

## 05:300:306:V1 – Educational Psychology: Principles of Classroom Learning

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Office Hours: By appointment (via phone, skype, in person)

### Course Description

The goal of this course is to introduce a psychological perspective to teaching and learning in classroom contexts through an overview of principles, issues, and related research in educational psychology. Discussions will focus mainly on explaining psychological principles and theories and considering how these theories help inform teachers and learners about the processes underlying learning, motivation, and instruction. This class will provide you with the “tools” for understanding and making informed decisions concerning aspects of student learning and instruction. To productively engage with these topics and educational issues, we will be applying psychological theories to real world settings and draw connections among theories. Here, it is critical to recognize that each of the topics under study is not isolated or independent. Rather, topics (e.g. cognition and motivation) are interconnected and important for understanding the “whole” student. For these reasons, we will also work to make connections and integrate topics across the semester.

### Learning Objectives

Over the course of the semester, you will be able to meet the following objectives:

- Describe, connect, contrast, and evaluate the primary theories that explain how students learn
- Explain student cognition and learning
- Explain the role of individual differences related to ability and intelligence, socioeconomic status, race, gender and ethnicity for learning
- Characterize the role of motivation for student engagement and learning
- Consider the implications of various instructional and assessment practices for learning, understanding, and motivation
- Apply principles of cognition, learning, individual differences and motivation to the classroom and relevant examples
- Apply principles of learning to yourself as a learner

### Course Readings

- 1) O'Donnell, A. M., Reeve, J. M., & Smith, J. K. (2012). *Educational Psychology: Reflection for Action* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley.

The text is available at Rutgers University Bookstore

- 2) Assigned articles and book chapters are available via the eCollege course website.

## Course Format

### Features of an Online Course

An online course differs from a traditional face-to-face course in a number of ways (adopted from Dr. Clark Chinn):

- A. A strong emphasis on student-driven learning. The instructor role is of overall facilitator and coordinator.
- B. Work at your convenience. But it is important to be engaged most days during the week. This is quite different from a traditional course, in which it is perfectly fine to prepare the day before, go to class the day of class, and then not think about the course the other five days a week.
- C. Focus on asynchronous rather than synchronous activities. (This course will officially be all asynchronous.)
- D. Students have to do much more of the integrative work. There is also a more disjointed, spread out feel to an online course. This is likely to support long-term memory development, though it may not feel like it at the time. Remember that spaced encounters with ideas is a powerful technique to enhance memory.

### Course Organization

This course will be conducted primarily as a discussion seminar. We will engage in weekly discussions related to the assigned readings. All seminar participants will be a member of a small group within which you will raise questions and discuss the topic of the week. You will be expected to make each session stimulating by keeping up with the readings, organizing your thoughts before each session, and participating actively in class discussions. Each week will culminate with a weekly reflection meant to connect your course goals and interests to the content and concepts from the week.

### Illustration of a Weekly Schedule

The asynchronous discussions require an extended time to reflect on what we have read. Here is a typical weekly schedule:

Tuesday a new topic begins → Read the course readings & course handouts Tuesday & Wednesday → Answer initial clarification questions → Thursday & Friday answer application questions and grapple with issues raised by your peers → Culminate the week by aiming to further advance the discussion (ex: draw connections) and respond to feedback and follow-up questions → Sunday & Monday prepare weekly reflect and the threaded-discussion is closed.

### Notes:

1. Some requirements and procedures may be adjusted as we find out how things are working this semester.
2. There will undoubtedly be some technological hiccups to work through the first two weeks.

## Course Requirements & Grading

The following assignments are designed to encourage you to think about the course material in a meaningful and reflective manner.

Participation & Weekly Questions/Posts	25%
Weekly Reflections	20%
3 Quizzes	30%
Final Paper	25%

90+ A      87 B+      80 B      77 C+      70 C      60 D      <60 F

### **Active Class Participation & Discussion of Readings** **25% of final grade**

Each week we will discuss the assigned psychological theories and principles presented in the assigned readings and via course handouts. We will focus on:

- Clarifying understanding of the readings. For example, this includes questions clarifying key terms and principles of the theory, exploring central ideas, and providing specific brief examples that illustrate the terms.
- Discussing applications and implications of the ideas we have read about. This can also involve drawing personal connections to past experience as a learner, classroom observer, or tutor.
- Summarize key conclusions and ideas made by your group during the week.

Each week, you should contribute at least 5 entries to the discussion threads (e.g., 3-4 individual reflective comments; 1-2 responses members of your group). In your entries, you can post questions or reflections that are related to the week's readings. In addition, some of your entries should be in response to the questions and comments posted by your fellow group members.

Our shared criteria for evaluating class' contributions are below and focus both on the number of contributions as well as the quality of your contributions.

- Frequent posts that are elaborated and relevant to the discussion
- Reflections and questions that advance the discussion by interpreting, analyzing, applying, and connecting.
- Go beyond repeating or agreeing with the information presented by others. Be critical in seeing both strengths and weaknesses.
- Support examples, experiences & opinions with reasons and ideas from theories & readings.
- Clear and relevant connections are made back to the readings and main ideas are reflected in the readings.

### **Weekly Journals** **20% of final grade**

Each week you will submit a one-page personal reflection in your journal via ecollege. These journals are due on Monday (at the end of the week's topic). Your personal reflection should draw connections between your course interests/goals (from Week 1) and the theories, concepts & principles covered that week. While this connection is the primary focus of the weekly reflection, you can also consider the following topics: Elaborate on a question, reading, or discussion thread from your group discussion, connect among theories, draw applications to a relevant context, summarize main ideas from the week with thoughtful reflection. The focus of the weekly journal is synthesis, elaboration, and reflection.

## **Quizzes**

**30% each of final grade (15% each)**

There will be three quizzes across the term. These assessments will focus on the theories and principles covered in readings and online discussion. Questions require that you apply, contrast, or explain psychology-related concepts. Exams will include multiple choice and/or short answer. Quizzes will be taken at the close of a week, prior to beginning the next topic. For instance, the first quiz will be taken at the close of Cognitive Views of Learning, June 17 or June 18.

## **Paper**

**25% of final grade**

There will be one assigned paper. The intent of this class requirement is your demonstrating mastery of topics and issues related to the study of educational psychology. The topics will require that you synthesize and apply psychological theories to your developing ideas. The paper will be 7 pages long.

The paper will involve describing your developing take on how students learn. As part of this discussion for either topic you will need to provide the connection between your ideas related to classroom instruction and theories of educational psychology. More detail about this assignment as well as scoring rubrics will be provided via eCollege. The paper deadline is July 29<sup>th</sup>. All papers will be submitted to 'turnitin' prior to being graded. If you need an extension of time please contact me before the date when the assignment is due.

## **Academic Integrity**

As specified in the University's Academic Integrity policy, it is critical that each of us "properly acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, or words of others." This ensures that "everyone is given proper credit for his or her ideas, words, results, and other scholarly accomplishments." This means that copying or using any portion of another student's or researcher's paper without directly quoting the source material is considered against the honor code. In addition, all submitted work should be your own, without the aid of unsanctioned materials or unsanctioned collaboration (e.g., cheating). If you have any questions regarding these policies (e.g. what is an acceptable degree of collaboration, how and when to use and cite secondary sources, or how to use quoted material), please consult with me and see the university's policy on academic integrity (Quotations and resources cited from: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>).

## **Netiquette**

This is drawn from Palloff, R. M., & Pratt, K. (1999). *Building learning communities in cyberspace*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, p. 101.

