



## **EPSY 359 Learning Theory**

Wednesdays, 1-3 PM

103 Gentry

Instructor: M. Young

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015B Gentry (860-486-0182)

### Course Goals

#### EPSY 359 Course Objectives

- Discuss the major research paradigms used in learning and cognitive research.
- Discuss the major aspects of the following models of learning from both a theoretical and applied orientation: for example, Anderson, Brown, Bruner, Gagné, Gardner, Glaser, Mayer, Piaget, Sternberg, Vygotsky.
- Differentiate the implications of Constructivism, Social Constructivism, Situated Cognition, Behaviorism, and an eclectic approach to how people think and learn.
- Develop instructional interventions applying the research related to episodic and semantic memory in educational settings.
- Differentiate the characteristic of procedural and declarative knowledge as applied to instructional settings.
- Discuss the issues related to memory permanence and the factors/procedures that may influence memory.
- Describe at least two models of problem solving and tie their theoretical base to a model of learning.
- Describe the pros and cons of three different methods for evaluating problem solving courses
- Discuss automaticity and define its role in cognition.
- Describe one model of imagery and discuss the role of imagery in learning.
- Describe the attributes associated with expert and novice performance.
- Describe the role of the schema in learning and describe how schemata are developed and used.
- Discuss the role of context and social environment in learning.
- Discuss three different models of decision making, describing the major characteristics of each.
- Discuss how instructors can increase students' skills in making judgments and decisions.

- Describe the attributes that contribute to a successful PBL environment.
- Describe appropriate evaluation techniques for measuring learning from different theoretical perspectives.
- Describe the role of domain knowledge in learning environments.

### Course Requirements

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#### **(35%) Content examination**

The exam will be essay format and focus on learning theories and theorists discussed in class presentations and assigned readings.

#### **(30%) Theorist paper**

The paper is to be typed and double-spaced using the current APA format. Details on the topic and format for the paper will be distributed on webct.

#### **(10%) Philosophy Statement**

This statement will outline a personal statement with regard to their philosophy of thinking, teaching, and learning. In 8, double-spaced pages or fewer (compliant with APA guidelines; note that references, tables, figures are not included in 8 pages), present a statement of philosophy and pedagogy that describes your philosophy about how people think and learning and how this might best be put into practice by giving three of your tenets regarding “best cognition and instruction practices.” Of course, it may be obvious that teaching and learning positions complement one another. As you present these points of view, refer to at least one philosopher, psychologist, or educational psychologist who holds similar viewpoints. Additionally, introduce the ideas of at least one philosopher, psychologist, or educational psychologist who would express opposing views to yours. Emphasize at least one major difference between your views and those of the opposing ones. With respect to this difference, argue why you think your view is better for the enhancement of thinking, teaching and/or learning.

#### **(15%) Class participation.**

Students are expected to be prepared to discuss the assigned topic each week by completing all the required readings prior to the class meeting.

#### **(10%) WebCT discussion**

As you begin to read about your chosen theorist, you will be required to post a brief (1 paragraph) summary of their work and post a thought question concerning this theorist's ideas to the class on WebCT discussion forum. All students are expected to contribute to these discussions, but there is no "minimum" or "required number of posts." You may "lurk" on some but not all of the discussions. Exceptional participation include summarizing, combining 2 threads, initiating a new thread that captures interest from the class, and introducing new ideas that further discussion in interesting ways.

**Note:** Grades will be assigned on a criterion-referenced basis, where A+ is *exceptional and outstanding*, B+-A- are considered *good performance*, B is considered *adequate*, C is considered *below expectation*.

EPSY 359 Spring 2006 Course Schedule		
<u>WEEK</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>READINGS</u>
1/18	Introduction to course content, select Author... <a href="#">Sample use of theories</a> <a href="#">Great Theorists List with links</a> Brainstorm- Theorist, known, unknown, want-to-know	Ch 1
1/25	<a href="#">Robot Challenge</a> - What is cognition? What is learning? Draft Philosophy Statement <b>DUE</b>	Read this link before class and Ch 14
2/01	Presentation: Problem Solving; Jasper Woodbury Theorist proposal (1-pager) <b>DUE</b>	Ch 4, 11
2/08	Attention, Goals, and Consciousness, Decision-Mkg	*Ch 3, 12
2/15	Presentation: Memory (false, Declarative/ Procedural); Reasoning ( <b>Guest: Scott Brown</b> )	*Ch 5, 6
2/22	Knowledge representation	Ch 7, 8
3/01	Lanuage, Literacy and Context	Ch 9, 10
3/08	Spring Break - NO CLASS	
3/15	Vygotsky- Social Learning DRAFT <b>DUE</b> (Theorist paper)	Ch 13
3/22	Presentations: Assessing Contemporary Learning	
3/29	Presentation: Expertise and Automaticity	
4/05	NO CLASS MEETING/ AERA; Online WebCT chat during regular class time.	

4/12	Content Exam	
4/19	Theories of Embedded, Embodied Learning Revised Philosophy Statement <b>DUE</b>	
4/26	Theorist Presentations	

Texts: [Sternberg, Cognitive Psychology](#) available online \$86.36 (less if you are willing to wait and get it from <http://half.com>)

How People Learn by Bransford, Brown & Cocking (2000). Available and readable completely online at <http://www.nap.edu/openbook/0309065577/html/index.html> (Note: there is also a shorter version designed for teachers also available online at <http://books.nap.edu/html/howpeople2/> and you can also buy the [paper copy from National Academy Press](#) for about \$25)