

Fall 2013: 05:300:306 Section 4 -- Educational Psychology

Class Meets: Monday 4:30-7:30 p.m. MU-114
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Required Texts:

O'Donnell, A. M., Reeve, J. M., & Smith, J. K. (2011). *Educational Psychology: Reflection for Action* (3rd Edition); Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley. Available at New Jersey Bookstore, Easton Avenue.

Overview

The purpose of the course is to introduce you to the theory and research that underlies instructional practice. Whether you plan to become a teacher or not, you can expect to learn about your own thinking skills and learning strategies. Most people do some kind of teaching (e.g., coaching, training in business, medical education, health education, parenting etc.). If you are planning to become a teacher, you will have further courses as part of the teacher preparation program that will provide you with practical experience (observation, teaching practice) in the classroom. My primary goal for this course is to have you reason about the psychological basis of behavior when learning and teaching. The title of the textbook, *Reflection for Action*, describes the intent of the course. I want you to be able to consider instructional issues and classroom problems with research-based ideas and to formulate action plans. The course will introduce competing theories of learning and motivation with a view to understanding how different theories may have different implications for decisions made in classrooms.

Research

Students enrolled in this section of the course will be invited to participate in a research study. This study will take place completely within the context of the course for which student participants are registered and will not require any additional work outside of what is typical for the course. The part of the course that will be of particular interest to the research study will occur during six course meetings spread throughout the semester for a total of 18 total hours of instruction. At the end of the course, participants in the study will be asked to complete a questionnaire related to their preferences for different forms of instruction presented in the course. Completion of the questionnaire will be voluntary and all responses will be kept anonymous.

Participation in this research study is voluntary. Any student enrolled in this section of Educational Psychology where the research will occur has the right to opt out of having their performance on examinations used for the purpose of research. Any student that does not wish to participate in the study will have two alternate options: **1.** The student could simply opt out of participating in the study and remain in the section of the course where the research will be conducted. If you select this option, you will still be required to participate within the requirements of the various instructional designs for the purpose of learning required course content. However, your performance in the course would not be used for the purposes of research. **2.** The student could withdraw from the section of the course where the research is being conducted and enroll in one of the several other sections of Educational Psychology.

Goals for the Course

In this course, you will be learning to connect abstract principles to concrete examples. The text is written to encourage “reflection for action” so that you can consider alternative strategies in the classroom. We have initial accreditation for our teacher education program from the *Teacher Education Accreditation Council* (TEAC). As part of the accreditation process, we make **four claims** about the totality of our teacher preparation program. The claims are as follows:

1. *Our students understand the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines they teach, especially as they relate to the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standard.*
2. *Our students demonstrate pedagogical content knowledge in their planning and design of instructional plans and their use of multiple assessment strategies to evaluate and promote student learning.*
3. *Our students demonstrate knowledge of learners and learning in accommodating diverse learners and those with special needs and in the design of learning environments that provide a supportive, safe, and respectful environment.*
4. *Our students demonstrate knowledge of appropriate professional practice in their use of effective communication in the classroom, knowledge of strategies for building relationships with parents to support student learning, and knowledge of opportunities to pursue professional growth.*

At the end of the course, you will be able to meet the following objectives and contribute to adherence to a number of claims made by our accreditation process:

- Describe and critique the major theories that seek to explain how humans learn. (TEAC Claim 3)
- Explain how human memory is thought to work and describe the implications of this understanding for how you would teach. (TEAC Claim 3)
- Characterize the role of motivation in classrooms and analyze the relationships between motivation and competence. (TEAC Claim 3)
- Describe various approaches to defining intelligence and explain the effects of these views on teachers and children. (TEAC Claim 3)
- Explain the implications of individual differences such as socioeconomic status, race, gender, and ability for classroom instruction. (TEAC Claim 2 and 3)
- Explain the rationale for a variety of practical instructional methods and choices such as cooperative learning, individual practice. (TEAC Claim 2)
- Understand various forms of assessment and their strengths and weaknesses (TEAC Claim 2)
- Understand your own strengths and weaknesses as a learner.

