“I have never let my schooling interfere with my education.”

-- Mark Twain

**BHP260: Education and the Arts**

**Fall, 2012: Wednesday 6:30-9:30**

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| Dr. Don Ambrose, MEM 202D | Dr. Tim McGee, Science 305 |
| Office Hours: Wed. 4:15-5:45; Thurs. 2:30-4:00 | Office Hours: Wed. 5-6 p.m. and by appt. |
| Phone: 609.895.5647 | Phone: 609.896.7015 |
| [ambrose@rider.edu](mailto:ambrose@rider.edu) | [tmcgee@rider.edu](mailto:tmcgee@rider.edu) |

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION**: Through the study of classic and contemporary artistic works as well as influential philosophies and theories of education, this course explores representations of education in fiction, nonfiction, drama, poetry, film, painting (and other art forms) and the relationship between theory and practice. Society’s shifting, ambivalent attitudes toward teachers and the educational process will be studied from multiple perspectives, including those of artists who are important educators themselves. Readings on educational theory will address, among other topics, the controversial relationship between standardized testing and recent developments in cognitive science.

**EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION:** For millennia, society has projected its aspirations, anxieties, and desires onto educators and classrooms. Teachers are revered and put on pedestals even as they are underpaid and demeaned; universities are presented as necessary gateways to status and success even as they are denounced as elitist or subversive. This course examines how artists in various disciplines have commented on or participated in the creation of contradictory stereotypes: the teacher as savior and corrupter, hero and saboteur, healer and destroyer, charismatic leader and bureaucratic pedant; the classroom as a place of liberation and prison, self-reliance and conformity, inspiration and drudgery; the university as corporate business and incubator of radicalism, preserver of traditional values and subverter of them. Education has taken on all these contradictions and many others depending on the ideology of the moment and the writer or filmmaker representing or critiquing it. The course will survey these changing myths but will focus on the deeper questions that underlie them:

* Is education fundamentally about learning facts and information or attaining self-knowledge and thinking skills?
* Should education prepare students for their proper slots in society or help them break out of them?
* Do standardized tests encourage or damage creativity and critical thinking?
* Can charismatic teachers be dangerous as well as inspirational?
* Is the university turning into a corporate business, as progressives claim, valuing profits over learning? Conversely, are universities unfairly staffed with left-wingers, as traditionalists claim, to the exclusion of conservative points of view?
* How accurate are stereotypes of students – the nerd, the jock, the overachiever, the teacher’s pet, the sexy manipulator, the frat-boy, the techno-geek, the special needs student – and how do these mirror stereotypes about teachers?
* Can creative artists be better teachers than professional educators and if so, what can educators learn from them?
* What does it really mean to be a mentor? Is it only about the academic discipline or about developmental issues and role models?
* Are nature and direct experience better “educators” than classroom teachers, as many famous teachers themselves have claimed over the centuries, and if so, do educators subvert themselves by declaring this?

These are complex questions that resist easy answers, the kinds of issues appropriate for an Honors course. They are the themes or subtexts of our readings and films and will be the subject of papers and discussions.

**COURSE GOALS:** Students will be able to recognize and escape from dogmatic belief systems that can exert excessive control over our notions about the structure, dynamics, and purposes of good education and about the purposes and value of the arts.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

* Understand the significance of the varying, often conflicting ways educational issues are presented in the arts.
* Analyze fiction, poetry, drama, social issues, music, visual art, and film in relation to the purposes, structure, and dynamics of education.
* Learn to use some creative and critical thinking strategies for analyzing and explaining complex problems in class discussion and writing.
* Write a researched argument that integrates key ideas of multiple resources from various disciplines used in this course.
* Use the materials in the course to reflect on your own education with new focus, depth, and self-awareness.
* Each individual student will compose one objective for him or herself by the end of the fourth week of the semester.
* The class, as a whole, will compose one objective that all will pursue together by the end of the fourth week of the semester.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Berger, John. (1990). *Ways of Seeing.* New York: Penguin

Dickens, Charles. (2000). *Hard Times*. New York: Norton Critical Edition.

Ravitch, Diane. (2010). *The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice are Undermining Education*. New York: Basic Books.

