GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

EDEP 550 001: Theories of Learning and Cognition
3 Credits, Fall 2016
Mondays 4:30-7:10 pm
Robinson Hall A, Room 412 (Fairfax Campus)

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Prerequisites: None
CATALOG DESCRIPTION:
Explores theoretical perspectives on learning and cognition, and relation of these theories to construction of learning environments, student motivation, classroom management, assessment, and technology to support teaching and learning.

EXTENDED COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Each week, this course explores different theoretical perspectives in psychology on learning for instruction. Students will be reading an overview of the history, orientation, and aspects of each theory and discussing key components in class. Students will demonstrate their understanding of these learning theories by reading case studies and analyzing them for appropriate and complete application in the learning context. Further, students will demonstrate the synthesis of their knowledge by applying these learning theories to learning events, not limited to an actual classroom situation, written guides (such as instruction or teaching manuals), instructional videos, or other presentational formats and learning opportunities.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY
This course is structured around readings, reflections on readings, class projects, technology activities, and writing assignments. This course will be taught using lectures, discussions, and small and large group activities. The Blackboard site for the class can be accessed at: https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu.

For those in the Educational Psychology master's program, review the student Handbook: http://cehd.gmu.edu/documents/epsychology/edpsych-handbook.pdf

LEARNER OUTCOMES
This course is designed to enable students to do the following:
- Demonstrate an understanding of principles and theories of learning and cognition related to biological, behavioral, cognitive, social learning, and information processing models of learning and memory.
- Develop an increased awareness of the ways in which theories of learning and cognition can be applied to instruction.
- Become familiar with aspects of contemporary issues in education related to the science of learning.
- Understand the relationship between a range of technologies and learning, critical thinking, and problem solving processes.
- Develop an appreciation for and understanding of the variance of developmental and learning needs of

culturally diverse and exceptional learners.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how theoretical approaches to learning and cognition relate to classroom management, instruction, and assessment.
- Design instruction that is consistent with the developmental and learning needs of today's students.
- Develop and reinforce critical thinking, oral presentation, technological, and writing skills.

RELATIONSHIP TO PROGRAM GOALS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

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 7: Motivational and Emotional Influences on Learning
Principle 8: Intrinsic Motivation to Learn
Principle 9: Effects of Motivation on Effort
Principle 11: Social Influences on Learning
Principle 13: Learning and Diversity

For more information please see:
American Psychological Association (1997). Learner-Centered Psychological Principles*: Guidelines for the Teaching of Educational Psychology in Teacher Education Programs*. (http://www.apa.org)

Alignment with Program Standards:
- The EDEP 550 (Learning and Cognition) midterm assessment addresses Program Standard 1: *Knowledge of Cognition, Motivation, and Development* and Program Standard 2: *Application of Cognition, Motivation, and Development Knowledge*.
- Candidates demonstrate their understanding of the key principles, generalizations and content knowledge involved in domains of cognition, motivation, and development and apply this knowledge to critically analyze and evaluate the case studies presented in the midterm. These program standards also strongly connect to the CEHD Core Value 4, Research-based practice and Program Disposition IV: Commitment to APA Learner-Centered Principles. The midterm is a written analysis of the cases and thus also addresses Program Standard 6: Communication and Dissemination of Educational Research in that students must demonstrate appropriate writing skills and use of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA).

REQUIRED TEXT
Driscoll, M. P. (2005). *Psychology of learning for instruction* (3rd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS
Strunk, W., & White, E. B. (2009). *The Elements of Style* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon. p. xiii. ISBN 978-0-205-31342-6.
American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.)*. Washington, DC: Author.
APA Style guide summary: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01

SUPPORTING READINGS

Elliot, A. J., & Dweck, C. S. (2005). *Handbook of competence and motivation.* New York: Guilford Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes.* (M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman, Eds.). Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Rogoff, B. (2003). *The cultural nature of human development.* Oxford University Press.

A list of additional readings may be provided on Blackboard.