Class Format

A mixed method of instructional techniques will be the used as a means of instruction in this course. These techniques may include the use of lectures, class discussions, small group activities, cooperative group activities, individual activities, and the use of videos, web resources etc. The methods used to assess student performance will also be mixed. These methods may include written assessment including test items involving multiple choice, short answer, essay, or true/false responses. In addition, students will be expected to work together and independently in order to formulate solutions to case-based problems.

| <i>Required Activities</i> | <i>Due Date</i> | <i>Percent of Grade</i> |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Blog Entry | September 15th | 5% |
| Comprehension Assessment # 1 | September 30th | 5% |
| Problem Solution #1 | September 30th | 10% |
| Comprehension Assessment # 2 | October 14th | 5% |
| Problem Solution #2 | October 14th | 10% |
| Comprehension Assessment # 3 | October 28th | 5% |
| Problem Solution #3 | October 28th | 10% |
| Final Examination Part 1 (Take-home) | December 9th | 25% |
| Final Examination Part 2 | TBA | 25% |

How You Earn Your Grade

The evaluation of your performance in this course is based on a points system. It is possible for you to earn a total of one hundred points (100) for this course. This system allows you to monitor your progress as the semester progresses. Details of requirements are provided on succeeding pages. The following is a list of the number of points you will need in order to earn the associated grade.

| To Earn | A | B+ | B | C+ | C | D | F |
|---------------|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| Points Needed | 90+ | 87 | 80 | 77 | 70 | 60 | <60 |

Policies

Academic Integrity: I expect that you will comply with standards of academic integrity (that is, you will *not even think* about cheating) in this course. Most of you wish to become teachers or are considering becoming teachers. You have a professional responsibility to model the standards of professionalism and integrity you would hope for from your own students. If you need assistance in understanding an assignment or course content, please seek assistance from other appropriate resources or me. Assignments, however, should be your own work, except in cases where I have required a group product. The consequence for violating policies of academic integrity and other elements of the student code of conduct are serious and can have a tremendous negative impact on your academic progress and future career. You should not turn in the same work in two separate classes without the specific written approval of the faculty members involved. Leaving work until the last minute can increase the temptation to plagiarize work from journals or “borrow” friends’ work. You can avoid problems by getting your work done early. Exams are also your own work. The Office of Student Conduct supervises issues related to violations of academic integrity (see (<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>)). Please familiarize yourself with the university policy on academic integrity (<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>). Also see the PowerPoint slides on plagiarism on the course sakai website.

Make Up Exam: Make-up assessments/exams will NOT be scheduled unless you miss an exam because of religious observance or because of a properly documented illness. Proper documentation means that you provide a doctor's note that states you were unable to attend class on the specific day of the exam.

Attendance: Attendance at all regularly scheduled classes is required in accordance with the university's attendance policy. Your final grade will be reduced as indicated for excessive absence from course meetings (unless, of course, an absence is considered “excused” for an appropriate reason): 2 absences – reduction of a half a grade; 3 absences--reduction of 1 full grade; 4 absences--reduction of 2 full grades; 5 absences--failing grade in course. Excused absences include absences due to religious observance (please let me know *before* the holiday), travel on university business (e.g., sports team), and properly documented illnesses. Attendance will be monitored by a sign-in sheet that will be circulated at each course meeting. It is the responsibility of each student to be diligent about signing the attendance sheet at each class meeting to avoid any discrepancies related to their attendance.

Missed Classes: It is your responsibility to get notes, including handouts, from another student if you miss class. If you miss class when exams are returned, you will need to come to office hours to look at your exam.

Policy on Late Assignments: Assignments must be submitted on time. Late assignments will be accepted but the grade will be reduced.

Classroom Culture: Please turn all cell phones to **SILENT** during class. Please refrain from sending text messages during class. If you bring a laptop to class, I expect that you will use it for the purposes of the class ONLY. In other words, please do not use your laptop to surf the web or check email. If you like doing the puzzles in the Targum, please solve these puzzles **BEFORE** coming to class. I expect that all of us (instructor included) will treat one another with respect and have a pleasant learning environment (I cannot make promises about the heating/cooling issues!!).