Shaw, George Bernard. (2003). *Pygmalion.* New York: Penguin Classics.

Zhao, Y. (2009). *Catching Up or Leading the Way*.– ASCD.

**ADA:** If you have a disability and believe you will need academic accommodations in this course, please make an appointment for an Intake Interview with Services for Students with Disabilities in the Vona Academic Annex, Room 8. The phone number is (609) 895-5492 and the email is [serv4dstu@rider.edu](mailto:serv4dstu@rider.edu). They will ask for documentation of your disability to support your accommodation requests and to recommend services as appropriate to your individual situation.

**CODE OF ACADEMIC CONDUCT:** The submission of written work that includes the words or ideas of another without proper citation possibly constitutes plagiarism. Papers or presentations that are plagiarized will be given a grade of zero, and their authors will be treated in accordance with the “Procedures to be Followed in Academic Cases of Dishonesty” as outlined in *The Source*, 2012-2013.

**LATE ASSIGNMENT:** Assignments are due as specified in the assignment guidelines. Late assignments will result in lower grades. Any change in this policy must be arranged before the assigned due date and be accompanied by a written explanation for your need to make any adjustment to the schedule of due dates.

**PAPER SPECIFICATIONS**: All essays and informal writing should be submitted electronically.

You should use a font that is easy to read in a size that would result in approximately 250 words per page if printed in hard copy. You should keep an electronic copy of all work (essays, informal writing, etc.) you submit in the event that anything gets lost. You will be submitting much of your writing electronically via Canvas, either in the Discussion Board Forums or in other digital fora. You may use either MLA or APA style to cite borrowings.

**CMS SPECIFICATION:** We will use Canvas (the CMS that will replace Blackboard next year) for four primary purposes: Posting course materials and links to relevant resources; announcing events and activities; posting written versions of informal and formal writing assignments; providing you with forums for your informal writing. Informal writing activities will take a variety of forms; in most cases, we will expect you to engage in meaningful analyses of texts and cooperative learning behaviors that are conducive to helping yourselves and your classmates learn more and produce better work. You should check Canvas regularly for announcements.

**COMPUTER SKILLS USED:** Word processing, presentation software, electronic mail, Canvas CMS, bibliographic database software, and accessing online library and Internet resources.

**WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:**

You will have four different kinds of writing assignments. You will submit brief Free Informal Writings to the Discussion Board on a regular basis. They will be scored credit/no credit. If you submit them on time, you will earn the points. You will also submit Structured Informal Writings to the Discussion Board. They will be scored on a check/plus/minus basis. You will also write one formal researched argument on a topic of your choosing. It will be letter graded. Finally, you, as a member of a group, will compose and deliver an oral presentation using the jurisprudential model of teaching. It will also be letter graded.

**INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES:** In addition to the traditional practices of reading, writing, listening, and viewing, this section of BHP260 will incorporate current pedagogical approaches including process writing, cooperative learning, small group activities, and creative and critical thinking strategies. Some of the above approaches will be implemented through the writing and communication software available on Rider’s computer network, especially the Canvas Learning Management System. This section of BHP260 will focus on a few selected themes identified by the instructors at the start of the term.

**HOMEWORK AND ASSISGNMENTS**: The satisfactory completion of all major assignments and most homework assignments is required for a passing grade.

**PREPARATION AND PARTICIPATION**: Preparation for class and diplomatic participation in class activities are vitally important for your success in this course. This course requires a considerable amount of reading; preparing yourself for class and actively participating will greatly aid your learning process. Occasional quizzes on the reading material will account for 10% of your final grade.

**PROFESSIONALISM**

Professionalism includes the following:

* Arriving on time for classes and attending all class sessions (A "no cut" policy exists for this course). If you do have to miss class for unavoidable reasons, notify the instructor in advance of, or shortly after, the missed session, and ask a classmate to collect any handouts and summarize the night's events for you.
* Active, mature, and reflective participation in class activities and discussions. In order to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of your participation, we recommend preparing brief point form chapter summaries for quick review before discussions of readings, which will occur in many class sessions. Active participation means carrying your share of the discussion, with diplomacy, and asking pertinent questions of the instructor and fellow students. Our class sessions will be interactive so we will make frequent transitions from group activities back to whole class sessions. Professionalism here entails rapid, efficient transitions without side conversations. Note––electronic devices (cell phones, etc.) should be turned off during class session.
* Timely completion of readings and assignments. You will have written assignments due at or before the beginning of most class meetings and marked on a check/plus/minus or credit/no credit basis. Late submissions will not be awarded credit.

