EDUC 591 – LEARNING ABOUT HOW PEOPLE LEARN
Mondays; 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Room 2328 SEB

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734-647-2975 (office phone)
Office Hours: by appointment

Canvas: We will use Canvas for our course management system. I will use our course Canvas site to post course materials (e.g., weekly reading, class PowerPoints, assignment guidelines). It is your responsibility to check the Canvas site regularly. Please let me know if you do not have regular Internet access.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
There are various perspectives about how people learn. What are some major perspectives that have shaped educational practice? Why have these perspectives been so influential? Whose perspectives on learning have not been as central to educational practice and why (and why should we worry about that)? How do these various perspectives show up currently in our own work – whatever that may be (e.g., curriculum development, K-12 and/or post-secondary teaching, museum exhibit design, assessment development, development of educational technologies, educational policy)? How might these perspectives influence our work moving forward?

These are the types of questions we will explore in this course. The course is meant to provide an introduction to some of the major theories of learning and how they have guided educational practice historically and currently. We will read texts to explore some of these theories, and we will analyze educational artifacts and learning environments (e.g., curricula, assessment, software, pedagogical strategies, museum programming) to look for traces of these various ideas about learning. In addition, we will investigate how existing educational artifacts and learning environments might be altered to better align with one or more of these perspectives on learning. Your interests and past learning-related experiences will help guide some of what we read, as well as the education-related artifacts and learning environments that we choose to analyze.

COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
This is a seminar-style, survey course with an emphasis on (a) analysis of text and other artifacts, (b) thorough and thoughtful in-class discussion, and (c) in- and out-of-class explorations related to course themes. Given the sheer breadth of information related to this course and its themes, it should be obvious that you will not become an expert on the topic of “how people learn” in 14 weeks. However, through course readings, discussions, writings, and explorations, my hope is that you will have a much more detailed understanding of various perspectives about how people learn, how those perspectives have shaped educational practice, and how they might be useful to you with respect to your current and future work.
Course Evaluation
Grades are based on total points earned. No curve is used. Note that I do not give grades of A+ in graduate-level courses (because as noted above, no one is going to be “expert” with respect to any of these ideas after one, 14-week course). The course grading scale is as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Percent Range</th>
<th>Corresponding Grade</th>
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<td>94% - 100%</td>
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<td>Below 60%</td>
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NOTE: See “Course Assignments and Projects” for a list of course assignments and their accompanying points.

Additional Policies and Expectations
1. Academic and Professional Integrity
It is expected that all members of this learning community will conduct themselves with integrity related to all aspects of our academic and professional lives. This includes making certain that plagiarism never occurs. If you are unsure about how to correctly attribute ideas, words, work, etc. to others, please ask. Please refer to the following website for specific policies and procedures related to academic and professional integrity:
http://www.soe.umich.edu/file/academic_integrity/

2. Accessibility & Access
Every member of this learning community has the right to full participation. If you need extra support for any reason, please do not hesitate to contact me and have a discussion with me. I want to support your learning as fully as I can. I will, of course, keep our discussions private and confidential. For example, if you need an accommodation(s) for any type of disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. We can work with Services for Students with Disabilities (http://ssd.umich.edu/) to ensure that your learning is fully supported.

3. Discrimination/Harassment
No member of this learning community should be subject to discrimination of any kind and/or harassment. Please refer to the following websites for University policies related to discrimination and harassment:
http://spg.umich.edu/policy/201.89-1
http://www.rackham.umich.edu/current-students/help/discrimination
4. **Diversity, Inclusion, Justice, and Equity**
As you know, the University of Michigan School of Education is guided by twin imperatives, as we call them: a focus on education practice (writ large) and a commitment to diversity, inclusion, justice, and equity. In this course, we will explore how these twin imperatives currently surface in discussions about how people learn, and what this might mean for OUR practice (e.g., teaching, policy, design) moving forward.

