

Syllabus
EDP 310 - Individual Learning Skills
Fall 2010
Unique #10055 / SZB 416 / MWF Noon-12:50 PM



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Office hours: MW 2:00 - 3:30, TH: 12: 00 – 1:00, and by appointment

Texts: LASSI Instructional Modules and Course Packet

****Required to be purchased by Friday, August 27th***

- **The LASSI Instructional Modules** are available online (about \$55). This is a web-based instructional tool that everyone will be required to purchase, read and complete some of the activities. How to purchase the LASSI Instructional Modules will be discussed in class and available on blackboard under the syllabus link.
- **The Course packet** is available under Dr. Weinstein's name (Coordinator of EDP 310) at Abel's Copies, 715 West 23rd Street (about \$20). Their phone number is 512-472-5353. The course packet will include important readings.

Course Description & Objectives

EDP 310 is designed to help you become a more strategic learner. Providing you with knowledge and skills that you can use immediately to help you be more successful at UT, in the work place, and throughout your life, this course will help you:

- 1) develop awareness of your current learning and study strategies and methods in order to identify and assess your personal strengths and areas where you may need improvement
- 2) set learning goals, use these goals to guide your studying, and monitor your progress toward achieving your goals
- 3) build a repertoire of learning strategies and skills useful for a variety of learning tasks
- 4) become a more strategic learner who is motivated to learn, understands how to study and learn effectively and efficiently, and understands how to manage his/her studying and learning activities

Course Expectations

University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Academic Dishonesty

Students who violate university rules regarding academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the university. Policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. This includes but is not limited to: writing another student's name on an in-class activity, or otherwise taking or giving credit for work that is not one's own. This is viewed as a form of cheating by The University of Texas and will be treated as such in this class as well.

Classroom Etiquette

In order to maximize the learning opportunities for all students, it is imperative that the classroom environment be conducive to learning. This means that you are expected to respect everyone in the class as well as the class rules and guidelines. Therefore, behavior that will not be tolerated includes, but is not limited to, working on anything not directly related to the class activities at hand (e.g., studying for other classes), reading newspapers, sleeping, wearing headphones or ear pieces, using cell phones (it is your responsibility to shut them off before class), and talking while anyone else is talking. Computers will not be needed for in-class exercises, therefore using a laptop, iPhone, Palm Pilot, Blackberry or other forms of technology during class is inappropriate. Engaging in these or other distracting activities may result in your removal from class and an unexcused absence for the day. Disruptiveness or disrespect of your fellow students or your instructor will result in a warning, followed by being asked to leave the classroom. If you are asked to leave, this will be counted as an unexcused absence.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>

Participation

This course requires active participation by all students. Much of our class time will be spent in small group and full class discussions. For the sake of your success, as well as that of your classmates, I expect your attitude and level of participation to reflect a commitment to reaching the objectives and goals of this course. What you get back from this course is proportional to what you put into it.

There is a growing body of evidence that cooperative learning is a very successful technique in helping students learn. With this evidence in mind, our class will make use of small groups as a means of enhancing your learning. You will be expected to participate in structured discussions and work with your assigned group to complete in-class exercises. These in-class exercises are designed to help you process, understand, and apply new information from class lecture and modules. These exercises will also help you on tests and in preparing the major assignments.

Small group exercises will be structured in order to ensure all group members contribute appropriately.

Communication with Instructor

I am here to guide and help you improve your knowledge and skills so that you can become a more strategic and self-regulated learner. However, you must take responsibility for what you will learn from this course. In addition to the modules and other materials you have for this course, I am also available to help you succeed in EDP 310. If you have questions or concerns about the course, need some help with a difficult concept or assignment, or anything else, I am always willing to listen and do what I can to help you. You can come to my office during my posted office hours, or arrange a separate meeting if those times are not available for you, contact me by email, or leave a message on my office phone number (be sure to say the message is for me since several of us share the same number).

Remember, I cannot discuss grades right before, during, or right after class or by e-mail. Please come see me during office hours or make an appointment.

Since most problems are more easily solved when addressed in advance, it is to your benefit to maintain communication with me throughout the semester. Don't wait until it is too late to seek help!

Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students

E-mail is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, you are responsible for reading your e-mail for university and course-related information and announcements. You are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to your e-mail address. You should check your e-mail regularly and frequently—I recommend daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-critical. You can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating your e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>

Attendance Policy

Attendance is an important part of succeeding in college and in the "real world." Therefore, coming to this class on time will be a substantial part of your grade. At the beginning of each class throughout the semester, I will have an attendance sheet for you to sign. It is *your responsibility* to sign the sheet each class. **DO NOT** ask anyone to sign for you and do not sign for anyone else. If you are late, don't forget to sign the sheet before you leave class for the day. *If you do not sign before leaving class, you will be counted as absent for that day.*

Unexcused absences

You are allowed 3 unexcused absences but remember that part of your grade is class participation. If you chose not to come to class, you will not be able to receive credit for participating in class that day. Students with more than 3 unexcused absences will earn the following penalties:

- 4 unexcused absences = *decrease of grade by one level (example A to A-)*
- 5 or 6 unexcused absences = *loss of one full letter grade (100 points)*
- 7 or more unexcused absences = *automatic failure of the course* (uniformly enforced)

Excused Absences

For an absence to be excused you must provide legitimate documentation. Excused absences include:

- Illness (with a signed note from your doctor, University Health Services' generic "no excuse" form letters will not be accepted)
- Critical family events (weddings or deaths)
- Official U.T. events (games for athletes, concerts for band members)
- Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence *at least fourteen days* prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Excused absences must be documented with a written excuse, turned in to me prior to or no later than one week after your absence. If possible, please inform me ahead of time. If you have an excused absence you will have 1 week to complete whatever work was due that day, including the in-class activities if they were collected that day.

Tardies

Class will begin on the hour since we have a limited amount of time to cover a lot of material. You will be counted tardy if you are more than 5 minutes late (by my watch) and if you are more than 25 minutes late, you will be counted as absent. Also, if you choose to leave class for more than five minutes in the middle or at the end of class you may also be counted tardy for that day. ***Three tardies will result in 1 unexcused absence.***

Due Dates, Late Work and Incomplete Assignments

Due Dates

Assignments will be turned in electronically on Blackboard by 9 a.m. on the day the assignment is due. The assignment submission space on Blackboard will be removed at 9 a.m. on the due date. This is the latest possible date and time that work can be turned in for credit. Work will not be accepted for credit after 9 a.m. on the due date. **Do not wait until the night before to start on an assignment!** Computer crashes and server problems will not be accepted as an excuse for late work.

Late Work

No late work will be accepted for a grade unless you have an excused absence. If you have an excused absence, you must turn in the work **within one week** of your absence. If your absence is going to be unexcused, you need to make other arrangements to turn in the assignment on time.

Each student is allowed a single one-week extension on a module or unit application deadline. That is, once during the semester, a student will be allowed to have one additional week to complete one of these assignments and still receive full credit.

Late Assignments

Even though late work will not be graded, you will still need to complete the work since it contains much of the information that is necessary for you to reach the learning objectives in this course. Failure to complete any graded or non-graded assignment in this course will result in a

grade of “incomplete” (X) for this course. The assignments that must be completed include: pre- and post-assessments, subject pool participation, class assignments, homework, goals activities, modules, unit applications, exams, office visit with me, and the capstone project.

Remember that it is your responsibility to obtain assignments and announcements made on days when you are absent.

Grading System, Course Requirements & Assignments

The University of Texas at Austin has adopted the +/- system for grading. As such, the chart below shows the conversions from the letter grading system to the 4.0 grading system to % grades and finally to our 1000 point system.

Letter	4 point system	Percentage	EDP 310 1000 pt system
A	4.00	94-100	940-1000
A-	3.67	90-93	900-939
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899
B	3.00	83-86	830-869
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799
C	2.00	73-76	730-769
C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
D	1.00	63-66	630-669
D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
F	0.00	59 or below	590 or below

I am always happy to discuss the grade you have earned on any task. As I am not able to discuss grades right before, during, or after class, or by email, you will need to see me during regularly scheduled office hours or make an appointment. Also, I prefer that you wait at least one day to set an appointment as this will allow you enough time to think about whatever questions you may have.

