3/4 or 3/5</td>
<td>3/6 - Philosophical theme #7. Social and political philosophy. What does it mean to have a government with laws? What kinds of rules are fair and unfair?</td>
<td>Revised lesson plan #7 due by Friday, 3/8 6 p.m. Final draft of ORIGINAL lesson plan posted online by Monday 3/11 at 6 p.m. (Due Wednesday 3/13)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Ten</td>
<td>- Undergraduates lead circle discussion #7 with children.</td>
<td>- EDMODO postings are received during the week from the children; responses written and sent by undergraduates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/11 or 3/12</td>
<td>3/13 - Presentation of original lesson plans. To be handed in to the instructor.</td>
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When visiting public schools, university students will treat all members of the school community with a high degree of respect and professionalism. This includes:

- Outward appearance and demeanor.
- Appropriate language during elementary classroom discussions.
- Verbal and written communications made to the school community.
- Weekly collaboration with the classroom teacher.
- EDMODO responses to children’s postings.

As a representative of the University of Oregon and, in particular, the Philosophy Department, students in this course have a responsibility to set a high standard in their interactions with children and teachers.

**Expected University Classroom Behavior**

Laptops, iPads Smart phones and other computer devices may only be used during class activities for academic work, note taking and sharing. Students are asked to put away or turn off their computers at all other times. In most cases, the instructor will ask for **printed** copies of assigned lesson plans to be brought to class.

Please read the Diversity section below. The attributes listed under Diversity apply to basic principles of classroom behavior during the term. In addition, all students are subject to the regulations stipulated in the UO Student Conduct Code, which can be accessed at: http://www.uoregon.edu/~conduct/

**Diversity**

It is the policy of the University of Oregon to support and value diversity. To do so requires that we:

- respect the dignity and essential worth of all individuals.
- promote a culture of respect throughout the University community.
- respect the privacy, property and freedom of others.
- reject bigotry, discrimination, violence or intimidation of any kind.
- practice personal and academic integrity and expect it from others.
- promote the diversity of opinions, ideas and backgrounds which is the lifeblood of the university.

**Documented Disability**

Appropriate accommodations will be provided for students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability and require accommodation, arrange to meet with the course instructor within the first two weeks of the term. The documentation of your disability must come in writing from the Disability Services in the Office of Academic Advising and Student Services. Disabilities may include (but are not limited to) neurological impairment, orthopedic impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment, chronic medical conditions, emotional/psychological disabilities, hearing impairment, and learning disabilities. For more information on Disability Services, please see http://ds.uoregon.edu/

**Academic Misconduct Policy**

All students are subject to the regulations stipulated in the UO student Conduct Code (http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/programs/student_judi_affairs/). This code represents a compilation of important regulations, policies and procedures pertaining to student life. It is intended to inform students of their rights and responsibilities during their association with this institution, and to provide general guidance for enforcing those regulations and policies essential to the educational and research missions of the University.
Conflict Resolution
Several options, both informal and formal, are available to resolve conflicts for students who believe they have been subjected to, or have witnessed bias, unfairness or other improper treatment.

It is important to exhaust the administrative remedies available to you, including discussing the conflict with the specific individual, contacting the Department Head, or within the College of Education, you can contact Joe Stevens, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at 346-2445 or stevensj@uoregon.edu; or Surendra Subramani, Diversity Coordinator at 346-1472 or surendra@uoregon.edu

Outside the College, you can contact:
UO Bias Response Team: 346-1139 or http://bias.uoregon.edu/whatbrt.htm
Conflict Resolution Services 346-0617 or http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/programs/crs/
Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity 346-3123 or http://aaeo.uoregon.edu/

Grievance Policy
A student or group of students of the College of Education may appeal decisions or actions pertaining to admissions, programs, evaluation of performance and program retention and completion. Students who decide to file a grievance should follow the student grievance procedure, or alternative ways to file a grievance outlined in the Student Grievance Policy (http://education.uoregon.edu/feature.htm?id=399) or enter search: student grievance.

In Case of Inclement Weather
In the event the University operates on a curtailed schedule or closes, UO media relations will notify the Eugene-Springfield area radio and television stations as quickly as possible. In addition, a notice regarding the university’s schedule will be posted on the UO main home page (in the “News” section) at http://www.uoregon.edu.

If an individual class must be canceled due to inclement weather, illness, or other reason, a notice will be posted on Blackboard or via email. During periods of inclement weather, please check Blackboard and your email rather than contact department personnel. Due to unsafe travel conditions, departmental staff may be limited and unable to handle the volume of calls from you and others.

Course Incomplete Policy
Students are expected to be familiar with university policy and procedures, which result in failing to complete te course by the end of the term in which it is offered. For details on the policy and procedures regarding incompletes, please see http://interact.uoregon.edu/pdf/sas/AlncGrdCon.pdf