5. **Classroom Community**
Our work together relies on honest, open, and respectful dialogue so that all participants feel free to express their views and ask questions. Disruptive behavior (e.g., inappropriate language, talking over others, harassing others) has no place in our course and will result in the loss of participation points at the very least. Here are a few guidelines to help facilitate our conversations and activities each week:

   a. *There is no such thing as a stupid question.* Please ask any and all questions that you have and remember that by asking your questions, you are allowing us to learn as a community because you are helping to make ideas visible.

   b. *Be respectful of others’ ideas and experiences* even if they are different from your own. We do not have to agree but we do owe it to each other to listen to and consider each other’s points of view. On a related note, please *respect confidentiality* related to this course.

   c. *Listen to others* by trying not to interrupt until whoever is talking is finished and until you have heard and considered what others have said. *Do not assume that silences are unproductive.* Give others time to think, consider, and formulate ideas.

   d. *Monitor your participation.* If you are outgoing and tend to dominate conversation, use this course as a chance to practice allowing others a space to participate. If you are less outgoing and tend to let others do the talking, use this course as an opportunity to practice speaking up and adding to the conversation.

   e. *Please turn cell phones off or to vibrate* before each class session out of respect for our community. On a related note, *use laptops appropriately* (e.g., note taking, presentations). Unless directly related to this course, please *refrain from texting, visiting Facebook, etc.* Please *turn off all MP3 players.* Please be mindful of your technology use because it can be quite offensive to others if they are speaking and you are texting or checking email.

6. **Attendance, Participation, and Communication**
Regular, on-time attendance and thoughtful participation during class discussions and other activities are essential not only to your individual performance but also to the success of the course and our community. We all share responsibility for the learning and teaching in this course. Because you will not be able to participate in the class community if you are not present, *absences will result in the loss of participation points,* except in cases of extreme circumstances (e.g., family emergency, illness). If you know that you have to miss a class session, *please notify me PRIOR to your absence.* You are responsible for obtaining all materials (including summaries of class activities and discussions) and making up any missed work. *I expect excellent communication* (e.g., notifying me prior to any absence, notifying me about any issues regarding assignments).
7. Late Work, Extension Requests, and Revisions
LATE WORK: Unless I state otherwise, all assignments are due on the dates listed in the syllabus. You may submit your work via email to me directly, and/or by uploading it to the course’s Canvas site.

EXTENSIONS: I understand that we are all busy people and sometimes we are not able to adhere to stated due dates. If you need an extension, please talk with me in person or contact me via email. Make sure you contact me PRIOR to any given due date or I may not be able to grant your extension request. Please do not abuse my liberal extension policy.

REVISIONS: You may revise and resubmit assignments that you submitted on time (this policy does not apply to late work unless I have granted you an extension). Should you find yourself in this situation, I will give you detailed instructions about how to revise your work. I will expect that you take account of my feedback when creating your revisions.

8. Format for Assignments & Assignment Submission Guidelines
Unless I note otherwise, all assignments must be typed. Please double-space your work, use 1” margins all around, and use 12 point Times New Roman font. As with all assignments, I expect you to attend closely and carefully to spelling, grammar, and other conventions. When referencing course and other materials, please follow the American Psychological Association style guidelines (APA – 6th edition). You can access the APA style manual through University of Michigan’s libraries or online at http://www.apastyle.org. Purdue University also has a very helpful online APA guide: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS
NOTE: When applicable, more detailed assignment guidelines and evaluation criteria will be posted to Canvas in a timely fashion.

1. Participation – 20 points total – ~15% of final course grade
Due Date: Rolling throughout the semester
You are expected to participate in all aspects of this course. Participation will take many different forms throughout the semester. For example, I might ask you to bring questions to class, design an activity that relates to the readings, and find web sites and other resources to share. You are expected to come to class having already done the readings and ready to participate in discussions and other activities. I want to see you sharing your expertise, debating various perspectives, questioning ideas and arguments, and proposing practical applications for the ideas we are exploring.

2. Learning Paper – 20 points – ~15% of final course grade
Due Date: September 12 (first day of class): upload to course Canvas site or email this paper to me directly
In no more than 5 pages (typed and double-spaced), write about a time where you felt like you deeply learned something. You can write about something you learned in a school context, or you can write about something you learned elsewhere (e.g., in a museum, as part of a hobby, as part of a previous job). Make sure to fully describe the event; where you were, what you were
learning, why, how, with whom, etc. Why do you think this learning event is so vivid for you? Why do you think you learned whatever you learned so well? When you say you “learned” whatever it is that you learned, what does that mean to you (i.e., how are you defining learning as tied to this event)? Finally, what questions do you have about learning (in general, as tied to your previous work before you came to grad school, etc.)? Please do not include citations in this first paper. Linking your ideas and experiences to course literature will come later. Presently, I am interested only in hearing about the learning experience you wish to describe. We will revisit these papers, and your ideas, at the end of the semester.

3. Learning Analyses – 30 points each (60 points total; you must complete two of these) -- ~40% of final course grade (20% each)
Due Dates: Analysis 1: on or before October 31, 2016; Analysis 2: on or before November 28, 2016. Your second analysis must take into account at least one theoretical perspective discussed since the October 31, 2016 due date.

A large part of this course is identifying where and how the theories of learning we will explore (or main parts of them) show up in current practice. We will have these types of discussions each week and analyze educational artifacts, learning environments, instruction, etc. together in class. At two points during the semester though, you will submit a more formal and thorough analysis of an artifact, environment, etc. (what you choose to analyze and which theory/theories you choose to work with is up to you).

4. Final Course Project – 50 points -- ~35% of final course grade
Due Date: on or before Dec. 16 at 5:00 p.m. (no extension possible for this assignment)
You have some choice with respect to your final course project. Perhaps you want to complete a third learning analysis. Perhaps you want to begin to design some type of artifact drawing on a theory/theories of learning. Perhaps you want to read more deeply about one or two of these theories and summarize what more you learned. We will talk in detail about my expectations for this project in class.
→ NOTE: You must email me (or talk with me in class) no later than October 31 about what you will do for your final project.

COURSE SCHEDULE*
*I reserve the right to revise this schedule whenever necessary and useful for us based on our progress in the course.

WEEK 1 – SEPTEMBER 12, 2016 – COURSE INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS YOUR LEARNING “STORY”?
READING:
ASSIGNMENT:
1. “Learning” paper due before class this week. Be ready to discuss your learning story in class.
WEEK 2 – SEPTEMBER 19, 2016 – DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES ON LEARNING

READINGS:
  → Chapter 1: Learning: From Speculation to Science

ASSIGNMENTS:
1. Come to class with any questions you have about the syllabus.
2. Begin to think about what artifacts, environments, educational films, educational memoirs etc. you want to analyze for your two analysis assignments. Your choices should be guided by your interests, your past or current work/career, and/or what you wish to do next after you finish your degree.

IDEAS ABOUT LEARNING: MAJOR THEORISTS AND THEORETICAL TERRAINS

WEEK 3 – SEPTEMBER 26, 2016 – BEHAVIORISM

GUEST SPEAKER: MS. ANNA SHAPIRO (2ND YEAR DOCTORAL STUDENT)

READINGS:

ASSIGNMENTS:
1. Find some examples of behaviorism used in current educational practice. Be ready to share and discuss your examples in class on October 10th.
2. Your first learning analysis is due on or before October 31.