Additional sources:

In preparation for class meetings, you may find these resources useful

- *American Psychological Association*: http://www.apa.org/ed/schools/cpse/
- *National Resource Council*: http://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/index.htm
- *What Works Clearinghouse* (reviews of studies with judgments of quality): http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/ReviewedStudies.aspx
- *GMU Library Info Guides for Education:* http://infoguides.gmu.edu/sb.php?subject_id=27294
- *PsycNet*: http://psycnet.apa.org/index.cfm?fa=search.defaultSearchForm
- *NSF Award Abstracts* (nice source of research activity that's in process but not yet published): http://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/
- *International Society of the Learning Sciences* (webinars for different takes on some of the topics we will discuss in class): http://isls-naples.psy.lmu.de/intro/all-webinars/index.html

COURSE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION:

It is expected that each student will:

1. Read all assigned materials for the course
2. Attend each class session
3. Participate in classroom activities that reflect critical reading of materials
4. Critique and or discuss assigned articles in class
5. Keep a researcher's diary/journal, see: http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/IJQM/article/view/8069/9008
6. Submit all written assignments on time via Blackboard

Technology Policy: *When you are using cell phones, laptops, etc., please be respectful and do not engage in activities that are unrelated to class. Such disruptions may affect your participation grade.*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Attendance and participation (10%)

Because of the importance of lecture and classroom discussions to students' total learning experience, each student is expected to come to class on time and participate in class discussions and activities. 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 and will account for 10% of the course grade. In the event students miss a class, the professor should be notified, preferably in advance, and the student is responsible for any assignments and materials passed out or discussed that day. (see end of syllabus for attendance and participation rubric)

B. Journal reflections on articles and resources (30%)
Five times over the course of the semester, you will be asked to reflect on an article or resource (e.g., webinar, website) of your choice in a public forum on Blackboard. This will allow you to move deeper into some of the topics of the course by reflecting on resources beyond the class text. I will post a bibliography of suggested articles and resources, but you may also bring potential sources to me for approval. Three journal entries will be formally graded at the end of the semester—2 the student selects, 1 the professor randomly selects. The evaluation criteria will be depth of thinking, attention to detail, and creativity. You will be expected to bring up ideas generated through the journaling process in class discussions. You are encouraged to look at others' journals to extend your own thinking, or to help clarify difficult concepts. *If you do use an idea from another student's journal, cite it.*

C. Group project (15%)
Students will form working groups of 3-4 for the second half of the semester, based primarily on similarities in interest and professional goals. Each group will develop a project that will consist of an analysis of an instructional even from the perspectives of several learning theories. There are two products for this assignment: a group paper and a group presentation (below). The instructional event may be of several different types:
- an actual classroom situation,
- written guides (such as instruction manuals),
- instructional videos,
- or other presentational formats and learning opportunities.

We will discuss the project after we have covered a good portion of the materials for the course. Also, I'm leaving open the possibility of another kind of assignment that could contribute well to the group's learning, so talk to me if you have ideas! Rubrics for both the paper and the oral presentation are found at the end of this syllabus.

Your group paper (8-12 pages, double spaced) should include the following elements:
- *Statement of purpose*: A clear and complete explanation of why you chose the instructional event you did and what your main arguments are.
- *Presentation of instructional event:* A complete and detailed description of the event you are analyzing.
- *Application of specific theories from class:* An analysis of the instructional event through at least three theoretical lenses, with (a) suggestions for improvement and (b) ways the instructional methods could be extended to other contexts.

D. Oral presentation of group project (5%)
Each group will be asked to use audio-visual aids like power point slides to tell the whole group about (a) the product they have created, (b) the process of collaborative group work, and (c) ways they think this project could be used in organizations like schools or non-profits.

E. Two case analyses (40% total--20% each)
You will complete 2 case analysis writing assignments in which you will analyze real-life practical situations and apply or discuss the concepts from class. The first case study analysis will cover material read or discussed through October 17 and will be due October 24. The second one will cover material from the second half of the course and will be due December 12. The assignments will be given out a week prior to the due date. Both papers should be roughly 6-10 pages.