Problems?

Personal problems: A variety of resources are available at the university to assist you with personal difficulties (e.g., stress, anxiety, bereavement, etc). Each campus has a counseling center and these services are free to you as a student. Please seek assistance as early as you can so you can maintain a good academic performance.

Academic problems. If you are having difficulties with this course, you should seek assistance from me during office hours or by making an appointment with me. The Learning Resource Centers on each campus also provide a variety of services to help you with your academic performance. If you are a student with special needs, you should contact the Office of Disability Services if you need accommodations in the course. The office can be found at <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>

Details of Assignments/Requirements/Policies

1. Sakai Blog Entry (5% of total grade):

You will complete a blog entry on Sakai of your reflections related to the course readings. Additionally, you must respond to at least two of your fellow classmates' blogs before the next course meeting. This assignment is intended to encourage you to carefully reflect upon the readings and consider the information from multiple perspectives.

2. Comprehension Assessments (15% of total grade):

The comprehension assessments are intended to test knowledge of course content presented in the lectures, readings, and/or group work.

Format: The assessments will consist of open-ended questions requiring a response in essay format.

Grading: Your grade will be based on the extent to which you are able to answer the questions and demonstrate competency in a particular area of content.

3. Problem Solutions: (30% of total grade).

These assignments will consist of students working independently or in small groups to formulate viable solutions to a problem outlined in a case provided by the instructor. This assignment is intended to encourage you to practice different aspects of problem solving while learning course content.

Grading: The specific requirements of the deliverable problem solution will be outlined in detail by a written description of the assignment and rubric provided by the instructor before the beginning of the assignment.

Please note: You must be present at course lectures and actively participate in discussions to earn credit towards cooperative problem solutions.

4. Take-home Final Examination (25% of total grade)

The take-home final exam will give students the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to apply course content to the solution of novel problems.

5. Final Examination (25% of total grade)

The final exam will be cumulative. Specifically, this means that any material that has been covered up to the point of the exam is fair game. Reasons for cumulative exams include an appeal to the cumulative nature of knowledge and a chance to capitalize on previous success.

Format: These examinations may include multiple choice, short answer, essay, true/false responses, application, or problem-solving items.

Grading: Your grade is based on the number of correct answers on the multiple-choice questions, combined with scores from the alternative format questions.

Please note: The final exam is to be scheduled according to the University schedule that allocates exam slots based on the period/day of the class and is still subject to change accordingly.

Tentative Schedule and Assigned Readings

| <i>DATE</i> | <i>LECTURE TOPIC</i> | <i>ASSESSMENT-DELIVERABLE</i> | <i>READING</i> |
|-------------|---|--|---|
| | | | All Readings are to be completed before the corresponding date. |
| 9/9 | Introduction Teachers and Teaching | | Chapter 1 Chapter 2 |
| 9/16 | Problem-based Learning Collaboration | Blog Entry Due Sunday 9/15 By Midnight | Newman (2005) Savery (2006) Johnson & Johnson (1992) |
| 9/23 | TBA | | TBA |
| 9/30 | TBA | Comprehension Assessment #1 Problem Solution #1 Due | TBA |
| 10/7 | TBA | | TBA |
| 10/14 | TBA | Comprehension Assessment #2 Problem Solution #2 Due | TBA |
| 10/21 | TBA | | TBA |
| 10/28 | TBA | Comprehension Assessment #3 Problem Solution #3 Due | TBA |
| 11/4 | Managing Learning in Classrooms Learning from Peers | | Chapter 6 Chapter 9 |
| 11/11 | Motivation and Engagement | | Chapter 10 |
| 11/18 | Motivation to Learn | | Chapter 11 |
| 11/25 | Individual Differences and Special Needs Issues in Diversity | | Chapter 12 Chapter 13 |
| 12/2 | Assessment for Learning Standardized and Standards-Based Assessments | | Chapter 14 Chapter 15 |
| 12/9 | Take-home Final Due/ Review for Final | | |
| TBA | Final Exam | Final Exam | Covers Chapters 1-15 |