EDEP 652: Processes of Learning and Development

M. Layne Kalbfleisch

Class Location: Krasnow Institute Lecture Room
Office: 206 Krasnow Institute
Office Hours: Tuesday 2-4 p.m. (please make appointment by email)
Phone: 703.993.3516
Email: mkalbfle@gmu.edu

Course Description
This advanced course explores different theoretical perspectives of learning and cognitive development. It focuses on historical and contemporary theories of learning and cognitive development and examines current research and its application in educational settings.

Prerequisite
EDEP 550 or permission of instructor

Course Objectives

- Students will develop a reflective, psychological, and developmental perspective on the learner and on the teaching/learning process
- Students will gain an understanding of the research/inquiry process and how teachers and educational psychologists go about answering questions regarding the teaching and learning process
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of issues and controversies in developmental research and theory and implications for child-rearing, education, and self-understanding
- Students will become familiar with theoretical perspectives on cognitive development and learning and their implications for classroom instruction
- Students will become familiar with various topics within the areas of memory, skill learning, language, reasoning, and problem solving
- Students will develop an understanding of the kinds of accommodations that are appropriate for the learning and developmental needs of culturally diverse and exceptional learners
- Students will acquire knowledge in evaluating research findings and theoretical perspectives
- Students will apply the major principles and concepts derived from developmental psychology (a) to the improvement of the instructional, counseling, and developmental process in relation to schooling and (b) to pressing societal and educational problems
- Students will use theoretical perspectives to describe and analyze specific cases of cognitive development in the school context
- Students will develop and reinforce their critical thinking, problem solving, oral, and writing skills
- Students will use the writing style described in the Fifth Edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) for writing term and research papers
Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organization

The program goals are consistent with the following Learner-centered psychological principles (APA Division 15) outlined by the American Psychological Association Presidential Task Force in Education.

- Principle 1: The Nature of Learning Process
- Principle 2: Goals of the Learning Process
- Principle 3: Construction of Knowledge
- Principle 4: Strategic Thinking
- Principle 5: Thinking about Thinking
- Principle 6: Context of Learning
- Principle 10: Developmental Influences on Learning
- Principle 11: Social Influences on Learning
- Principle 12: Individual Differences on Learning
- Principle 13: Learning and Diversity

For a detailed description of each principle see reference below.


Nature of Course Delivery

The course is structured around readings, reflections on those readings, class projects/activities, and participation on Blackboard. This course will be taught using lectures, discussions, and relevant group activities. Student participation and involvement is crucial for making the course successful for everyone.

Texts and Readings/ Required


Texts and Readings/ Optional


Performance Expectations - It is expected that each student will do the following:
(1) Read all assigned materials for the course.
(2) Participate in classroom activities that reflect critical reading of materials.
(3) Complete in-class and homework assignments.
(4) Read, critique, and present an assigned empirical research paper in class.
(5) Write a literature review paper on a topic related to learning and development theories. Instructor’s approval is required.
Course Requirements

I. Observation and Qualitative Report
   Students will be asked to observe two individuals who are either infants, children, or adolescents, in order to determine and discuss levels of development (e.g., emotional, social or cognitive) and learning and record their reactions. Students will share their findings with the other students in class and provide a written report to the instructor. (2 separate assignments) (15 points per assignment x 2 = 30 points)

II. Research Paper
   Students will be asked to write a scholarly review on one learning-development theory (e.g., social cognitive, information processing, constructivism, etc.). The paper should include a summary of the key constructs and the usefulness of the theory and relevant research in an area of interest to educators and policy makers. Research papers must be handed in on time and must adhere to the APA Publication Manual Guidelines. (30 points for paper + 10 for peer review = 40 points)

III. Article Critique and Presentation
   Students will critique, present in class and submit critical reviews of one empirical article or literature review related to some aspect of student learning/development. (10 points for written critique + 10 points for presentation = 20 points)

IV. Class Participation and Attendance Policy
   Because of the importance of lecture and discussion in the total learning experience, Students are encouraged to both attend and participate in class regularly. Attendance, punctuality, preparation, and active contribution to small and large group efforts are essential. These elements of behavior will reflect the professional attitude implied in the course goals and will account for 10% of the course grade. With reference to the evaluation schema described later in this syllabus, this percentage is equivalent to a full letter grade. If students miss a class, they must notify the instructor (preferably in advance) and are responsible for completing all assignments and readings for the next class. (10 points)
## Rubric for Participation and Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENT</th>
<th>LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>The student attends all classes, is on time, is prepared and follows outlined procedures in case of absence, the student actively participates and supports the members of the learning group and the members of the class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The student attends all classes, is on time, is prepared and follows outlined procedures in case of absence; the student makes active contributions to the learning group and class.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The student is on time, prepared for class, and participates in group and class discussions. The student attends all classes and if an absence occurs, the procedure outlined in this section of the syllabus is followed.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>The student is late for class. Absences are not documented by following the procedures outlined in this section of the syllabus. The student is not prepared for class and does not actively participate in discussions.</td>
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### Evaluation Schema