Percentage of Final Grade	Task	Points (Possible on each)	Number of Assignments	Total Points
29%	Module Activities	15	6	90
	Notes	13	10	130
	Integration Paragraphs	10	7	70
16%	Unit Applications	80	2	160
36%	Exams	120	3	360
14%	Capstone Project	140	1	140
5%	Class Participation			50
	<i>Extra Credit</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>10</i>
TOTAL (Extra Credit is NOT included in the total)				1,000

Modules (29% of final grade)

All students will complete 6 online instructional modules based on your scores on the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI), which is an assessment tool to help you identify your learning strengths and areas needing improvement. There are 10 modules total, and you will complete the notes and integration paragraph for each module (or combined module). However, based on your LASSI results you will contract to complete 6 sets of module activities. Once you have signed your contract, you may **not** change your required Module Activities. Failure to complete your contracted module activities will result in full loss of points for those module activities. Be sure to retain your signed Module Contract.

These modules consist of content and activities designed to help you learn, think about, and gain more expertise in each topic area. Some of these modules will be combined (i.e., information processing and self-testing) in order to facilitate the integration of content and strategies in those areas.

Each module will be completed online and should take between 2-4 hours to complete. You should work through the assigned portions of the module in order. You will also be required to take notes on the material you learned from each module, which will include one paragraph integrating some of the information you learned with previous course topics. This will help you more fully understand and integrate the material and also help you prepare for the exams.

More information and instructions can be found on blackboard and additional guidance will be given prior to the first assignment. Each module assignment (i.e., activities & notes & integration paragraph) will be due the day of class where we begin focusing on that topic area (e.g., your Motivation module will be due when we start talking about Motivation). Specific deadlines can be found on the course schedule. All module assignments: activities, notes, and integration paragraphs must be typed.

Unit Applications (16% of final grade)

The course is divided into two units. Each unit has a corresponding application assignment for you to complete. These papers are designed to give you the opportunity to reflect about and apply various things you are learning in this course. Further guidelines will be provided.

Exams (36% of final grade)

All students will take 3 exams. Each exam will contain 12 multiple-choice and 4 short answer questions. Exam 1 will cover course topics from unit 1. Exam 2 will cover course topics from unit 2. Exam 3 will focus on the integration of all course topics as well as broad themes and core concepts presented in the course.

ITEM TYPE	POINTS (Possible on each)	# of Items	TOTAL (raw)	% of Exam
Multiple Choice	4	12	48	40%
Essay	18	4	72	60%
TOTAL			120	100%

Capstone Project (14% of final grade)

All students will submit an integrative paper. This project is designed to synthesize your learning over the semester. It will also provide you with an opportunity to track your progress in the 10 LASSI areas, as well as in other areas related to strategic learning, over the course of the semester. Guidelines will be provided.

Class Participation and In-Class Activities (5% of final grade)

This course is interactive and requires your participation in class activities, small and large group discussions, and group work. Individual and group participation during class is a vital part of learning and will be highly emphasized in this course. There will be an individual or group in-class activity/discussion to be completed almost every day of class. Participation points are earned by actively taking notes during class, by thoughtfully contributing to in-class activities and discussions, by showing respect to your fellow classmates and the instructor, and by maintaining a positive attitude towards learning.

Extra Credit

Extra credit is worth 10 points. It is not mandatory and is not counted as part of the 1,000 total course points. Therefore, the highest score a student could earn in this course is 1,010. The assignment involves bringing in one source and writing a description of how it is related to the content of this course. The source can be an article, story, poem, quote, comic, website, movie/TV clip, picture, song, or some other source. Further guidelines are available on blackboard. **There is also another option for my section that we will discuss in class.**

Office hours visit

All students must make at least one appointment to meet with me during office hours, or by appointment. You will be assigned the dates during which you have to make the appointment (to be announced). A sign-up sheet will be made available. The specific purposes and guidelines of this assignment will be discussed in more detail during class. While students are not assigned a grade for this assignment, not completing this assignment will result in an incomplete in the course.

Assessments

At the beginning and end of the semester, students will complete assessments that are used to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement in the areas of strategic learning. Results of these assessments will not affect final grades in the course. However, you will receive an incomplete in the course if you do not complete all pre- and post-assessments.

Research Participation/Subject Pool

Departmental policy requires that all EDP 310 students participate in a research study related to Educational Psychology, or complete an alternate assignment. You must complete this requirement or you will receive an incomplete in the course. Information on how to register for research participation will be provided.

Documented Disability Statement

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone) or

<http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd>