

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY**

**EDEP 652
Process of Learning and Development
Fall 2009
Wednesday 4:30pm – 7:10pm
Innovation Hall Room 319**

PROFESSOR

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

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

Prerequisites: EDEP 550 or permission of instructor

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY

This course is structured around readings, reflections on readings, class projects, and writing assignments. The course will be taught using lectures, discussions, and small and large group activities. Student participation and involvement is crucial.

The course is technology-enhanced using Blackboard (<http://courses.gmu.edu>). Students are responsible for any information posted on the Blackboard site. For assistance with Blackboard students may email courses@gmu.edu, call (703) 993-3141, or go to Johnson Center Rm 311 (office hours: 8:30am-5pm). For general technical assistance, students may call (703) 993-8870 or go to the counter in Innovation Hall.

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 Sixth 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.

American Psychological Association (1997). *Learner-Centered Psychological Principles: Guidelines for the Teaching of Educational Psychology in Teacher Education Programs*. Retrieved October 14, 2002 from <http://www.apa.org>

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

Recommended Text

American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Additional Readings (to be updated)

Alexander, P. A. (2006). *Psychology in learning and instruction*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall. (Chps 4 and 11).

Alexander, P. A., Murphy, P. K., & Woods, B. S. (1996). Of squalls and fathoms: Navigating the seas of educational innovation. *Educational Researcher*, 25(3), 31-36.

Mayer, R. E. (1996). Learners as information processors: Legacies and limitations of educational psychology's second metaphor. *Educational Psychologist*, 31, 151-161.

Prawat, R. S. (1996). Constructivisms, modern and postmodern. *Educational Psychologist*, 31, 218-225.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

It is expected that student will:

- (1) Read all assigned materials before coming to class.
- (2) Participate in classroom activities that reflect critical reading of materials.
- (3) Complete all assignments.
- (4) Lead a class discussion on a topic related to learning and development.
- (5) Conduct a literature review and prepare a research proposal.
- (6) Attend each class session.

COURSE EVALUATION

A. Attendance and Participation

Because of the importance of lecture and class discussions to students' learning experience, each student is expected to come to class on time and participate. Additionally, assigned readings are to be completed before class. Attendance, punctuality, preparation, and active contribution to small and large group activities are essential. These elements of behavior reflect the professional attitude implied in the course goals. In the event of a missed class, the professor should be notified, preferably in advance, and the student is responsible for any assignments and materials discussed that day. (See rubric for attendance and participation in Appendix A).

B. Student Led Discussion

Students will prepare and lead a discussion related on a topic related to their final paper. Each student will be responsible for assigning reading for the class, presenting a brief overview of key points related to the topic, and facilitating an activity and or group discussion related to the topic. Students are to meet with the instructor at least two weeks in advance of their assigned class period and are to make the assigned readings available to the class no later than one week before the assigned class period.

C. Journal/Reflection on Content

Students will maintain a journal throughout the semester in which they will record responses to structured questions and activities as well as reflections on how course readings and topics are related to their own thinking and area of research. Students are expected to have at least one entry per week. Journals should be typed and follow the paper format guidelines, including use of APA style. Journals will be collected periodically throughout the semester. In addition to the typed journal, students may also submit supporting materials that represent developments in their thinking (e.g., concept map). Note: Students may be asked to post some structured responses on Blackboard.

D. Final Paper Preparation Assignments

To support students' preparation of the final paper, students will submit materials throughout the semester including:

Statement of Research Topic. Typed statement of general area of research interest and reason why this area is important to you. (1 page typed-double-spaced)

In-process Literature Review Table. Students must develop a literature review for the research proposal. The in-progress table should demonstrate the progress you are making toward completing your assignment.

Paper Update: Purpose/Research Question(s), Rationale, & Tentative Method. Statement of the purpose of your study your research question(s), and a rationale for why this research should be conducted. You must also include an outline/list of the remainder of your research plan including methods and procedures.

E. Final Paper

Students are to write a research proposal on a topic related to Cognition, Motivation, and Development. Depending on the student's program and professional goals, alternative assignments may also be discussed. Paper format and topics should be chosen in consultation with the instructor and submitted to the instructor in writing by September 16, 2009. There will be assignments throughout the semester to support the development of the final paper. ***The final paper is due by 4:30pm Wednesday, December 12, 2009. Late papers will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made.***

F. Peer Review

All students will submit a complete draft of their final paper on Wednesday, December 2, 2009. This paper will be read and reviewed by a peer. The written peer review is due Wednesday, December 9, 2009. Additional information and guidelines will be provided.