**EVALUATION PROCEDURE:**

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| **Assignment** | **Grading Percentages** | **Method of Evaluation** |
| Free Informal Writings | 15% | Credit/No Credit |
| Structured Informal Writings | 15% | Check/Plus/Minus |
| Quizzes | 10% | Numerically Scored |
| Jurisprudential Presentation | 20% | Letter Graded |
| Researched Argument | 20% | Letter Graded |
| Final Exam | 20% | Letter Graded |

**COURSE CALENDAR**

The calendar below indicates the dates by which you should have read and be prepared for a quiz on the material listed. It also lists the dues dates for a Researched Argument and a Jurisprudential Presentation. Additionally, you will have frequent Informal Writing assignments throughout the trem.

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| **Date** | **Topic/Question/Focus** | **Assignment** |
| **9/5** | 1. Introductions  2. Defining “The Arts”; Recounting our own “Arts” educations  3. Overview of the structure, dynamics, and purposes of education—a 21st-century education  4. Divergent thinking  5. “What if” thinking  6. Going over the syllabus and assignments | Brief response paper written in class at the end of the evening.  Write a brief (300 wd.) narrative of our individual “Arts” education. Submit it to the Discussion Board by Monday, 9/10. |
| **9/12** | 1. How have the arts been used to educate? How has education been represented in the arts?  2. Visual metaphor as a bridge between the arts and education  3. What is intelligence?  4. Root-metaphorical worldviews as foundations for education and the arts | Classical Readings  View Norman Rockwell illustrations depicting schooling, students, and teachers. |
| **9/19** | 1. How should we read a novel?  2. The impact of social inequality on education  3. The inquiry model in education | *Hard Times*, Book the First |
| **9/26** | 1. The impact of social inequality on education (cnt’d)  2. Interdisciplinary thinking  3. Aspiration development | *Hard Times*, Book the Second |
| **10/3** | 1. What is “school reform”?  2. Higher-order creative and critical thinking (HOT) | *Hard Times*, Book the Third  Zhao chs. 1&2; Ravitch chs. 1&2 |
| **10/10** | 1. How should we view images?  2. Nonlinguistic representations in education  3. What is school reform (cnt’d) | *Ways of Seeing*  Berliner; Ravitch chs. 3,4,5 |
| **10/17** | 1. HOT cnt’d…the problem of dogmatism  2. Creative problem solving (CPS) | *Pygmalion*  View Portions of *My Fair Lady* |

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| **10/24** | 1. Seeking chaotic order in education and the arts  2. Motivation in education  3. Integrative learning | Ravitch chs. 6,7,8 |
| **10/31** | 1. Cooperative learning in education and the arts | “Such, Such Were the Joys” |
| **11/7** | 1. Democracy as a context for education  2. Mind mapping | Ravitch ch. 10 |
| **11/14** | 1. Findings in neuroscience and their implications for education and the arts  2. 21st-century education cnt’d | Zhao chs. 3,4,5,6  View *Educating Rita*  Researched Argument Due |
| **11/21** | **Thanksgiving** |  |
| **11/28** | 1. Cognitive diversity as an educational and artistic advantage  2. Concept learning in education and the arts  3. 21st-century education cnt’d | Zhao ch.s 7,8,9 |
| **12/5** | 1. HOT cnt’d  2. SCAMPER education | Jurisprudential Presentations |
| **12/12** | **Final Exam Date** |  |

**WARNING:** The due dates listed above are provisional. Definite dates will be announced in class, and an updated version of this syllabus will be available via Canvas throughout the term. Also, the instructors reserve the right to make adjustments in this course to better meet the needs of the students.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:** In constructing this syllabus, we are indebted to the BHP260 faculty who went before us.