

# EDEP 652: Process of Learning and Development

George Mason University, College of Education and Human Development  
Graduate School of Education

**Dr. Anastasia Kitsantas**

**Spring 2012**

**EDEP 692-001:** 3 credits

**Class Meeting:** Thompson Hall Room L-018, R 4:30-7:10 PM

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Other hours may be arranged by appointment.

**Teaching Assistant**

**Jen Buxton**

## 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.

*Prerequisite: EDEP 550 or permission of instructor.*

## Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of the course, students should:

- 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

**Course Methodology:** This course consists of lectures, large group and electronic discussion, in class activities, and individual/group assignments.

### **Required Texts**

Creswell, J.W. (2012). *Educational Research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

There is a class Blackboard site that contains course documents and relevant links. Students are required to download pertinent documents for class.

### **Strongly Recommended Text**

American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC.

**Course Requirements:** It is expected that each of you will:

- (1) Read all assigned materials for the course.
- (2) Attend each class session and participate in classroom activities that reflect critical reading of materials.
- (3) Complete in-class assignments
- (4) Complete two assignments. Submit to professor prior to each class meeting.\*
- (5) Evaluate and write a review of one quantitative intervention study and one qualitative study.\*
- (6) Write a research proposal.\*
- (7) Present that proposal in class.

\*Late assignments will not be accepted by the instructor. If an emergency occurs please notify the instructor in advance.

## **Course Evaluation Assignments**

**1. Two Assignments (10 points each):** Students will be asked to work individually on 2 homework assignments. Assignment 1 will be a brief literature review. For assignment 2, students will submit a concept map regarding their proposed research. The goal is to help students define their understanding of the key concepts of the proposed theory, the relationships among them, and how they influence their research. Details of each assignment are described on Blackboard.

**2. Critique of One Empirical Research Article (10 points):** Students will write a critique of one quantitative intervention study and one qualitative study obtained from a peer-reviewed journal. The critiques should include the following parts: purpose, methods, results, and critical comments as well as your reflections about the article (see Blackboard site for specific instructions).

**3. Research Proposal (50 points):** Students will write a proposal in APA style for a research project focusing on an educational topic of interest. Students should utilize a methodological approach that most appropriately addresses their research question(s). See pp. 41-59 of the APA manual for an example of an APA style paper. Place electronic versions in the relevant assignment box on the Blackboard site. The proposal should include:

1. Literature review to orient the reader to your topic and theoretical framework.
2. Statement of purpose and research questions, including a statement indicating research you are replicating or extending and relevant citations.
3. Method
  - Participants and setting
  - Data sources (dependent variables); instrumentation (where relevant)
  - Research design
  - Intervention (where relevant)
  - Procedures (proposed data collection process)
  - Proposed preliminary data analyses (bonus section)
4. References

**4. Research Poster Session (10 points):** Students' research proposals will be presented in a poster session. Place a copy of the slides on Blackboard.

**6. In Class Assignments, Participation, and Attendance Policy (10 points):** Students will be asked to work individually or in groups of 2-3 students in class assignments throughout the semester (assignments are clearly described on Blackboard). Because of the importance of lecture and discussion to your total learning experience, I wish to encourage you 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 your behavior will reflect the professional attitude implied in the course goals and will account for 10% of your course grade. With reference to the grading scale described later in this syllabus, you will note that this percentage is equivalent to a full letter grade. Students who must miss a class must notify the

instructor (preferably in advance) and are responsible for completing all assignments and readings for the next class.

**\*Bring flash drive or other relevant media to class in order to save work completed during class.**

### **RUBRIC FOR POSTER PRESENTATION**

**Exemplary presentation (10 points):** Keeps within the time limits; reflects poise, clarity, knowledge and interest in the content being presented; reflects a high level of preparation; make effective use of overheads, handouts, demonstrations; describes very clearly the treatment(s) under consideration; keeps the audience engaged; provides information of interest and value to audience.

