

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

**EDEP 652
Learning and Development
Spring 2011
Thursdays 4:30pm – 7:10pm**

PROFESSOR:

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This advanced course explores different perspectives about 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.

Prerequisite: 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.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Students will develop a reflective, psychological, and developmental perspective on the learner and on the teaching/learning process
- Students will gain further understandings of the research/inquiry process and how teachers and educational psychologists go about handling issues related to school achievement
- Students will become familiar with various topics within the areas of competence
- 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 experience in evaluating research findings and theoretical perspectives
- Students will use theoretical perspectives to describe and analyze achievement issues 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 the 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

Elliot, A.J. & Dweck, C.S. *Handbook of Competence and Motivation*. New York: Guilford.

American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author. [I highly recommend buying a copy of this manual for current and future use. As an alternative, you can go to the APA web site for basics and advanced features of the manual: <http://www.apastyle.org/manual/index.aspx>]

I expect that each 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 in a timely fashion.
- (4) Lead a class discussion on a topic related to learning and development.
- (5) Attend each class session on time.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

A: Theory of Action Report (30 points; 15%)

Topic

From the set of chapters designated for the course, choose a chapter and related topic to be your key responsibility during the course. In order for you to get the most from this exercise, it will be best to choose something of interest but not exactly a topic with which you already have high familiarity.

Non-Profit Organizations

From their web sites, find three non-profit organizations that are dedicated to some element of the topic that you will work with during the semester. These can be national organizations, regional or local. I will work with the class as a whole and with students individually to help find sites that fit the constraints of this exercise.

The Report Itself

Outline the theory of action for 3 non-profit organizations whose work connects to the designated topic. I will show the class how to think in terms of theories of action and to apply that approach to understanding organizations.

B: Organizational Consultancy Paper (50 points; 25%)

Steps

1. Compare the three organizations on their theories of action and the type of data they rely on for conducting their practice. This will not be in-depth, but it will set you in a good position for the next part of the assignment.
2. For one of the organizations, prepare a literature review that could provide further support for their efforts. Choose one of the following approaches:
 - In-depth body of research studies that underline the **importance** of their current efforts
 - In-depth body of studies that would enable the organization to engage in some **collateral activities** or practice
 - In-depth body of studies or a methodology for engaging in organizational **self-study** to determine if they are reaching their objectives
3. In composing the literature review, you will also (briefly) point out where the literature could be applied to the organization you have chosen.

I will be happy to provide you with guidance in organizing this paper, if you desire.

C: Reciprocal Peer Review (20; 10%)

One week before the paper is to be submitted to me, you will share your advanced draft of the paper with another student and will read that student's advanced draft, thereby getting and giving a critique of each paper prior to submission.

D: Journal Reflections (40 points; 20%)

Write an entry in your journal each week, at least one paragraph related to the reading and the discussion. Focus on the usefulness of the week's topics for you in your current occupation, for your goals as an educational psychologist or for development of your capstone experience. Journals should be typed and follow the paper format guidelines, including use of APA style. Journals will be collected periodically throughout the semester.

D: Discussion Leading (40 points; 20%)

Lead the class in discussion of the chapter and topic with which you have become familiar. You are responsible for presenting a brief overview of key points related to the topic and facilitating an activity or group discussion related to the topic. I encourage you to meet with me at least two weeks in advance of your assigned class period in order to discuss ways of covering the material that will enhance student learning. I will be happy to help you with anything that you want, such as deciding on the key ideas to emphasize, preparing any handouts (if desired) and organizing how you will lead the discussion.

E: Class Participation (20 points; 10%)

Because of the importance of lecture and class discussions to students' learning experience, I expect each student to come to class on time and participate in class discussions. 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 that you have to miss class, notify me, preferably in advance. You are responsible for any assignments and materials discussed that day.

Components of the Course Grade

Components of the class grade are indicated in the headings above.

Grading Scale

A+ = 196 - 200	A = 186 - 195	A- = 180 - 185
B+ = 176 - 179	B = 166 - 175	B- = 160 - 165
C = 140 - 159	F < 140	

ADDITIONAL CLASS POLICIES

Paper Format

Papers not following this format may be automatically reduced by up to a letter grade.

- 1 inch margins on all sides, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman or comparably sized font.
- Separate title page including the following: title, name, date, professor, course number.
- All papers should be proofread for spelling, grammar, and clarity errors.
- Citation and references in APA format.

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 send the assignment to me as an email attachment. Since I have truly limited office hours, do not submit an assignment by leaving it at my office. I much prefer email submissions, anyway, and I will notify you that I have received it if you are concerned about whether it arrived. 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 affect the learning of those around you.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Student Expectations

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Campus Resources

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

PROPOSED CLASS SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Readings	Other Assignments
Thu 1/ 27	Course Overview Introduction to Theories of Action		
Thu 2/03	Learning and Competence Intelligence and Ability	Elliot and Dweck (ED) Chapter 1 ED Chapter 2	
Thu 2/10	Motives Goals	ED Chapter 3 ED Chapter 4	Choices of Topics Finalized
Thu 2/17	Attributions Competence Perceptions	ED Chapter 5 ED Chapter 6	
Thu 2/24	Values Implicit Theories of Ability	ED Chapter 7 ED Chapter 8	
Thu 3/03	Temperament Affective Development	ED Chapter 10 ED Chapter 11	Theory of Action Report Due
Thu 3/10	Early Childhood Adolescence	ED Chapter 12 ED Chapter 13	
Thu 3/17	Spring Break No Class		
Thu 3/24	Parents Peers	ED Chapter 15 ED Chapter 16	
Thu 3/31	Teachers and Schools Government and Policy	ED Chapter 17 ED Chapter 20	
Thu 4/07	Gender Race and Ethnicity	ED Chapter 21 ED Chapter 22	
Thu 4/14	Socioeconomic Status Stereotyping	ED Chapter 23 ED Chapter 24	
Thu 4/21	Culture: Construals and Frameworks Culture: Dynamic Processes	ED Chapter 25 ED Chapter 26	
Thu 4/28	To Be Determined	TBD	
Thu 5/05	Course wrap-up and reflections	To be Assigned, if necessary	
Thu 5/12	EXAM WEEK No class meeting		<i>Paper due by 4:30 pm</i>

Appendix A

Attendance & Participation Rubric (30 points)

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.