

EPSY 335: LEARNING – ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION
Fall Semester 2005, Class #25636
Tuesdays 4:00-6:30pm
Arjona Room 237

INSTRUCTOR

Jason M. Stephens, Ph.D.
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OFFICE HOURS

Tues & Thurs 9:30-11:00am,
Thursdays 2:00-5:00pm, or
by appointment (Gentry 335)

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or if you have emergency medical information to share with me, please make an appointment with me or see me during office hours as soon as possible.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to provide information regarding a variety of learning theories from both a psychological and educational perspective. The purpose of the course is to provide students with an understanding of the major historical and contemporary theories of learning and their educational implications.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To provide the students with knowledge and understanding regarding:
 - a. the philosophical and historical roots of contemporary learning theories;
 - b. the assumptions and implications of various behavioral views of learning;
 - c. the assumptions and implications of various cognitive views of learning;
 - d. the interpretation of learning environments, and;
 - e. the assessment of learning.
2. To enable the students to develop their own personal philosophy or theory of learning as well as statement on pedagogy.
3. To offer students an opportunity to research an area of learning that is of particular interest or importance to them.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Ormrod, J. E. (2004). *Human Learning* (4th Edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill. (ISBN#0-13-094199-9)

Bransford, J. D., Brown, A. L., & Cocking R. R. (Eds.) (1999). *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School*. Available online at <http://www.nap.edu/html/howpeople1/> (Selected Chapters)

*Other readings may be assigned via the WebCT link. If so, I'll let you know. **All reading should be completed prior to class.***

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your final grade for this course is based on your engagement with and mastery of concepts underlying human development, learning, motivation, and teaching. Four major requirements will determine my assessment of how well you engaged with and mastered the class material:

- 1. Participation in class discussions and on WebCT** **15 points**
We meet only once a week and you (like me) are expected to attend every class meeting. With the exception of the first day, please come class with all the readings completed and prepared to actively participate in class discussions. If you must miss a class, please inform me (preferably by email) at least 48 hours before class (except, of course, in the case of emergencies).
- 2. Mid-term examination** **30 points**
The mid-term exam will be during class on Tuesday October and will include material from all of preceding readings (see Course Schedule). The exam will consist of 10 matching items (1/2 point each) and 25 multiple choice items (1 point each). The exam is designed to assess both your understanding of the theories and concepts discussed as well as their educational implications.
- 3. Philosophy of Learning and Statement of Pedagogy** **15 points**
A clear and concise statement about your philosophy of teaching and/or learning is something that you are likely going to be asked to produce (in writing or speech) as you enter the job market. This statement may be relatively short (1 to 2 pages) but it should be well-polished, if not poetic, piece of writing. You may want to consider employing a rhetorical device, such as a metaphor or analogy, to communicate your understanding of how students learn and your view to teaching.
- 4. Final examination or research paper** **40 points**
All students are required to complete a final take-home exam or a research paper related to cognition and instruction. The form and substance of the paper is to be determined by students but must be approved by me.

Final letter grades will be assigned accordingly:

Point Range	Grade
97 to 100	A+
94 to 96	A
90 to 93	A-
87 to 89	B+
84 to 86	B
80 to 83	B-

and so on (I hope not!)

You are expected to be familiar with what constitutes academic misconduct. In particular you should be familiar with what constitutes plagiarism. If you are unclear or have any questions, it is your responsibility to ask me or some other authoritative source for clarification. Per University stipulations, cheating and/or plagiarism will result in a failing grade (i.e., an F) on the assignment in question.

