

## EDP 382L: Instructional Psychology Spring, 2013

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### Texts:

1. In response to previous classes feedback, I decided to actually have textbooks that you can use as your primary reference material.

If you have a strong background in learning already, or you have fundamentals textbooks from previous courses, you can use your own reference materials and read what fits the topic theory of the day.

If you don't have a good background in learning and motivation theories, I've arranged for two books I like that provide the basic information to be available through the COOP or you can get them at Amazon.

Schunk 6<sup>th</sup> edition Learning Theories: An Educational Perspective

Schunk, Pintrich and Meece 3<sup>rd</sup> edition Motivation in Education

You could probably get by with a previous edition on either one. They're not usually that different although the chapter orders change. Look for the topic rather than the chapter.

Another good source for basic descriptions of theories is the Gale Virtual Reference Site available at the General Libraries reference site (<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/indexes/titles.php?id=152>).

Read the parts of whatever book or the description that deals with the topic of the week. Then try the base reading.

### Other readings to expand each topic

2. I will also be assigning some **base readings** and then offering suggestions about additional reading specific to a theory. **I only expect you to read the base readings and have reviewed or read something basic about the topics, such as the text chapters indicated.** All readings not in the texts are available on Blackboard, but I've also included the citation for most of them so that you can download them directly from the library if that's easier for you. Some are from handbooks, so those you have to get from Blackboard unless you own the book.

3. As part of your participation in class, you will look for and share **other related readings that illustrate how theories get applied to instruction in your specific area of interest.** Each week you should post a short summary of your article and you will have time to share your example with your home group during class.

**Goals:** This is a course in translating the theories and research on human learning and motivation into practice for ed psych students who will be working with designing instruction to meet the needs of a range of audiences and instructional situations. Here are my goals for the class:

- Goal 1: You will be able to describe how various learning and motivation theories get translated into design theories and instructional practice and how a given instructional practice might be derived from theory.
- Goal 2: You will be able to use the above theories to critique instructional designs that are proposed or currently in place in the field.
- Goal 3: You will be able to advise teachers, designers, or other interested parties about the possibilities for tailoring instruction for a given individual or situation, based on the principles of learning and motivation espoused in the theories above.

For each theory we discuss, you will ask the following key questions:

**How does this theory define learning or motivation?**

**How does this theory conceptualize what happens during learning or motivation?**

**In light of the above, what instructional strategies could be derived from that conceptualization of learning or motivation?**

**What are the main drawbacks of designing instruction from this perspective?**

And from your individual article contribution

**What ideas can you derive from your article that show how the topic would apply to your own specialization area?**

**Context:** An important part of this class is putting the theories into context. That means you have to think about a concrete context to specialize in. You will be constantly asked to apply what we discuss to that context. A context might be a specific age group, a disability group, an instructional setting, an instructional delivery method (like technology-based).

**Performance evaluation:** Your grade will be assigned as follows. Descriptions of each activity are included in the next section.

Percent of grade based on your individual performance

1. Major problem analysis paper (done in three parts) 45%

This paper demonstrates your ability to apply psychological theory in your own professional area.

2. Comparison of theories quizzes (2 at 15% each) 30%

These three exams comprehensively test students' knowledge of the course

3. Weekly individual article review posted on 25%

Blackboard before class to be discussed in small groups

### ***Individually prepared assignments***

#### **1. Major problem analysis and proposal paper**

It is important to me that you are able to use what you learn in the class in your area of special interest. Therefore I'm inviting you to identify an instructional problem that is prominent in your area of interest. For example, if you work with special populations, select one area in which instructional strategies or systems are very important but problematic, such as inclusion in regular classrooms versus the need for IEPs and differential instruction. The goal is to write a major paper which explains and analyzes the problem, reviews the literature on possible solutions, and finally proposes a new instructional solution based on one or more of the theories that we have studied. The paper will be done across the semester in three parts as follows:

- Part 1: What is the instructional problem and why is it important? (up to 4 pages)
  - **Due Feb. 15** (Friday) at midnight via email
- Part 2: What does the literature say about how this problem is being solved at this point and what is wrong with those solutions? (up to 10-12 pages)
  - **Due Mar 22** (Friday) at midnight via email
- Part 3: What is your proposed solution and why would it work better than what was described in part 2? This must derive from one or more of the theories discussed in class. (up to 6-8 pages)
  - **Due May 10<sup>th</sup>** (Friday) at midnight via email

#### **2. Comparison of theories quizzes**

Since this is a core course for Ed Psych students, we have to have an exam. So these exams will compare sets of theories in the way that you would be expected to know them for a departmental qualifying exam – that means, what are the theories in general and how do they compare in their application to instructional psychology problems.

The dates are indicated on the schedule as **March 4 and April 22**

#### **3. Weekly Blackboard article annotation**

We are a learning community to some extent. In most cases I am not an expert in all the professional specializations represented in the class. So in addition to the base readings, which I have identified, you are asked to find an article in your own professional specialization that is related to the weekly topic and to **post a short bibliographic annotation (summary of about three paragraphs) plus the citation on the Blackboard site before class on Wednesday**. At the Wednesday class meeting, you'll be asked to share the nugget of your article with your HOME group, emphasizing how it is related to the week's topic.

The source of these articles can be your pre-existing library, or the result of a literature search you conduct during the week, or you can peruse the extra articles that I have posted under each topic's folder. These are not the base articles, but others that are related and have been suggested by previous classes. Also check the Gale Virtual Reference Site I mentioned earlier.

<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/indexes/titles.php?id=152>

**Class activities:** Since this is a 2.75 hour class, we're going to do a lot of different things each week so our attention is maintained. Class will usually include a lecture and a lot of discussion, either as a whole group or as small special interest groups.

**Group work:** You will be discussing in groups this semester to share your own expertise with others. These groups will be diverse in nature and changing, each person representing a different application situation (such as clinical, counseling, k-12 system, research, etc). You will be the expert on your application setting and will help the others in your home group understand how the reading/theory of the week applies in it.

About 90 minutes: Presentation by the instructor and **discussion of base reading for the day plus** discussion by the groups on the key applications of the day's theory/method to specialty areas. Be prepared to talk about your potential application of the day's topic.

*Somewhere in here we'll take a 15 minute break.*

60 minutes: General discussion and comparison of findings looking for key ideas that cut across situations and clarifying confusions and critiquing the theory.

### **Intangibles but very important to me**

On a less objective note, I'm often asked to serve on dissertation or qualifying exam committees for folks in this class. Therefore, I hope to form an impression of you as a professional in addition to your grasp of the content. To do that, I use the following:

1. Your overall participation in the groups and class
2. The professional quality of your work
3. Regular attendance (unless you let me know of a problem)

These things will enter into my assessment of you as a professional, just as they would on the job. They will determine the degree to which I'm willing in the future to support your work. They go beyond the grade to a more professional evaluation.

***Anything else?*** I have laid out these course activities prior to meeting with the class, so it may be the case that the actual make-up of the class will necessitate some modifications. However, I will attempt to remain true to the course goals and basic outline, and I am always open to suggestions. Please ask me if you don't understand or need some help. Don't suffer in silence.

**Special needs:** The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. To determine if you qualify, please contact the Dean of Students at 471-6259; 471-4641 TTY. If they certify your needs, I will work with you to make appropriate arrangements.

If a class assignment falls due on a religious holy day for your religion, I will make arrangements to accommodate your needs.

The University considers class email to be an official communication of the University and expects it to be consulted and responded to in a timely fashion.

## **Daily schedule and readings**

The next pages show the schedule for the class periods, including topics, readings, and assignment due dates. These and any articles you find from your own library will be the basis for the course.

## **How to read the readings**

I am not one that encourages very detailed study of the base readings. I would suggest that you make an outline of the main ideas contained in each such that you could describe the gist of the article to someone else who might consider reading it. Just be sure to get an overall picture of what the base reading is saying about the following questions:

**How does this theory define learning or motivation?**

**How does this theory conceptualize what happens during learning or motivation?**

**In light of the above, what instructional strategies could be derived from that conceptualization of learning or motivation?**

**What are the main drawbacks of designing instruction from this perspective?**

And from your individual article contribution

**What ideas can you derive from your article that show how the topic would apply to your own specialization area?**

So come to class on Monday ready to discuss the above five items, the first four about one of the base readings and the last one about your individual article.

If you have trouble finding additional articles that make a connection between your area and the week's topic, look over the additional readings that are in each topic's folder and pick one that sounds interesting. You can choose to read from the perspective of a learner instead of a professional.