

Educational Psychology
EDU 301 Fall 2009 for Elementary Students

10:00 - 11:20 AM

Tuesdays and Thursdays

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Office Hours: Wednesdays: 11- 2 pm

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Required Textbook: Durkin, J. (2003). Cases in Educational Psychology: A Canadian Perspective.

In addition, there will be required “readings,” from the Internet including articles, videos, blogs and so forth.

Overall Goals of Course, and General Course Structure

In this course we will focus on taking what we know from research about teaching and learning, and applying that to educational practices. Educational psychology has a great deal to say about how teaching and learning could be; each of you should acquire a broad understanding of the possible applications of educational psychology in real classroom contexts. In addition each of you will become immersed in an area of particular interest to yourself, allowing you to delve further with your understanding. The overriding goal is that each of you will acquire knowledge and understanding you can use in classrooms; we will strive to connect theory to practice in relevant appropriate ways.

The material in this course is linked to several of the competencies for teachers provided by the MEQ. The problem in explaining how is that this is a broad survey course with implications for practically everything in education, and so this course touches on each competency. If you consider the syllabus, there are parts on motivation, classroom management, individual differences, learning theories with implications for planning and teaching, etc. Most specifically, this course relates to the competencies related to the teaching act, including #3 developing teaching/learning situations and #5 evaluating student progress in learning and #6 planning, organizing and supervising class to promote social and intellectual development. The course will also look at competency #7, which focuses on learners’ individual needs. Competencies 2, 12 and 8 are also addressed.

The textbook is not a typical educational psychology textbook. After years of hearing students in this programme explain how they have already learned much of the core basic information included in these textbooks, I have decided to break from the mold and instead use a ‘textbook’ which draws on a series of cases with brief notes proceeding each one. This should help us keep focused on the links between theory and practice, helping you see the relevance of theories. I will provide supplemental

notes and materials when more information would be useful for you than is in our textbook. I hope we enjoy this exploration of the case-study method and find it an interesting innovative educational technique.

You will learn through the case studies, through reading, through watching video tapes, through surfing the Internet, through face-to-face and online discussions, through class activities, through connecting what you learn in the classroom with your classroom experiences, and through reflecting on the course material and your own progress.

For my teaching philosophy I draw on social-constructivism (especially Vygotsky) and also cognitive information processing models of learning. You the learner are in an active role in the learning processes involved in this course. Your learning in this course should involve an iterative cycle of action and reflection.

You will learn from each other and also through individual endeavors. My role is to help facilitate your learning: to ensure that you have an opportunity to acquire the core content of the course and also the opportunity to expand your own understanding and interpretations through small-group activities, discussions, and individual reflection. I will aim to create structure that allows the exploration of learning to be interesting and yet manageable. Following socio-constructivism, I also plan to model some of the skills targeted in this course. Finally, beyond even deep comprehension, I hope to inspire you with a love for the subject material that ideally will motivate you to apply what we know of human nature and learning to improve your teaching in classrooms.

A creative intellectual online game, a group exploration of a case study, a wiki and a final test are used to promote learning of the fundamental course material: the online activity will be used to promote reflective discussion and the learning of core concepts, and the final exam and wiki will help insure that you review and synthesize course content. Finally, the opportunity to explore a case study will provide each student with a chance to study one area in-depth.

Activities for Assessment

20% HipBone Game (Oct. 1 to Oct. 15)

30% Teaching Experience (in groups of 2 or 3) (between Sept. 29 and Nov. 19)

15% Case-study analysis: written 5 pages double-spaced, excluding references

15% Case-study facilitation in class plus brief handout/wiki contribution

15% Wiki (in pairs or individually) due Dec. 1

25% Final test

10% Participation

HipBone Game (25%)

Oct. 1 to Oct. 15

For this activity you will each engage in small groups of 3 or 4 in a group online activity. Marks for the HipBone Game are awarded on an **individual basis**. This activity is designed to advance your understanding of the course material and to support your reflective, critical thinking individually and in groups. If you have played a HipBone Game before, you will find this a rather different approach. Rather than a specific topic, we will develop a list of concepts ahead of time. In the game, each move will be about a different concept. Furthermore, the links you draw must be between the concepts. The game will explore both the set of concepts and how they relate to each other. So if one move is about intrinsic motivation and the other about bullying, then the two concepts will have to be linked.

This type of activity is called a HipBoneGame, and is a type of 'cognitive' game played in groups of 3-4. You can choose your own groups. Please let me know once you have formed a group, and also ask me for help in finding group members if you run into any difficulties. Remember that you will be dependent on your group members for successful completion of these games; although each member is individually responsible for their own moves, the inter-relationships between the moves is crucial. So I suggest you pick your team members carefully and work to build positive relationships with one another during the game process.

