

(Chicago) Education and Democracy | syllabus

Location/Time	Course Overview
TBD	The University of Chicago’s educational philosophy has always been distinctive. John Dewey founded the Lab School in 1896 as a vehicle for his ‘hands-on’ pedagogical theories. And later, Robert Hutchins and Mortimer Adler revolutionized the undergraduate curriculum at Chicago by instituting their “Great Books” program, vestiges of which live on in the required Core sequences. Both educational approaches claimed to further and foster democratic citizenship, but they often seemed worlds apart in terms of both general philosophy and practical methodology.
Instructor	
Sarita Zaffini	
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Office Location	Do these two celebrated Chicago traditions really clash with each other? Can either of them provide a ‘democratic’ education? We will consider these questions while studying works by Dewey, Hutchins, and Adler. Their combined contributions will also help us to critically investigate whether the concept of “Great Ideas” has lasting relevance, either for present or future generations. The theme ‘equality’, for instance, is not included amongst Adler’s canonical “Great Ideas”. At the end of the course, we will form a class colloquium in order to judge both the “Great Ideas” and concept of ‘equality’: should we retain “Great Ideas” as an educational approach? And if we should, does ‘equality’ deserve a spot on the list?
TBD	
Office Hours	This course is about democracy and education. It is about the process by which we become better people and better citizens. And, last but not least, it is about becoming excellent students, here at Chicago and beyond.
TBD	

Required Texts

- Mortimer Adler* How to Read a Book
Paideia Proposal
The Great Ideas: A Syntopicon (Chalk)
- John Dewey* Democracy and Education
- Robert Hutchins* The Great Conversation (Chalk)
Higher Learning in America (Chalk)
“Alumni, Athletics and Academic Freedom” (Chalk)
- Harry Gideonse* Higher Learning: a reply to Hutchins (Chalk)

Grade Distribution

- 5% - summary/analysis and leadership of one class reading (assigned)
- 10% - summary/analysis of two 'great ideas' from *Syntopicon*
- 25% - final report on 'equality'
- 30% - paper on Dewey and Adler
- 30% - paper on the 'Great Ideas' program

Course Schedule

	Week One, Monday:	Introduction, no reading
Adler	Week One, Wednesday:	Introduction to <i>Syntopicon</i> (Chalk); <i>How to Read a Book</i> , Preface and Ch. 1
	Week Two, Monday:	<i>How to Read a Book</i> , Ch. 2-7
	Week Two, Wednesday:	<i>How to Read a Book</i> , Ch. 8-10
	Week Three, Monday:	<i>How to Read a Book</i> , Ch. 11-15
	Week Three, Wednesday:	<i>How to Read a Book</i> , Ch. 16-17, 19
	Week Four, Monday:	<i>How to Read a Book</i> , Ch. 18; <i>The Great Conversation</i> (Chalk)
	Week Four, Wednesday:	<i>How to Read a Book</i> , Ch. 20-21
Dewey	Week Five, Monday:	<i>Democracy and Education</i> , Preface and Ch. 1-5
	Week Five, Wednesday:	<i>Democracy and Education</i> , Ch. 6-7
	Week Six, Monday:	<i>Democracy and Education</i> , Ch. 8-12
	Week Six, Wednesday:	<i>Democracy and Education</i> , Ch. 13-14
	Week Seven, Monday:	<i>Democracy and Education</i> , Ch. 15-19
	Week Seven, Wednesday:	<i>Democracy and Education</i> , Ch. 20-22
	Week Eight, Monday:	<i>Democracy and Education</i> , Ch. 23-26
Adler	Week Eight, Wednesday:	<i>The Paideia Proposal</i>
	Week Nine, Monday:	<i>Syntopicon</i> : 'Justice' and 'Democracy' (Chalk) <i>Higher Learning in America</i> , Ch. I-II (Chalk)
Hutchins	Week Nine, Wednesday:	<i>Higher Learning in America</i> , Ch. III-IV (Chalk)
	Week Ten, Monday:	<i>Reply to Hutchins</i> ; "Alumni, Athletics" (Chalk)
	Week Ten, Wednesday:	Colloquium on 'Equality'