WEEK 4 – OCTOBER 3, 2016 – NO CLASS (INSTRUCTOR ABSENCE)

READINGS:
*Start reading for October 10th.*

ASSIGNMENTS:
1. Remember to find some examples of behaviorism used in current educational practice. Be ready to share and discuss your examples in class next week.
2. Your first learning analysis is due on or before October 31.
WEEK 5 – OCTOBER 10, 2016 – INTELLIGENCE

READINGS:


OPTIONAL READINGS:

ASSIGNMENTS:
1. Find some examples of how theories of intelligence are still used in current educational practice. Be ready to share and discuss your examples in class on October 24th.
2. Your first learning analysis is due on or before October 31.
3. Make sure to contact me no later than October 31 to tell me about your final course project idea.

WEEK 6 – OCTOBER 17, 2016 – NO CLASS (U-M’S FALL STUDY BREAK)

READINGS:
*Start readings for October 24th.

ASSIGNMENTS:
1. Remember to find some examples of how theories of intelligence are still used in current educational practice. Be ready to share and discuss your examples in class next week.
2. Do not forget that your first learning analysis is due on or before October 31.
3. Remember to contact me no later than October 31 to tell me about your final course project idea.

WEEK 7 – OCTOBER 24, 2016 – SOCIOCULTURAL THEORIES OF LEARNING

READINGS:


ASSIGNMENTS:
1. Find some examples of how sociocultural historical theories related to learning are used in current educational practice.
2. Your first learning analysis is due next week.
3. Make sure to contact me no later than next week to tell me about your final course project idea.

WEEK 8 – OCTOBER 31, 2016 – EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHERS AND CONNECTIONS TO LEARNING
READINGS:

ASSIGNMENTS:
1. Locate some examples of where one or more of the ideas we discussed this week show up in current educational practice. Be ready to discuss the examples you locate in class next week.
2. Your second learning analysis is due on or before November 28th.

WEEK 9 – NOVEMBER 7, 2016 – CONSTRUCTIVISM
READINGS:

Optional Reading:
ASSIGNMENTS:
1. Where have you seen ideas related to constructivism show up this week? Be ready to discuss any examples you find in class next week.
2. Your second learning analysis is due on or before November 28th.

WEEK 10 – NOVEMBER 14, 2016 – THEORIES OF LEARNING FROM COGNITIVE SCIENCE
GUEST SPEAKER: PROFESSOR CHRIS QUINTANA

READINGS:

ASSIGNMENTS:
1. Find an example of how ideas related to cognitive science show up in current educational practice. Be ready to discuss your example in class next week.
2. Remember that your second learning analysis is due on or before November 28th.

WEEK 11 – NOVEMBER 21, 2016 – CRITICAL THEORIES OF LEARNING
READINGS:

ASSIGNMENTS:
1. Find an example of how ideas related to critical theories of learning show up in current educational practice. Be ready to discuss your example in class next week.
2. Remember that your second learning analysis is due next week.
3. Remember that your final course project is due on or before December 16th (by 5:00 p.m.).

WEEK 12 – NOVEMBER 28, 2016 – THEORIES IN DIALOGUE
GUEST SPEAKER: PROFESSOR ANNMARIE PALINCSAR
READINGS:

**Optional Reading:**

**Assignments:**
1. Look back at your learning story that you wrote in preparation for the first day of class. What perspectives on learning that we have discussed and study seem most applicable to your story and why? What questions do you now have about learning that you want to continue to explore? Be ready to discuss your reflections next week in class.
2. Final papers are due on or before December 16th by 5:00 p.m.

**Week 13 – December 5, 2016 – Life-Long, Life-Wide, & Life-Deep Learning + Situated Learning**

**Readings:**

**Assignment:**
--Final papers are due on or before December 16th by 5:00 p.m.

**Week 14 – December 12, 2016 – What Next? (Course Wrap-Up)**

**Reading:**

**Assignment:**
--Final papers are due on or before December 16th by 5:00 p.m.
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NOTE: We’ll add to this list throughout the semester. See the “Additional Readings that Might be of Interest” on Canvas.

Dewey, J. (1896?). John Dewey’s original letter to the Trustees of the University of Chicago, arguing for the creation of a laboratory school.