**Adequate presentation (8-9 points):** Good overall presentation, but may be lacking in one or two of the criteria specified in exemplary response. May seem a little less polished or prepared, may be vague in some place, or may fail to completely engage the audience.

**Marginal presentation (6-7 points):** Presentation provides relevant information, but demonstrates only a limited understanding of the topic or project. Style, handouts, or visual aids may be less than inadequate.

**Inadequate presentation (1-5 points):** Weak overall presentation that reflects very little knowledge of topic or project. May appear very poorly prepared, or may not have followed directions. Handouts or visual aids may be inadequate or lacking.

**Unacceptable/no presentation (0 points):** Completely unsatisfactory presentation, with no reasonable reference to topic or project; or no presentation made.

### **Grading Policy**

Homework Assignments (brief lit review and concept map)	20 pts total (10 pts each)
Evaluation of Empirical Research Article	10 pts total
Research Proposal	50 pts total
Research Proposal Presentation	10 pts
In Class Assignments, Participation, and Attendance	10 Pts
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 pts</b>

**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%

**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/>].  
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 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/>].

**Tentative Course Organization and Schedule**

	<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>READINGS DUE</b>	<b>WORK DUE</b>
<b>1</b>	1/26	Introduction & Course Overview		
<b>2</b>	2/2	An Overview of Research Methods	Creswell (2012)- (Chapter 1)	<b>In Class Assignment</b> Research Questions
<b>3</b>	2/9	Theoretical Approaches to Learning, Cognition, and Motivation-Part I	Schunk (2012)- (chapter 7) F (1992)- (Chapter 6) Chapters 1 & 2 in APA Manual	<b>In Class Assignment</b> <b>APA</b> <b>Article Evaluation</b> <b>TBD</b>
<b>4</b>	2/16	Theoretical Approaches to Learning, Cognition, and Motivation-Part II  Identifying Research Problems; Reviewing the Literature Specifying a Purpose; Research Questions Librarian – Anne Driscoll	Schunk (2012)- (chapter 8)  Creswell (2012)- (Chapters 2, 3, & 4)	<b>Article Evaluation</b> <b>TBD</b>
<b>5</b>	2/23	Perspectives on Child, Adolescent, and Adult Development  Research Designs	Schunk (2012)- (chapter 10)  Creswell (2012)- (Chapters 10, 11 & 12)	<b>Graded Assignment 1</b> Initial Statement of Research Topic Article Evaluation <b>TBD</b>
<b>6</b>	3/1	The Nature of Knowledge and The Process of Knowing Instructional Applications  Research Designs	Creswell (2012)- (Chapters 12, 13, & 14)	<b>Graded Assignment 2</b> Concept Map

<b>7</b>	3/8	Research Designs	Maxwell & Loomis (2003) Creswell(2012)- (Chapters 16 & 17)	<b>Article Evaluation TBD</b>
<b>8</b>	3/15	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>		
<b>9</b>	3/22	Measurement	Creswell (2012)- (Chapters 5 & 7)	<b>Draft of Introduction Section</b>
<b>10</b>	3/29	Data Analysis	Creswell (2012)- (Chapters 6 & 8)  Blaikie (2003)- (Chapters 4 & 7)  Creswell (1998)- (Chapter 8)	<b>Article Evaluation TBD</b>
<b>11</b>	4/5	<b>NO CLASS – Writing Day</b>		<b>Draft of Methods Section-draft</b>
<b>12</b>	4/12	Data Interpretation Proposed Results	Blaikie (2003)- (Chapters 4 & 7)  Creswell (1998)- (Chapter 8)	<b>Article Evaluation TBD</b>
<b>13</b>	4/19	Discussion Section, Limitations, Implications, and Future Research	Creswell (1998) – (Chapter 9)	<b>Research Proposal Due for Feedback - -Draft</b>  <b>Article Evaluation TBD</b>
<b>14</b>	4/26	Revisiting the Introduction and Abstract Reflections	Work on Final draft of the research proposal based on feedback	<b>Article Evaluation TBD</b>
<b>15</b>	5/3	<b>Last Class – Poster Session</b>		<b>Project Poster</b>
<b>16</b>	5/10			<b>Research Proposal Due</b>