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation Assignments</td>
<td>2 X 15pts=30 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critique and Presentation of a research Article</td>
<td>20 pts. (10 oral/10 written)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>30 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Review of Research Paper</td>
<td>10 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation and Attendance</td>
<td>10 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
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</tbody>
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Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

- **A+**: 98-100%
- **A**: 93-97.49%
- **A-**: 90-92.49%
- **B+**: 88-89.49%
- **B**: 83-87.49%
- **B-**: 80-82.49%
- **C**: 70-79.49%
- **F**: below 70%
Note

• All written assignments must be typed and must follow APA format
• Grading on written work will take into account the following factors:
  • quality of written work
  • knowledge of content area
  • adherence to requirements of assignment.

*As a graduate student, it is expected that all of your work will be turned in on the assigned dates. A late assignment is subject to a penalty of 10% of the award for every day that it is overdue*

Honor Code

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of George Mason University and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the members of George Mason University, have set forth the following code of honor. Any individual who is caught in the act of cheating, attempting to cheat, plagiarizing, or stealing will be brought forth before a council of their peers. In the event that the individual is found guilty, he or she will be punished accordingly. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.

Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See http://mail.gmu.edu and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

Statement Regarding Disabilities

This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability please inform your instructor and provide required documentation as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made. Documentation can be obtained from the Disability Resource Center, SUB I (703)-993-2427.

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

Statement of Expectations

The College of Education and Human Development expects that all students abide by the following:

Commitment to the profession
Commitment to honoring professional ethical standards
Commitment to key elements of professional practice
Commitment to being a member of a learning community
Commitment to democratic values and social justice

See for details of these 5 expectations: http://gse.gmu.edu/facultystaffres/profdisp.htm
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>ASSIGNED READING/ ACTIVITY</th>
<th>WORK DUE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/25</td>
<td>Introduction to Processes of Learning and Development</td>
<td>Scientist in the Crib (SIC) CH 1-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/1</td>
<td>Piaget &amp; Vygotsky</td>
<td>SIC CH 3</td>
<td>WebQuest on Concepts of Infant Development</td>
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<td>The Computational Baby</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What Children Learn about People</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What Children Learn about Things</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/8</td>
<td>What Children Learn about Language</td>
<td>SIC CH 4</td>
<td>Article Search and Selection for Critique Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/15</td>
<td>What Scientists have learned about Children’s Minds</td>
<td>SIC CH 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/22</td>
<td>What Scientists have learned about Children’s Brains</td>
<td>SIC CH 6-7</td>
<td>Child Observation #1 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/1</td>
<td>Article Critique</td>
<td>Presentations I</td>
<td>Article Critique Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/8</td>
<td>Article Critique</td>
<td>Presentations II</td>
<td>Article Critique Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/15</td>
<td>Spring Recess</td>
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<td>3/22</td>
<td>Experience &amp; Education</td>
<td>Dewey CH 1-4</td>
<td>Blackboard Assignment</td>
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<td>Approve topics for Research Paper</td>
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<td>Child Observation #2 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/29</td>
<td>Experience &amp; Education</td>
<td>Dewey CH 5-8</td>
<td>Blackboard Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>Learning and Developing -or- Developing Learning?</td>
<td>Adult Learning and Development (ALD) CH 1-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/12</td>
<td>Sociocultural Influences on Adult Learning and Developing Metacognition</td>
<td>ALD CH 4 (pp 56-62) &amp; CH 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading Material</td>
<td>Action/Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/19</td>
<td>Adult Intelligence (Cognitive): Practical Intelligence and Tacit Knowledge</td>
<td>ALD CH 6, 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/26</td>
<td>Adult Intelligence (Emotional): Forgiveness Education</td>
<td>ALD CH 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/3</td>
<td>Last Class</td>
<td>Peer Review of Papers</td>
<td>3 drafts of paper + abstract</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/10</td>
<td>Final</td>
<td>Final Paper Due via Electronic submission</td>
<td>Submit final paper to <a href="mailto:mkalbfle@gmu.edu">mkalbfle@gmu.edu</a> by 7:10p.m.</td>
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Some Possible Journals for Choosing Articles for the Critique Assignment:

- Instructional Science
- Journal of Educational Psychology
- Journal of Experimental Education
- Educational Researcher
- American Educational Research Journal
- Child Development
- Memory and Cognition