Each individual will play three or four moves, all of which must link to other player's moves. Each move should open with a quote. Quotes should not be one-liners and should be drawn from outside the educational context. The content of each move excluding the quotes should be approximately two pages double-spaced. Use references to educational theory and also connect theory to practice; use examples and personal experience to illustrate your points.

Assessment of the game will be based on the exhibition of: critical thinking (AKA deep thinking), understanding of core course issues, creative thinking, viewing multiple perspectives, and co-construction of knowledge (especially through linking).

Analysis and Presentation of Case Study (30%)

September 29th to November 19th (sometime between these dates)

Written analysis of case: 15%

Class facilitation of case study: 15%

Case study selection: During the first week of the course you will read the text and handouts, and attend classes dealing with the topic of learning and psychology, how it has been studied in the past, and how it might apply to the present and future. During the course of your initial reading, think about the areas being presented, and tentatively select several topics you would like to explore in depth. By our third class, indicate three topics you would like to present in order of preference (i.e., first choice, second choice,

third choice). If you have someone in particular you would like to work with, make these decisions together and submit your choices as a team (maximum three people).

Class Facilitation/Presentation of Case Study (15%):

You and your group will be responsible to present your case study, allow the class to explore it, and present your conclusions; this process should take 30 minutes maximum. Students will be required to read the case study before class. The group must also bring a 'lesson plan' to submit to the professor.

Your primary objective in the presentation is to engage the class in a meaningful learning experience where they gain an understanding of key principles and how they relate to the case study you are exploring.

The presentations should be organized more or less as follows: a brief introduction to the case study; a period where students explore the case or debate key issues arising from the case (often people use groups for this); and finally a period where the group brings the class together to summarize key conclusions about the case study and its implications for classroom practice.

The total facilitation time should last no more than 30 minutes, and at least 15 minutes must be devoted to the students exploring the case actively.

Do not use PowerPoint for this exercise; these class facilitations/presentations are meant to be interactive, not about you imparting 'knowledge' to your peers.

Remember that your main object is to facilitate student understanding of the essential concepts in an engaging, meaningful fashion. All class members will be responsible for asking intelligent and probing questions. Disagreement as well as confirmation and supplementation are encouraged. Finally, expect my participation. Expect me to reinforce and summarize key points, help begin a debate, and so on.

Please notice that each member of the group must participate in the classroom component, must speak to the class as a whole, and must be involved in the planning of the class facilitation and the creation of the materials. It is not acceptable to jig-saw and have one member create the hand-out, one member organize the talk, etc. I will be asking for a group statement of what each member did.

Handout/Wiki contribution: Prepare a short handout that you feel would be useful to explain your case and key issues you feel are relevant. Distribute Xerox copies of these handouts at your presentation. Also please post it in the class wiki site.

Case study Report (15%):

You will submit a written analysis of the case you present in class. This will be due one week after the facilitation so that you are able to incorporate some of the experiences in class into your analysis.

Key components will include: summary of important facts about the case; problem(s) that need to be solved; analysis (this is the core component); and recommendations. Your analysis of the case should focus on the key issues raised in the case and should demonstrate an understanding of the core principles covered in class. Your analysis should lead clearly to your

recommendations. Your analysis and recommendations sections should clearly show you your case study accommodates individual needs of students.

Group wikis (15%) (due December 1)

For this course you will create a wiki, which is easy to do technically but more difficult conceptually. The idea is that you will synthesize the main elements you have learned in this course and you will represent this understanding in a website. A wiki is just an easy way to make a website.

You will do this in pairs, groups of three, or individually.

This will help you synthesize the course material as you study for the test. It will also allow you to have fun and be creative while doing that synthesis, and will encourage you to work together to foster shared understandings of course materials.

Final Test (25%)

This course will have one open-book test consisting of mini-essay and/or possibly essay questions. The main criteria will be your exhibition of high-level understanding of the course material and the skills to apply that understanding.

The test will be open-book but you will not be allowed to access the Internet; this because students might copy and paste from the Internet in test circumstances which is not a good way to present their knowledge and is also plagiarism. You are expected to write original answers for the test.

Plagiarism & Professionalism

I expect you to be careful not to commit plagiarism. In particular, if you are quoting a source, you must give credit. Do not paraphrase the textbook or other works without giving credit: this is a form of plagiarism. Plagiarism may be even easier to commit in online discussions than in written works: the more informal nature of online communication as compared to written communication may lead students to think the same rules do not apply. They do. Cite all sources online as well as in written assignments. Do not use someone else's words unless you place them in double-quotation marks.

