

Course Title	Understanding the Adult Learner 3 Credits
Course Number	15:233:543
Instructor's Name	Tom Heaney, Ph.D. Principal, Adult Learning Unleashed • ALU Consulting Emeritus Professor • National Louis University, Chicago
Semester and Year	Summer, 2018
Instructor's Office	Adult Learning Unleashed 4300 North Marine Drive • 1204 Chicago, IL 60613
Instructors Phone	773-472-0181
Virtual Office Hours	Synchronous: chat, email, Skype—by appointment Asynchronous: submit questions to virtual office
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Course Description	Understanding the Adult Learner (15:233:543) has the overall goal of guiding you through an exploration of the multiple dimensions of adult learners by immersing you in key theories, concepts related to adult learners and practices that are appropriate for meeting the needs of this population. This course is designed to give you the opportunity to investigate the physiological, psychological, and psychosocial changes in the adult life span and the implications these changes have for adult learning.
Course Learning Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the learning needs and characteristics of diverse adult learners in the varied social contexts and environments in which adult learning occurs, including non-formal, informal, and formal education • Be able to critically analyze and reflect upon the adult education literature concerning adult learner characteristics and participation, adult development and adult learning • Be able to use adult learning and development theories to reflect on and analyze teaching and learning
Prerequisite(s):	None
Permission(s)	None



Text	<p>Merriam, Sharan B., and Bierema, Laura L. (2014) <i>Adult Learning: Linking Theory to Practice</i>. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.</p> <p>Newman, Michael. (1999) <i>Maeler's Regard: Images of Adult Learning</i>. Sydney: Victor Stewart. Book can be downloaded free from Mike Newman's website.</p>
Course Overview	<p>This is a hands-on course and your participation in all activities is as important as completion of the readings and formal assignments. You should do the assigned reading first, listen to any posted lectures second, and then complete the weekly activities. It is very important to stay on schedule so please put aside time on the weekend to do the reading ahead of the week. There generally are multiple steps to doing the weekly activity and some depend on your classmates, so you will need to stay on schedule.</p> <p>The course is designed to be an adult learning experience. This will give you opportunities to experience and reflect on the adult learning theories in real time and think about how they relate to practice. This is my first time teaching this class fully online and for many of you this will be your first semester taking a fully online class. Consequently, it is important that we do our best to make the technology work for us and provide feedback and ask questions when there are problems so that we can engage in problem solving quickly and (hopefully) efficiently.</p>
Assignments	<p>Class participation: You are expected to complete all reading assignments, fully and professionally participate in the online discussions and activities, and submit assignments on or before their due dates. All assignments should be submitted through the course website. All written work should have a cover page, be double spaced, use Times New Roman 12 pt. font, and include a properly formatted reference page using APA style. For more information about APA and guidance on formatting, visit https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/.</p>

Assignment 1

Online discussions/Weekly activities (70% of overall grade):

Weekly activities are designed to help you enhance your understanding of assigned texts, draw connections between them and your current experiences, critically analyze their relevance to adult education contexts, and synthesize across topics from week to week. You are expected to participate fully in all weekly assigned discussions/activities. The rubric below details how your participation will be assessed. The learning benefits of participating in weekly activities are cumulative. Although assessment points for each individual weekly discussion/activity are few, your diligent participation adds up to your being successful in completing all assignments and fully benefitting from the course.

	Below Expectations	Average	Above Average	Superior	%
Content Quality of Posts and responses to Padlets	Post does not relate to the prompt or is missing.	Post responds to prompt but ideas are not stated clearly and/or fully elaborated.	Post responds to the prompt and ideas are stated relatively clearly; ideas are elaborated. There is little or no reference to the text or other sources	Post responds to the prompt, ideas are stated clearly and are well elaborated, and connections are draw to the text and/or outside references.	40%
Responses to classmates	Does not respond to posts from classmates.	Responds to fewer than required number of classmates.	Responds to required number of classmates, but response is not particularly meaningful or substantive.	Responds to required number of classmates in meaningful and substantive ways.	20%

	Timeliness	Does not submit assignment on time	N/A	N/A	Submitted assignment on time.	10%
	Insights and relevance of responses	Little or no contribution to knowledge in an area of inquire	Some relevance and insight, but minimal	Relevance and insight, but not well articulated or defended with a rationale	Significant relevance and insight	30%

Assignment 2

Book Review of Maeler's *Regard: Images of Adult Learning* (30% of overall grade):

In learning we make meaning. In making meaning we make choices. These choices can be moral and political ones. The author argues that learning and teaching are not just means by which we achieve personal growth, but tools to be used in the struggle for social justice.

This original and challenging book examines the mysterious and complex process of learning. The text contains:

- Vivid and compelling images—of a painting, a climb, the surf, a kidnapping, New York, and a long and exhilarating night in a jazz club
- Descriptions of people—on a picket line in South Africa, in the brick kilns of north Pakistan, in a women's refuge in Sydney, in a theater in London, and on an oil tanker in the Persian Gulf
- Stories and case studies—of resistance, fear, success, and persistent application
- Explanation and analysis of the ideas of activists, educators, philosophers, and social theorists.

The book is written in an accessible style. It covers a range of themes, including experience, critical and uncritical thinking, consciousness, forms of power and social control, social movements, civil society, social action, resistance and protest, learning as social beings, and learning as moral beings.

In this assignment, you are asked to write a book review suitable for an academic publication, approximately 1000–1200 words. You should read the book throughout the semester, with the final review being **due at the end of the term on week 11**.

	Below Expectations	Average	Above Average	Superior
Reflects an understanding of the text	Shows little comprehension of the text	Shows a minimal understanding of the	Shows some understanding of the themes and	Shows a clear understanding of the themes and purpose

Weight
50%

			text	content of the text	of the text	
	Engages the text critically	Does not engage the text critically	Shows a minimal critique of the text	Engages with the sections of the text in a critical manner	Presents a critical analysis of the text	20%
	Draws reasonable conclusions for practice	Does not relate the text to practice	Draws some conclusion for practice, but without a rationale	Draws some conclusions for practice, but with limited rationale	With rational argument, draws relations to practice	20%
	Follows APA style for citations and references	Does not include citations and references or use APA style.	Includes minimal references or misuses APA style.	Uses APA style and provides some citations.	Includes ample citations and references and uses APA style.	