COURSE SCHEDULE

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>READINGS</u>
PART I: Introduction to Human Learning and Development: Brain, Mind, and Self		
Aug 30	Introduction to Learning	Ch. 1 Ormrod Ch. 1 Bransford
Sept 6	Learning and the Brain	Ch. 2 Ormrod Ch. 5 Bransford
Sept 13	Cognitive, Psychosocial and Moral Development	TBA
PART II: Behaviorist Views of Learning: Learning Like an Animal		
Sept 20	Theory: Classical and Operant Conditioning	Ch. 3 & 4 Ormrod
Sept 27	Application: Operant Conditioning and the Effects of Aversive Stimuli <i>Philosophy Statement: First Draft</i>	Ch. 5 & 6 Ormrod
PART III: Social Cognitive Theory: Knowing More Than We Show		
Oct 4	Social Cognitive Theory	Ch. 7 Ormrod
PART IV: Cognitive Views of Learning: Learning Like a Machine		
Oct 11	Cognitivism: Antecedents and Assumptions <i>Mid-Term Examination: Beginning of Class</i>	Ch. 8 Ormrod
Oct 18	Theory: Information Processing, Part I	Ch. 9 & 10 Ormrod
Oct 25	Theory: Information Processing, Part II <i>Final Paper: Topic, Abstract and/or Concept Map</i>	Ch. 11 & 12 Ormrod
PART V: Complex Learning and Cognition: Learning Like a Human		
Nov 1	Metacognition and Self-Regulation	Ch. 13 Ormrod
Nov 8	Problem-Solving and Transfer	Ch. 14 Ormrod Ch. 3 Bransford
Nov 15	Social Constructivism <i>Philosophy Statement: Final Draft Due</i>	Ch. 15 Ormrod
PART V: The Motivation to Learn		
Nov 29	Affective and Cognitive Factors <i>Final Paper: First Draft Exchange</i>	Ch. 16 & 17 Ormrod
PART VI: Teachers and Teaching		
Dec 6	The Situation and Subject Matters	Ch. 6 & 7 Bransford
Dec 13	<i>Final Paper or Take Home Exam Due by Midnight</i>	

COURSE GRADING RUBRICS

Participation

0 Points	1/2 Point	1 Point
No or minimal attempt to participate in small group, whole class, or WebCT discussions. (Unexcused Absence)	Moderate attempt to participate in small group, whole class, or WebCT discussions. (Excused Absence)	Active listening and full participation in small group, whole class, or WebCT discussions.

Note. We will be using WebCT for asynchronous discussions about class topics. Prompts will be graded on quality of the responses, so be sure to make quality prompts. The determinants of a quality online discussion posting include (but are not limited to) the following: the post introduces a new idea or perspective related to the topic; the post summarizes previous posts in a useful way that furthers subsequent discussion; the post relates 2 or more posts making connections within or across discussions; the post provides a prompt that expands or takes discussion in a new yet course-relevant direction.

Essays

Criteria	Problematic (2 pts)	Progressing (3 pts)	Acceptable (4 pts)	Exceptional (5 pts)
Basic Writing Mechanics (10%)	Frequent errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation	Errors in grammar and punctuation, but spelling has been proofread	Occasional grammatical errors and questionable word choice	Nearly error-free which reflects clear understanding and thorough proofreading
Structural Organization (15%)	Essay lacks logical progression of ideas	Essay includes brief skeleton (introduction, body, conclusion) but lacks transitions	Essay includes logical progression of ideas aided by clear transitions	Essay is powerfully or creatively organized and ideas fully developed
Focus and Clarity (25%)	Topic is not clear; focus is lost focus by inclusion of irrelevant ideas	Essay is focused on a topic but one or more ideas seem loosely related	Essay is focused on a topic and includes relevant ideas	Essay is focused, purposeful, and reflects clear insight, critical thinking, and ideas.
Understanding of Theories, Principles, & Concepts (25%)	Absence or apparent misunderstanding of relevant theories, principles, and/or concepts	Limited use and/or understanding of learning material displayed by vague, unclear language	Sufficient use and proficient understanding of learning material is demonstrated	High level of use and understanding of learning material; clear, concrete, and appropriate use of theoretical principles, concepts, &/or ideas
Claims Supported with Evidence (25%)	Little to no solid supporting evidence for claims made in the commentary	Some support but it is loosely developed and lacks specificity	Support for claims or ideas is clear and specific	Specific, well-developed support drawn from multiple sources (class notes, text, outside sources)