

## Pragmatism

EFND 8040 – Summer 2008

Class Day M-F

Room RC 139

Class Time 4-6:15

Instructor Andrew Gitlin

### Course Purpose

It could be argued that no conceptual framework as influenced education more than pragmatism. From its roots with William James to the influential work of John Dewey and the current thinking of Richard Rorty. The purpose of this course is to fully understand these authors and their views on pragmatism. With this understanding in place we will spend the final part of the class working on ways to apply pragmatism to everyday school issues.

This course requires careful reading of the required text so it will be essential that you have done the reading before class and tried to dig deep into the ideas presented.

### Required Texts

James, W. (1907) Pragmatism. Sioux Falls, SD: NuVision Publications

Sleeper, R. W. (1986) The necessity of pragmatism: John Dewey's conception of philosophy. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Rorty, R. (1982). Consequences of pragmatism. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

### Assignments

1) for every class you will be required to produce a one page single spaced ( max length) response paper that does the following:

a) summarizes one or two arguments you feel passionate about.

b) your response to the articles both in terms of support and criticism.

c) 2 questions to pose to the class about the reading

2) 7-10 page paper that does the following:

a) reflects a deep understanding of pragmatism

b) show how to take your understanding of pragmatism and apply it to education in the form of curriculum, policy or pedagogy.

### Tentative Schedule

June 5<sup>th</sup>

Introduction

go over syllabus

June 6<sup>th</sup>

reading due: James--13-40

June 9<sup>th</sup>

reading due: James-- 40-67

June 10<sup>th</sup>

James lecture 1 and 2

rationalism

facts religion

a middle ground

pragmatism as method

instrumentalism

humanism

June 11<sup>th</sup>

James lecture 3 and 4

personal identity

the problem of design

accountability

free will

reflection

totality

one story one knower

June 12<sup>th</sup>–Reading due: James 69-95

pluralism

cause/ law

common sense and science

June 13<sup>th</sup> –Readings Due: James: 97-119.

June 16<sup>th</sup> Readings Due: Sleeper 1-77

June 17<sup>th</sup>

James:

notion of truth

humanism

tough mindedness

pragmatism as mediation

June 18<sup>th</sup>

Sleeper on:

interpreting Dewey

conception of Philosophy

logic of experience

June 19<sup>th</sup>–Reading Due: Sleeper 78-167.

Dewey and Aristotelian turn

existence as problematic

logic and truth

June 20<sup>th</sup>–Reading Due: Sleeper 168-214.

June 23<sup>th</sup>–Reading Due –Rorty chapters 1-5--1-89

June 24<sup>th</sup>

Sleeper on :

intelligent behavior

meliorism and transformation

June 25<sup>th</sup>

Rorty on:

Wittgenstein

Heidegger and Dewey

transcendentalism

Deweyian Metaphysics

June 26<sup>th</sup>–Readings Due Rorty–chapters 6-9 --90-175.

Derrida

fiction

idealism

relativism

June 27<sup>th</sup>—Readings due—Rorty--chapters 10-12—176 232.

June 30<sup>th</sup>

work on drafts of papers

July 1<sup>st</sup>

Rorty on

cavell

method

philosophy today

July 2<sup>nd</sup>

share drafts

final papers due