

**Latin American Philosophy**  
**PHIL 3653**  
**(Cross-listed with Comparative Literature and Latin American and Latino Studies)**  
**Theme: Latin American Philosophies of Education**  
**Fordham University, Spring 2018**

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**Office phone:** 718-817-2767  
**Office hours:** Wednesday 1:00-2:00, Thursday 1:00-3:50, and by appointment  
**Class Times:** Monday and Thursday, 4:00-5:15, in Keating 206

**Description:** This course serves as an introduction to Latin American Philosophy by focusing on the theme of education as a practice of liberation. Central to the course will be an international conference focusing on new pedagogical techniques from across the Americas, “Hacer Escuela/Inventing School,” which will be held at Fordham’s Lincoln Center campus on April 13-14. After first discussing foundational texts by Brazilian philosopher Paulo Freire, we will spend the weeks leading up to the conference reading texts by and related to the work of the conference presenters, and students will be expected to attend as much of the conference as they can. The content and form of the final weeks of the course will be determined collectively, as we seek to implement in our classroom the new ideas and techniques that we have studied.

**Texts:** There are two required texts for the course:

- Walter Omar Kohan, *The Inventive Schoolmaster: Simón Rodríguez*, translated by Vicki Jones and Jason Thomas Wozniak, Sense Publishers, 2015.
- Doris Sommer, *The Work of Art in the World: Civic Agency and Public Humanities*, Duke UP, 2014.

All other readings will be available as pdfs on Blackboard.

**On the readings:** The texts assigned for this course aren’t easy. For this reason, I’ve done my best to keep the readings at a manageable length. This will allow you to read them a number of times – ideally twice before class (once quickly to get a general idea of what is being said, and a second time more slowly), and then again after class. In our class sessions we’re going to be paying close attention to what is said in the text, so **it is essential that you bring the reading under discussion with you to class.**

<b>Assessment:</b>	Participation	10%
	5 Response papers	2% each
	2 exercises	5% each
	1 Group presentation	20%
	1 Short paper	20%
	1 Final paper/project	30%

I will use the following guidelines for grades:

A	(93-100)	Excellent. Honors-level work, outstanding.
A-	(90-93)	Still excellent.
B+	(87-90)	Very Good. High Level of performance.
B	(83-87)	Good. Solid and above average level of performance.
B-	(80-83)	Good. Still above average.
C+	(77-80)	Average level of performance.
C	(73-77)	Satisfactory. Acceptable level of performance.
C-	(70-73)	Minimally acceptable.
D	(60-70)	Passing, but unsatisfactory. Below average performance.
F	(0-60)	Failure. Inferior performance.

**Participation:** This is based on your attendance and your participation in class discussions.

*Attendance:* **You are allowed a maximum of 2 unexcused absences across the semester. Excused absences** are allowed for religious holidays, serious illness, a death in your immediate family, or participation in a university-sponsored activity, and must be accompanied by a formal and valid written explanation. In accordance with university policy, **you are allowed a maximum of 4 unexcused and excused absences combined.** For each absence exceeding these limits you will lose 1% from your 10% participation grade. It is your responsibility to talk to your classmates and catch up on any work you might have missed when not in class, and feel free, of course, to come and talk to me in office hours about anything that remains confusing.

*Discussions:* With respect to your participation in class discussions, you are not being graded on the correctness or profoundness of the things you say, but on your willingness to say them. Everyone will be expected to speak in class discussions across the semester. And everyone, myself included, has the right—indeed the duty—to express thoughts that are ridiculous, crazy, outlandish, or just plain wrong (in discussions and response papers, but not in the longer papers...). Philosophy works best when you risk yourself a little.

**Response papers:** You are asked to submit a response paper every second week for the first 10 weeks of the course. So you will submit 5 papers in total. I have divided the class into 2 groups, A and B, with each group writing their papers in an alternating sequence (A one week, B the next, and so on).

The response papers are to be **at least 1 ½ double-spaced pages of text in length, emailed to me by midnight on Friday evening, and should reflect on some aspect of the work we've done since your previous response paper.** The range of your reflection is open, and you can discuss any issues, themes, or questions arising from the readings or our class sessions. But I am particularly interested in your thoughts on the pedagogical dimensions of what we've been doing in the classroom, and what we might do in the future, in the light of our readings and discussions, so I encourage you to explore this topic in at least a couple responses. If you submit a response paper of at least 1 ½ pages on relevant material, you'll get 2/2. If you submit less than 1 ½ pages (or if it's not at all related to our class), you'll get 1/2, and if you fail to hand in a response paper that week, 0/2. No late response papers will be accepted.