Plagiarism and other forms of cheating (for example, copying another student's assignment and presenting it as your own) will be taken very seriously. Please refer to the definition of plagiarism in the Academic Calendar for 2008-2009.

As developing teachers, students are expected to demonstrate professional conduct in this course. Examples of such conduct include respecting others, maintaining appropriate confidentiality, letting me know about unavoidable absences, and being polite especially to each other. In particular, students should not be on the computers logging onto their e-mail accounts, MSN chat sessions, or working on assignments for this or other classes.

Students should note that professional conduct is a condition for success in this course. Students whose overall professional behavior is unsatisfactory will be referred to the Review Committee whose mandate is the supervision of individual student progress. Please refer to the School of Education's Policy on Ethics and Professionalism for details about professional conduct.

Attendance: More specifically, attendance in this course is an essential part of acquiring the course content and each student's consistent presence is an essential part of creating a learning community. Please let me know in advance about anticipated absences. If you unexpectedly cannot make it to class, please let me know via e-mail either ahead of time or as soon as possible afterwards. Paying attention in class, participating actively, and displaying your interest are all positive ways to add to the learning community; we all have our bad days ('Jonah days'), but please show your respect for others by trying to give your best in class.

Submission of assignments: Timeliness in the submission of assignments is important. When assignments involve group work then each group member's active participation is necessary for the group to function smoothly. Timeliness is important when trying to work with each other: you need to be able to depend on your teammates and they on you. In particular, it is impossible in an online activity to do all the work in the last two days. Sometimes a student logs on after everyone else in his/her group has finished an online debate, and then tries to add some comments. (This is analogous to arriving in the classroom after class is over and talking to oneself.) This is not considered acceptable participation in an online activity, and will result in a failing mark in the activity.

As regards other deadlines for individual submissions, these too are important. The assignments are spaced out to allow you to process the material over time. The spacing out of assignments also allows for formative feedback that will provide you the opportunity to improve your learning and me the opportunity to improve my teaching. Please note that **I reserve the right to award marks individually for group assignments if members appear to have worked disproportionately.**

If you are sincerely unable to meet a deadline due to illness or personal reasons, please let me know **in advance** face-to-face, via e-mail or via the telephone so we can discuss the situation. Sometimes students are facing specific circumstances, and it is important to let me know if that is the case so we can find a satisfactory way to allow you to successfully complete this course.

Please note that changes may be made to the topics covered and the deadlines to match the flow of the class in order to take advantage of 'teachable' (AKA 'learnable') moments.

COURSE CALENDAR EDU 301 Winter 2008 Elementary

Week	Date	Topic/Chapter Title	Reading/ Deadline
1	Sept 10 Th	Introduction to Applying Psychology to Teaching	Chapter 1
2	Sept 15 T	The nature of evidence	Chapter 2
2	Sept 17 Th	Genetics, evolutionary psychology, environment	Chapter 3
3	Sept 22 Tu	Brain and biological development	Chapter 4
3	Sept 24 Th	Cognitive and language development	Chapter 5
<i>Students may present case studies following this date</i>			
4	Sept 29 Tu	Cognitive and language development	Chapter 5
4	Oct 1 Th	Social and emotional development	Chapter 6 Game begins
5	Oct 6 T	Moral development	Chapter 7
5	Oct 8 Th	Peers and social relations (film)	Chapter 8
6	Oct 13 T	Behavioral learning theories	Chapter 10
6	Oct 15 Th	Cognitive learning theories	Chapter 11 Game ends
7	Oct 20 T	Cognitive learning theories Work on wikis	Chapter 11
7	Oct 22 Th	Mastery, direct, constructivist approaches	Chapter 12
8	Oct 27 Tu	Differentiated instruction and Brain-based approaches	Chapter 13
8	Oct 29 Th	Group and cooperative learning	Chapter 13, supplemental
9	Nov 3 Tu	Emotions, stress, motivation	Chapter 14
9	Nov 5 Th	More on motivation	Chapter 14
10	Nov 10 Tu	Learning environments, learned difficulties	Chapter 15
10	Nov 12 Th	Classroom Management	Chapter 16
11	Nov 17 Tu	Controversies	Chapter 18
11	Nov 19 Th	Alternative Schools	Chapter 19
12	Nov 24 Tu	Distance and digital education	Chapter 20
12	Nov 26 Th	Synthesis course material	
13	Dec 1 Tu	Synthesis course material	Wikis due

* Test to be scheduled during exam period in our classroom; as early as possible