EDEP 550 Midpoint Assignment
The EDEP 550 (Learning and Cognition) midpoint assessment is a mid-semester take-home that requires analysis of case studies, which satisfies the performance-based assessment for students in the Educational Psychology master's program. The assignment requires candidates: (1) to sample from and use all content covered from the class and out-of-class group work and independent study, and (2) to synthesize their thinking and knowledge to apply to the multifaceted details of each case in a relevant fashion. **Students must upload their analyses of the case studies to Blackboard in the Assignment Section in a timely fashion.**

MID-POINT CASE ANALYSIS UPLOAD REQUIREMENT (*Important!*)
Every student registered for any Educational Psychology course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment, Mid-Point Case Analysis, to Blackboard (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course, or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance-based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessment to Blackboard will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required Blackboard submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

Scoring
The individual cases (mid-point case analysis and the final case analysis) will be scored separately with the rubric at the end of the syllabus, which will be posted on Blackboard.

Your final grade for this class will be based on the following:

A+ = 98 – 100%	A = 93 – 97.99%	A- = 90 – 92.99%
B+ = 88 – 89.99%	B = 83 – 87.99%	B- = 80 – 82.99%
C = 70 – 79.99%	F < 70%	

ADDITIONAL CLASS POLICIES
Format for written work
- 1-inch margins on all sides, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font.
- Include the following information: title, name, date, professor, course number.
- Fully proofread for spelling, grammar, and clarity errors and citation and references in APA format.

Late assignments
Late assignments will be marked down by half a letter grade for each day the assignment is late. If there are questions or concerns about a particular situation, please contact me via email in advance of the deadline

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS:
Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

CORE VALUES COMMITMENT
The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.
http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/

GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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 with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see http://ods.gmu.edu/).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or https://cehd.gmu.edu/api/tk20. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to http://coursessupport.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/).
- 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 Office of Student Support staff helps students negotiate life situations by connecting them with appropriate campus and off-campus resources. Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone (703-993-5376). Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community by going to http://studentsupport.gmu.edu/, and the OSS staff will follow up with the student.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website https://cehd.gmu.edu/.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website http://gse.gmu.edu/

Class Schedule*		
*This is a tentative class schedule and may change. The most current schedule is on Blackboard.		
Date	Class Topics/Activities	Readings/Assignments Due
Week 1 Aug 29	Introduction and Overview Library orientation	
Week 2 Sept 5	*Labor Day: University Closed*	
Week 3 Sept 12	Introduction to theories of learning and instruction	Driscoll, Ch. 1
Week 4 Sept 19	Motivation and self-regulation	Driscoll, Ch. 9
Week 5 Sept 26	Behaviorism	Driscoll, Ch. 2 First journal **due on Blackboard**
Week 6 Oct 3	Gagne's theory of instruction	Driscoll, Ch. 10
Week 7 **TUE,** Oct 11	Cognitive information processing	Driscoll, Ch. 3 Second journal **due on Blackboard**
Week 8 Oct. 17	Situated learning	Driscoll, Ch. 5 First case study posted 10/13
Week 9 Oct 24	Schema theory and meaningful learning	Driscoll, Ch. 4 First case study analysis (i.e., Mid-point analysis) **due on Blackboard in Assignment section**
Week 10 Oct 31	Cognitive and knowledge development	Driscoll, Ch. 6 Third journal **due on Blackboard** Group member names and topic **due in class**
Week 11 Nov 7	Interactional theories of cognitive development	Driscoll, Ch. 7 Fourth journal **due on Blackboard**
Week 12 Nov 14	Biological bases of learning and development	Driscoll, Ch. 8 Group project outline **due in class**
Week 13 Nov 17	Constructivism	Driscoll, Ch. 11 Fifth journal **due on Blackboard**
Week 14 Nov 21	Wrap-up and overview	Driscoll, Ch. 12 Group project **due in class**
Week 15 Dec 5	Group project presentations	Second case study posted by professor
Exam Week Dec 12		Second case study **due on Blackboard by Dec. 12** Upload 2 best journal entries **on Blackboard by Dec. 12**

Attendance and 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 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.
e. Avoid using electronic devices for personal communication or other non-class-oriented purposes during class time.

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.