**Exercises:** During the semester there will be two exercises worth 5% each. The details are still to be determined, but the first will be related to a collaborative event with students from Bard College (with an alternative exercise for those who can't attend), and the second related to the Hacer Escuela workshop in April.

**Group Presentation:** The form and content of the last 3 weeks of the semester have been left open, and will be determined on the basis of the work we study up to that point. We will divide the class up into groups, with each group responsible for planning a portion (probably half) of a class session.

**Short Paper:** A short essay will be due in the first half of the semester.

**Final Paper/Project:** A final assignment will be due at the end of the semester, in lieu of a final exam. It can be a traditional essay or follow a different format, to be worked out in consultation with me.

**Late papers:** Penalty for lateness on the short paper and final paper/project is **a third of a letter grade per day, including weekends** (A- becomes B+, C becomes C-, etc.). The clock starts counting at the end of the class in which the paper is due, and the change is rounded up (that is, if you hand it in 1 hour after the class in which it is due, that counts as 1 day late, 25 hours after it's due, 2 days late, and so on). Since all papers will be submitted through Blackboard, I'll take its recorded time of submission as definitive when calculating penalties.

**Academic integrity:** The most common form of cheating in academic situations is plagiarism. This occurs when you present someone else's work or ideas as your own, whether it is intentional or not. Plagiarism is unethical, a sign of poor scholarship, and in professional environments can result in litigation. It is your responsibility to know and understand Fordham's position on plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct as it is stated in the Student Handbook. If you are caught plagiarizing in a paper, you will receive 0 for it. If you are not sure whether something constitutes plagiarism, ask me.

**Disability services:** Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all students, with or without disabilities, are entitled to equal access to the programs and activities of Fordham University. If you believe that you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, coursework, or assessment of the object of this course, you may be entitled to accommodations. Please schedule an appointment to speak with someone at the Office of Disability Services by calling 718-817-0655 (Rose Hill - O'Hare Hall, Lower Level, or at Lincoln Center – Lowenstein 408).

In addition to speaking to someone in the Office of Disability Services, I encourage you also to come and see me to discuss your situation, if you feel comfortable doing so. I want everyone in this course to succeed. If there are circumstances that may affect your performance, it would be good for us to get together as soon as possible to come up with strategies for adapting assignments to meet both your needs and the course requirements.

**Inclusive language in the classroom and in papers:** Across the semester we'll constantly be referring to everyday experiences to illustrate points and support arguments, in discussion and in writing. When doing this, it's very easy to fall into stereotypical thinking and expressions that can cause offense to other people. For example, we might assume that romantic relationships are heterosexual, or that people of certain religious or ethnic backgrounds always have certain tastes or preferences. We often do this without any conscious thought or intention. Having grown up in another country, I know that I'm

not fully aware of racial implications of certain language in the context of the United States, and have in the past used words in the classroom that have been inappropriate.

So I ask that you reflect on your use of language, and endeavor to make it as inclusive as possible, in discussion and in writing. If anything anyone says, myself included (above all myself!), makes you feel uncomfortable, please let me know and I'll do my best to respond appropriately. There's no getting around the fact that a philosophy classroom can sometimes be a strange place to be in, but I'd like everyone in the room, without exception, to feel as at home here as possible.

**Further study:** This course is cross-listed in three programs - Philosophy, Comparative Literature, and Latin American and Latino Studies. If you like what we're learning this semester, you should consider doing further work in these disciplines, perhaps even majoring or minoring (and they work well together, so consider being a double major, or majoring in one and minoring in another). For more information, you can visit these webpages or contact the following faculty:

Philosophy: <http://www.fordham.edu/philosophy>  
Associate Chair, Rose Hill: Daryl Tress ([tress@fordham.edu](mailto:tress@fordham.edu))  
Associate Chair, Lincoln Center: Jeffrey Flynn ([jeflynn@fordham.edu](mailto:jeflynn@fordham.edu))

Comp. Lit.: [http://www.fordham.edu/info/21540/comparative\\_literature](http://www.fordham.edu/info/21540/comparative_literature)  
Co-Director, Rose Hill: James Kim ([bjakim@fordham.edu](mailto:bjakim@fordham.edu))  
Co-Director, Lincoln Center: Jordan Stein ([jstein10@fordham.edu](mailto:jstein10@fordham.edu))

