EdP 5003 903
PSYCHOLOGICAL LEARNING THEORIES
Course Syllabus — Spring 2010

Instructor: Sharon Nichols
Office: Downtown: DB 4.342
Office Hours: Wednesday 2-4 PM & by appointment
Phone: 458-2035
E-mail: Sharon.Nichols@utsa.edu
Class Meets: Wednesdays 5:30-8:15 (DB 3.216)

Required Texts/Reading: Set of Supplemental Readings (See list on pp 5-6 of syllabus). These will be available on Blackboard. You are responsible for printing these out (reading them of course 😊) and bringing them with you to the assigned class period.

Course Objectives: This course will provide a current and comprehensive overview of research and theory related to human learning. The course will emphasize major concepts of learning theory but will also cover relevant motivational, developmental, and classroom management theories. The course will underscore the relationship between theory, research and practice. There are four major objectives of the course:

1. To acquaint students with the general concepts of learning theory;
2. To review, understand, and critique research related to theories of learning;
3. To provide students the opportunity to engage in critical analysis of theories through class discussion and class assignments;
4. To give students opportunities to think about how to apply course material into their personal philosophy and future practice.

Upon completion of the course, students will be expected to understand and discuss major theoretical perspectives regarding human learning.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

PARTICIPATION (30%)
Blackboard: You should be checking Blackboard regularly. I will use Blackboard to make important announcements and it will be an important venue for class discussion.

Attendance and Participation: Students are required to attend class and to participate in all class-related activities. Class activities are designed to enhance the learning experience by facilitating students’ critical thinking skills. I expect students to participate fully and to exchange ideas with respect and consideration for their peers. Missing more than one class may jeopardize your grade. This means, I reserve the right to lower your grade by one letter for missing more than one class. Failing to participate or to read the assigned material may jeopardize your grade.

Reflection Paper: Students will write one reflection paper that they can turn in any time before spring break. Reflection papers are a writing opportunity for students to explore their personal views of human learning. Students are to choose from any of the assigned readings and write a reaction to that piece addressing such questions as: What are the strengths in the article? Weaknesses? How do the ideas fit with your emerging view of learning? Your developing practice? Incorporating references into this paper is not a requirement; however, if students do cite outside sources, appropriate citation format according to APA guidelines is expected. Students can use first person in this writing assignment. These reflection papers will be evaluated based on thoughtfulness, writing style and clarity, and integration of course information into philosophy. It should be no longer than three pages.

Weekly Takeaways/Questions: For each class period, prepare a few main “take aways” from the articles that stood out most to you. Regularly, I will be asking students to share their take aways with the whole class or in small group settings. Similarly, I would like all students to come to class with questions that emerged from their weekly
reading. It is in sharing our “take aways” and questions that will enhance your learning experience….I look forward to your participation!

ASSSESSMENTS (40%)
There will be two assessments during the semester (each worth 20% of final grade). Each test will consist of multiple choice and short answer. Because we are not using a textbook this semester, your success on tests will rely on your attendance and participation in class discussion. Students are encouraged to get into study groups and to work together to prepare for each test.

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT (30%)
This is a five-seven page paper describing your personal philosophy of human learning. The goal of this paper is for you to have the opportunity to formulate your own personal view of learning. This view or vision statement will serve as a guide for your future practice/role in a teaching or mentoring setting. You may draw upon any theory, idea, topic we cover in class. Please note, I am much more interested in seeing how you will relate a theory, idea, or topic to your vision/philosophy of teaching or mentoring than in seeing how much you know about any one theory, idea, or topic. In short….show me what you care about, how you view learning and how this view might guide your future orientation toward students or clients (or in any other setting/role you define). Philosophy Statement Due Date: April 26, 2010

Paper Formatting: Your paper should include a title page and a reference page (if relevant). The paper should be formatted according to APA (tips for APA formatting are available on Blackboard, and you should include at least five research studies in your work/analysis.

Grade: Your grade will be based on integration of course material into your philosophy. You will also be graded on your writing clarity, style, and level of adherence to APA writing and formatting guidelines.