The requirements for this class will be weighted in the following manner:

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Attendance and Participation | 10% |
| Class Led Discussion | 20% |
| Journal/Reflection on Content | 25% |
| Final Paper Preparation | 10% |
| Final Paper | 25% |
| Peer Review | 10% |

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS:

All students must abide by the following:

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See gse.gmu.edu for a listing of these dispositions.
- Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.

Please note that:

- "Plagiarism encompasses the following:
 1. Presenting as one's own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgment.

2. Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgment.”

(from Mason Honor Code online at <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>)

- Paraphrasing involves taking someone else’s ideas and putting them in your own words. When you paraphrase, you need to cite the source.
 - When material is copied word for word from a source, it is a direct quotation. You must use quotation marks (or block indent the text) and cite the source.
 - Electronic tools (e.g., SafeAssign) may be used to detect plagiarism if necessary.
 - Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are treated seriously and may result in disciplinary actions.
- 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.
 - 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.

ADDITIONAL CLASS POLICIES

Paper Format

Research papers should be submitted in APA format with 1 inch margins on all sides, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, include a separate title page, and be proofread for spelling, grammar, and clarity errors. *Papers not following this format may be automatically reduced by up to a letter grade.*

Late Assignments

Assignments are due at the start of class on the assigned due date. If an assignment must be turned in late or outside of class, students may give the assignment to me in person, leave the assignment in my faculty mailbox (Robinson A Room 309), or email the document. If an assignment is left in my mailbox, send an email to indicate that it is there. ***DO NOT*** slide assignments under my office door. Assignments submitted this way will not be accepted or graded and will be considered missing. Late assignments will be marked down by half a letter grade for each day the assignment is late.

Computer Use in Class

During class time, please refrain from checking email or conducting activities on the computer that are not directly related to the class session.

Class Environment

Help to foster a positive learning environment by respecting the opinions and contributions of others. Also, cell phones should be turned off or put on silent mode so as to not effect the learning of those around you.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

| Date | Topic | Readings | Other Assignments |
|-------------|---|---|--|
| Wed 9/2 | Introduction & Course Overview | Alexander et al. (1996) | |
| Wed 9/9 | Historical Overview and Planning for the Future | HEP: Berliner (2006) HEP: Calfee (2006) | |
| Wed 9/16 | Perspectives on Child, Adolescent, and Adult Development | Read one of the following: HEP: Paris et al. (2006) HEP: Wigfield et al. (2006) HEP: Smith & Reio (2006) | Initial Statement of Research Topic |
| Wed 9/23 | The Nature of Knowledge & the Process of Knowing | Alexander (2006) Chapter 4 Read one of the following: Prawat (1996) Mayer (1996) | |
| Wed 9/30 | The Nature of Knowledge & the Process of Knowing Instructional Applications | Alexander (2006) Chapter 11 <i>TBA</i> | Preliminary Literature Review Table |
| Wed 10/7 | | | |
| Wed 10/14 | | | |
| Wed 10/21 | | | |
| Wed 10/28 | | | |
| Wed 11/4 | | | Final Paper Update: Purpose/Research Questions, Rationale, and Method |
| Wed 11/11 | | | |
| Wed 11/18 | | | |
| Wed 11/25 | <i>NO CLASS—THANKSGIVING</i> | | |
| Wed 12/2 | | | Final Paper for Peer Review |
| Wed 12/9 | Wrap-up and Conclusions | | Review of Peer Paper |
| Wed 12/16 | | | Final Paper due by 4:30pm |

Appendix A

Attendance & Participation Rubric

Student participation is imperative to student learning and a successful class. The following rubric outlines how student participation scores will be determined in this course. All students are expected to demonstrate specific characteristics and actions throughout the semester. The quality and quantity of these actions will determine the points assigned for participation.

Students are expected to:

- a) Be punctual, present (in mind and body), and well prepared for class.
- b) Participate fully in class activities and assignments – take an active part in small and large group discussions (without dominating the conversations) and pay attention to class lectures.
- c) Make insightful comments, which are informed by required readings and demonstrate reflection on those readings. Specifically, students should come to class with questions, comments, and thoughts on the current readings.
- d) Treat class activities, group discussions, and class discussions as important components of the course, showing respect for fellow classmates and the course material.

Each of these criteria will be assessed on a 5-point scale.

- 5 = Student *consistently* demonstrated the criterion throughout the semester.
- 4 = Student *frequently* demonstrated the criterion throughout the semester.
- 3 = Student *intermittently* demonstrated the criterion throughout the semester.
- 2 = Student *rarely* demonstrated the criterion throughout the semester.
- 1 = Student *did not* demonstrate the criterion throughout the semester.

Your participation grade will be calculated as the sum of points for each criterion.

| Criterion | Score |
|-----------|-------|
| a) | |
| b) | |
| c) | |
| d) | |
| TOTAL | _____ |