- a. Check the discussion frequently and respond appropriately and on the subject.
- b. Focus on one subject per message and use pertinent, informative, and not-too-long subject titles
- c. Capitalize words only to highlight a point or for titles. Capitalizing otherwise is generally viewed as SHOUTING.
- d. Be professional and careful with your online interaction
- e. Cite all quotes, references, and sources.
- f. When posting a long message, it is generally considered courteous to warn readers at the beginning of the message that is a lengthy post.
- g. Use humor carefully. The absence of face-to-face cues can cause humor to be misinterpreted as criticism or flaming (angry, antagonistic criticism). Feel free to use emoticons such as :- ) or ;- ) to let others know that you're being humorous.

## Norms

This is an example of norms for participating in constructive controversies. Smith, K., Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1981). Can conflict be constructive? Controversy versus concurrence seeking in learning groups. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 73, 651-663.

1. I am critical of ideas, not people.
2. I remember that we are all in this together.
3. I encourage everyone to participate.
4. I listen to everyone's ideas, even if I do not agree with them.
5. I restate what someone has said if it is not clear.
6. I try to understand both sides of the issue.
7. I first bring out all the ideas, then I put them together.

Although written for younger students, this is not a bad way for all of us to start. At the same time, however, let's add these norms:

Critical to the advance of knowledge are:

- a. Criticizing ideas, and having our ideas criticized by others
- b. Taking up criticism
- c. Exploring ideas without fully believing them, or without believing them at all.

## Course Outline and Important Dates

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
Week 1	May 28	Introduction	Chapter 1 Course Syllabus  <i>Task: Course Goals &amp; Interests</i>
Week 2	June 4	Behaviorism & Social learning theory	Chapter 5; Chapter 8 (pp. 254-261)
Week 3	June 11	Cognitive views of learning	Chapter 7 Recommended reading: Pashler et al., 2009  <i>Quiz #1 - June 17/18.</i>
Week 4	June 18	Complex Cognition: Experts & Novices Self-Regulated Learning & Metacognition	How People Learn (NRC), Chapter 2  Chapter 11 (pp. 397-401 (SRL)) Pintrich & Young, 1993
Week 5	June 25	Constructivist views of learning	Piaget: Chapter 3 (pp. 72 -75 until stages; pp. 83-85); Chapter 9 (pp. 300-302)  Vygotsky: Chapter 3 (pp. 85 - 93) Chapter 8 (pp.268-285); Chapter 9 (pp.302-303)  <i>Recommended: Palincsar (1998) - comparison.</i>
Week 6	July 2	Teaching for conceptual change  Complex Cognition: Transfer	Bruning, Schraw, Norby, & Ronning, 2004 (pp.340 - 346); Chapter 8 (pp. 262 - 268)  <i>Quiz #2 - July 8/9</i>
Week 7	July 9	Individual differences (Gender, race and ethnicity; ability)	Abbeduto, 2006; Davidson, 1996; Villegas & Lucas, 2007 Chapter 5 (pp. 184 - 185; 5.9)  <i>Recommended: Weinstein, et al., 2004</i>  Chapter 12 Select 1 from this set: Boaler, 2006; Cone, 2006; Herrenkohl, 2006; Hyland, 2006; Rubin, 2006; Yonezawa & Jones, 2006.  <i>Recommended on Sakai: Pashler et al., 2009</i>
Week 8	July 16	Student Motivation in the Classroom	Chapter 10; Chapter 11 (skip pp. 397-401 (SRL)) Engaging Schools (NRC), (pp. 44 - 59)

			Select 1 from this set: Interest: Renninger & Hidi, 2002 Achievement Goals: Brophy, 2004 Self-efficacy: Usher, 2009  <i>Quiz #3 - July 22/23</i>
Week 9	July 23	Instruction (Week 1): Planning & teacher-centered	Chapter 2 (pp.48 - 59) How People Learn (NRC), Chapter 7  <i>Paper Due July 29.</i>
Week 10	July 30	Instruction (Week 2) Student-centered	Chapter 9  Barron, 2000 - w/focus on results (pp.403-405; scenes from 2 contrasting groups pp. 407-408; pp. context 410-412; <b>results pp. 415-429</b> )

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