LALS: [http://www.fordham.edu/info/23206/latin\\_american\\_and\\_latino\\_studies](http://www.fordham.edu/info/23206/latin_american_and_latino_studies)  
Associate Director, Rose Hill: Sara Lehman ([slehman@fordham.edu](mailto:slehman@fordham.edu))  
Director, Lincoln Center: Arnaldo Cruz-Malave ([cruzmalave@fordham.edu](mailto:cruzmalave@fordham.edu))

### Schedule:

Wk 1	Thurs Jan 18	Introduction and mechanics
2	Mon 22	Eduardo Mendieta, "From Colonial to Decolonial Pedagogy: From Bello to Freire" Linda Martín Alcoff, "Educating with a [De]colonial Consciousness"
	Thurs 25	Paulo Freire, <i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i> , Chapters 1 & 2 <b>Group A response papers due on Friday</b>
3	Mon 29	Freire, "Education as the Practice of Freedom", pp.37-78 [but read pp.1-36 if interested]
	Thurs Feb 1	Freire and Antonio Faundez, from <i>Learning to Question</i> <b>Group B response papers due on Friday</b>
4	Mon 5	Freire, <i>A Pedagogy of Hope</i> , Chapter 4
	Thurs 8	Walter Kohan, <i>The Inventive Schoolmaster</i> , Presentation, Chapters 1 & 2 <b>Group A response papers due on Friday</b>
5	Mon 12	Kohan, <i>The Inventive Schoolmaster</i> , Chapters 3 & 4

	Thurs 15	Kohan, <i>The Inventive Schoolmaster</i> , Chapter 5 & Epilogue <b>Group B response papers due on Friday</b>
6	Mon 19	No class – President’s Day
	Tues 20	University follows a Monday schedule Kohan, “Childhood, Education, and Philosophy: Notes on Deterritorialization”
	Thurs 22	Doris Sommer, <i>The Work of Art in the World</i> , Prologue and Chapter 1 <b>Group A response papers due on Friday</b>
7	Mon 26	Sommer, <i>The Work of Art in the World</i> , Chapter 2
	Thurs Mar 1	Sommer, <i>The Work of Art in the World</i> , Chapters 3 & 4 <b>Group B response papers due on Friday</b>
8	Mon 5	Sommer, <i>The Work of Art in the World</i> , Chapter 5
	Thurs 8	Material from <a href="https://puertoricosyllabus.com/">https://puertoricosyllabus.com/</a> (Details in class email) <b>First paper due</b> <b>Group A response papers due on Friday</b>
9	Mon 12	Healing Justice Podcast: Episode 13 “Blackness & Belonging” and Episode 13 “Practice” & Episode 15 “Decolonization and the Long View of History” and Episode 15 “Practice” Available at <a href="http://healingjustice.podbean.com">healingjustice.podbean.com</a>
	Thurs 15	Selections from Leanne Simpson, <i>Islands of Decolonial Love</i> Eve Tuck & K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization is not a Metaphor” José I. Fusté, “Unsettling Citizenship, Circumventing Sovereignty: Reexamining the Quandaries of Contemporary Anticolonialism in the United States through Black Puerto Rican Antiracist Thought” <b>First paper responses due</b> <b>Group B response papers due on Friday</b>
10	Mon 19	No set reading – class devoted to planning for the end of semester sessions.  <b>Thurs Mar 22 – Mon Apr 2: Spring and Easter breaks</b>
11	Thurs Apr 5	Sophia McClennen and Remy Maisel, “When I Mock You, I Make You Better: How Satire Works” <b>Group A response papers due on Friday</b>
	Sat 7	Errant adventure to Bard College

- 12      Mon 9              Class visit by Marlène Ramírez-Cancio (NYU Hemispheric Institute)  
 Explore the following webpages:  
<http://cmsimpact.org/report/laughtereffect/>  
[www.migraton.com.mx](http://www.migraton.com.mx)  
[www.somoselmuro.com.mx](http://www.somoselmuro.com.mx)
- Thurs 12              Class visit by Walter Kohan (State University of Rio de Janeiro)
- Fri 13-Sat 14        Hacer Escuela/Inventing School workshop  
 [please attend as many sessions as possible]
- Group B response papers due on Friday**
- 13      Mon 16              Class visit by Melissa Rosario (Center for Embodied Pedagogy, Puerto Rico)
- Thurs 19              Group Presentations
- 14      Mon 23              Group Presentations
- Thurs 26              Group Presentations
- 15      Mon 30              Group Presentations
- Thurs May 3        Group Presentations

**Final paper/project due in exam week.**