A FINAL THOUGHT ON YOUR GRADE
Your final grade is a combination of your participation (30%), your tests (40%) and your philosophy paper (30%). I value effort and reward improvement. Therefore, more or less weight may be given to any one individual assignment that shows significant growth (or deterioration) in a student’s quality of work or level of effort over time.

In this course and on all writing assignments in general, a grade of “C” reflects average to below average performance. A grade of “B” in this course reflects “above average” performance. “A’s” are assigned only for “outstanding” performance that demonstrates excellence in effort and performance.

I understand that emergencies and unexpected events happen in our lives. Therefore, extensions will be granted only on a case-by-case basis and will depend upon the extenuating circumstances.
GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

**Inclusion:** Persons with disabilities will be fully included in this course. Please let me know as soon as possible if you need any special accommodations to the curriculum instruction, or assessments so you can fully participate. I will try to maintain confidentially of the information you share with me. However, I must contact Disabilities Services to alert their office so that they can share with me the services I can use to assist you. Students with disabilities may register with the Office of Disability Services located in MS 2.03.18 on the UTSA 1604 campus, 210-458-4157 (voice), 210-458-4981 (TTY), or UTSA downtown, FS1.526, 210-458-2816 to receive support services.

**Student Standards of Conduct and Performance:** (1) Students are expected to adhere to UTSA’s principles of academic integrity. See the student catalog for an explanation of issues related to and the consequences of plagiarism, cheating, and other acts of academic dishonesty (Grad Catalog, pp. 49-50). (2) Graduate students must demonstrate fitness to practice in the field of counseling. Please be aware that classroom behavior, discussion, professionalism, and coursework will be used to evaluate your fitness to practice. See [www.utsa.edu/hop/chapter5/5-16.htm](http://www.utsa.edu/hop/chapter5/5-16.htm) for information on fitness to practice. Be aware that acts of academic dishonesty or evidence of non-fitness to practice will be documented and maintained as part of students’ records. Be aware that your course paper may be scanned for text copied/plagiarized from online info, papers, and other resources.

**What I expect from you:**

This is a graduate-level course and students are expected to be self-directed learners. A major requirement of this course is class participation. Students will be expected to read and study materials in advance, attend all class meetings and ask questions as needed to maximize personal understanding. As graduate students your level of investment will determine your level of success; all grades are earned.

**What you can expect from me:**

I will give you everything I have so that you can be successful practitioners. My goal is to provide you with the theoretical and empirical information on human learning so that you can integrate it into your personal philosophy for practice.
## Tentative Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING ASSIGNMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 11</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 20</td>
<td>Introduction to learning</td>
<td>READING #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 27</td>
<td>Behaviorism</td>
<td>READING #2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Classical and Operant</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 3</td>
<td>Behaviorism</td>
<td>READING #3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Social Learning Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 10</td>
<td>Behaviorism</td>
<td>READING #4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Taxonomies, Mastery Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 17</td>
<td><strong>Assessment I</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td>February 24</td>
<td>Cognitive Information Processing Problem Solving, Transfer</td>
<td>READING #5</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 3</td>
<td>Meaningful Learning</td>
<td>READING #6</td>
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<td>March 10</td>
<td>Situated Cognition</td>
<td>READING #7</td>
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<td>March 17</td>
<td><strong>SPRING BREAK NO CLASS</strong></td>
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<td>March 24</td>
<td>Development &amp; Learning</td>
<td>READING #8</td>
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<td>March 31</td>
<td>Interactional Theories of Learning</td>
<td>READING #9</td>
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<td>April 7</td>
<td><strong>Assessment II</strong></td>
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<td>April 14</td>
<td>Motivation I</td>
<td>READING #10</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 21</td>
<td>Motivation II</td>
<td>READING #11</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 28</td>
<td>Last Class—Wrap Up</td>
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*Philosophy Paper DUE*

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*Student Study days are April 29 and 30, 2010*
REQUIRED READING LIST

READING #1


READING #2


READING #3


READING #4
• Carroll, J. B. (1963). A model of school learning. Teachers College Record, 64, 723-733


READING #5


READING #6


READING #7

READING #8

READING #9

READING #10

READING #11