Journal Reflections Rubric

	Unsatisfactory	Emerging	Competent
Engagement with Chosen Article/Source Writer refers to specific concepts and arguments in the article	Writer does not refer to specific arguments or concepts in the article. Writer never quotes or paraphrases the article.	Writer refers to specific arguments and concepts in the article, but sometimes veers from the topic. Writer quotes or paraphrases the article at least once.	Writer refers to specific arguments and concepts in the article throughout the piece. Writer quotes or paraphrases the article 2-3 times.
Connections to Teaching and Learning Writer connects the article's conclusions with some aspect of teaching and learning	Writer does not connect the article's conclusions to teaching and learning.	Writer connects the article's conclusions broadly to teaching and learning without specific examples.	Writer clearly connects the article's conclusions with specific aspects of teaching and learning.
Timeliness The writer hands in the journal reflections on time	Only 3 or fewer journal reflections are handed in on time. The writer does not complete all reflections.	At least 4 of the journal reflections are handed in on time. The writer completes all 5 reflections.	All 5 journal reflections are handed in on time. The writer completes all 5 reflections.

Rubric for Group Project

	Unsatisfactory	Emerging	Competent
Statement of purpose	Incomplete and unclear explanation of rationale for the instructional event and main arguments	Clear explanation of rationale for the instructional event and main arguments but some minor details were missing	Clear and complete explanation of rationale for the instructional event and main arguments
Presentation of instructional event	Incomplete description of the event	General description of the event but not enough detail to understand the event	Complete and detailed description of the event was presented
Application of theories from class	Zero or one theoretical lens were clear and completely described	2 theoretical lenses were clear and completely described	3 theoretical lenses were clear and completely described
Suggestions for improvement	No suggestions communicated	Suggestions communicated, but not based in the theory	Suggestions were communicated and connected to the appropriate theory
Extension of instructional methods to other contexts	Other contexts not communicated	Suggestions for extensions were communicated, but not based in the theory	Suggestions for extensions were communicated and connected to the appropriate theory

Rubric for Oral Presentation

	Unsatisfactory	Emerging	Competent
Description of the instructional event	Incomplete description of the event	General description of the event was presented but without enough detail to understand the event	Complete and detailed description of the event was presented
Critique of the event's incorporation of theories	Critique of the event's incorporation of theories not presented	Critique of the event's incorporation of theories presented without sufficient detail to understand the connections of the even to theories	Critique of the event's incorporation of theories presented with sufficient detail to understand the connections of the event to theories
Extension of instructional methods to other contexts	Other contexts not communicated	Suggestions for extensions were communicated, but not based in the theory	Suggestions for extensions were communicated and connected to the appropriate theory
Discussion of the process of collaboration	Process of collaboration not discussed	Process of collaboration discussed generally; did not mention each member's role and contribution	Process of collaboration discussed in detail; each member's role and contribution was presented

Rubric for EDEP 550 Mid-Point Case Analyses

This rubric is completed separately from the assignment of points for each question in the assignment (see Scoring Guide for descriptions of point values per question).

Performance Elements or Criteria	4 Exceeds Standards	3 Meets Standards	2 Approaching Standards	1 Does not meet standards
Demonstrates clear knowledge of key concepts related to cases presented in the assignment	Describes key concepts deeply and relates them accurately to key principles	Accurately describes all or almost all key concepts in his or her own words	In most cases, accurately describes key concepts but may be unclear or inaccurate at times	For the majority of concepts, inaccurately and unclearly explains them
Demonstrates ability to apply key concepts in real-life situations	Provides in-depth applications of all key concepts and their relationships to particular cases.	Accurately and clearly explains how all key concepts relate to particular cases.	Is inaccurate or unclear about some of the key concepts	Shows extremely limited grasp of key concepts and their relation to cases.
Analyzes case-study scenarios using appropriate concepts, principles or theories	Goes well beyond clear analyses and provides in-depth explanations	Accurately and clearly relates key concepts, principles or theories to particular cases	Explanations are sometimes superficial or inaccurate	Shows little or no analysis of key concepts, principles or theories
Writes clearly and effectively	Writing is clear with no typos or errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling and word usage.	Writing is clear and focused with minimal minor typos or errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling and word usage.	Writing is sometimes unclear and may contain typos or errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling and word usage.	Writing is fraught with typos or errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling and word usage that make the writing too unclear.