## Reading List

- Blaikie, N. (2003). *Social research and data analysis: Demystifying basic concepts. In Analyzing quantitative data.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (Chapters, 4 & 7).
- Creswell, J.W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design. Choosing among five traditions.* Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks. (Chapters 8 & 9).
- Ford, M.E. (1992). *Motivating humans: Goals, emotions, and personal agency beliefs.* Sage Publications (Chapters 6).
- Maxwell, J.A. & Loomis, D. (2003). *Mixed Method Design: An Alternative Approach,* in Handbook of Mixed Methods in the Social and Behavioral Sciences, Tashakkori, A. and Charles Teddlie, C. (Eds.), pp. 241-271. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Schunk, D. H. (2012). *Learning theories: An educational perspective (6<sup>th</sup> edition).* Pearson. (chapters, 7-cognitive learning processes, 8-motivation, 10-development).

**Rubric****Research Proposal Rubric**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Outstanding (4)</b>	<b>Competent (3)</b>	<b>Minimal (2)</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory (1)</b>
<b>Data Analysis and Results</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe data analysis plan</li> <li>Present results</li> </ul>	Excellent description of appropriate statistical techniques (descriptive, inferential statistics for quantitative research) and/or coding procedures (qualitative research) and expected results.	Adequate description of appropriate statistical techniques (descriptive, inferential statistics for quantitative research) and/or coding procedures (qualitative research) and expected results.	Significant weaknesses in the description of statistical techniques (descriptive, inferential statistics for quantitative research) and/or coding procedures (qualitative research) and expected results.	Appropriate data analysis techniques and or description of expected results were not provided.
<b>Discussion, Limitations and Educational Implications</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss findings</li> <li>Connect findings to prior research</li> <li>Identify limitations</li> <li>Discuss implications of findings</li> </ul>	Excellent discussion of findings and how they relate to prior research, discuss limitations and educational implications of research.	Adequate discussion of findings and appropriate limitations and educational implications. Findings were not discussed in detailed how they relate to prior research and critical limitations or implications were not addressed.	Significant weaknesses in the discussion of findings and of limitations and educational implications. Few were identified and/or were inappropriate.	Discussion of limitations and educational implications was not provided.
<i>Additional Elements</i>				
<b>Use of Peer-Reviewed Research</b>	Contains references to 10 or more relevant empirical studies	Contains references to at least 10, the majority of which are relevant	Contains references to 10 studies but most are irrelevant	Does not include at least 10 peer reviewed studies.
<b>Discussion of the Literature</b>	Clearly spoken, topic-specific jargon are defined, does not rely on quotes from papers; includes quotes strategically where appropriate	Most topic-specific jargon are defined OR inclusion of some lengthy or inappropriate quotes	Overuse of jargon AND quotes that are lengthy or inappropriate	Fragmented and unclear discussion; over reliance on quotes interrupts the flow of the content and leaves little room for student's synthesis
<b>Abstract</b>	Clearly and sequentially conveys the content of paper	Gives a general overview of paper topic, but no sequential elaboration of contents	Does not provide a clear representation of paper contents	Not provided
<b>Writing Style</b>	Paper is coherent, concise and well structured with a clear	Paper is coherent, concise and well structured with a clear	Paper conveys the main points of the topic but additional polish	Paper is incoherent and/or overly wordy with little

	purpose.	purpose and few errors.	is needed	structure or purpose; difficult to appreciate the content
<b>Technical Merit (spelling, grammar, typographical errors)</b>	Error free	A few minor errors	Several errors or incoherent sentences	Numerous errors
<b>Citation of sources</b>	Appropriate citation of sources	A few missing citations	Several missing citations	Lack of citations
<b>Paper guidelines and APA style (e.g., references, levels of heading, margins)</b>	APA guidelines were followed	APA guidelines were followed with a few instances of incorrect formatting and style	APA guidelines were used but there are several instances of incorrect formatting and style.	APA style was not used.

