The Scholarship of Academic Contexts and Success/EDUC 869
Winter 2015
Fridays 12:30 – 3:30 pm
School of Education

INSTRUCTORS: Lisa R. Lattuca, Janet H. Lawrence
OFFICES: Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education (CSHPE)
University of Michigan
SEB Room 2117
Ann Arbor, MI 48109
OFFICE PHONE: (734) 647-1979
EMAIL: llatt@umich.edu, janlaw@umich.edu
OFFICE HOURS: Contact us for appointments

OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE:

The course is designed to prepare doctoral students studying in the concentration in Academic Affairs and Student Development for their roles as researchers.

The course is divided into three parts. For the first four weeks, we will focus on deepening your knowledge of how to read and critique research, with an emphasis on how research studies are conceptualized and how these conceptualizations are translated into empirical research. During this part of the course, we will discuss readings about conceptualizing and critiquing research and we will also practice critiquing study conceptualizations and methods as well.

In the second part of the course, we will be reading and critiquing different approaches that researchers have taken to studying “academic success.” There are, as we will discuss on the first day of class, many ways to conceptualization “academic success,” and we have selected a variety of approaches to examine in weeks 5 through 10. In these sessions, we will consider how different researchers have conceptualized topics such as access to higher education, adjustment, motivation and self-regulation, and learning. We will be reading and discussing a range of articles and chapters, some conceptual, and some empirical, with the intention of examining closely the ways in which researchers define and study key concepts.

The last part of the course is dedicated to topics of particular interest to course participants. Each student will select a topic and relevant theoretical frameworks that he/she would like to consider in depth, and will share responsibility for identifying readings and leading discussions on this topic.

Course Objectives:
The primary goal of this course is to build your knowledge and skills related to conceptualizing and critiquing research. Specifically, you will learn to

• think conceptually about topics related to academic success
• critique how research is conceptualized and carried out methodologically
• critically analyze and synthesize scholarly work on a topic of interest.
**TEXTS AND REQUIRED READINGS:**

There is no required text for the course. Readings will be posted on CTools.

**EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:**

*Class Participation:* This is a discussion-based course. Our class discussions are an opportunity to raise questions, clarify understandings, challenge ideas and opinions constructively, consider how ideas can be translated into research, and learn about others’ perspectives. Effective discussions are marked by attentive listening to and thoughtful consideration of ideas that are circulating. Good discussions ensue when we critically assess the arguments, practices, or ideas in the assigned texts and that we bring to the conversation. Noting key points, posing questions, and connecting ideas and concepts as you read enable us to actively participate in class. Your comments, whether fully developed or still under construction, are welcome as we work together to understand the strengths and limitations of specific ideas and their utility for guiding higher education practice and scholarship.

Please review the schedule of readings in advance so that you will have time to fully prepare for each class meeting. The quality of our discussions relies on your ability to talk and think about the ideas we encounter. Class participation will contribute 25 percent of your final grade. A rubric explaining the participation grading criteria will be posted on CTools (Rubric Folder: Class Participation Rubric).

*Assignments:* The assignments for this course are very briefly described below. We will provide expanded descriptions of each assignment and an evaluation rubric to guide your work, as well discuss the assignments in class. Since this the first time we are teaching this course, we will be asking for your feedback on the evaluation criteria and rubrics as we develop them.

**All assignments for the course are due on the dates posted in this syllabus.** If you have a pressing commitment, you must negotiate an alternative date with us in advance of the due date. Deferred grades for the course (incompletes) will be awarded under extraordinary circumstances; you must discuss the need for a deferred grade, and the due date for completion of the course, with us in advance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critique Session 1</td>
<td>Friday, Jan. 23</td>
<td>ungraded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critique Session 2</td>
<td>Friday, Jan. 30</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison of Conceptual Models</td>
<td>Friday, Feb. 13</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal for Student-led Session</td>
<td>Friday, Feb. 20</td>
<td>ungraded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-led Session</td>
<td>March 27 – April 3</td>
<td>credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper for Student-led Session</td>
<td>Monday, April 20</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Critique Sessions:** You will lead two “critique sessions” early in the term. We will model these discussion sessions in class before we ask you to do so, and the first of the two sessions will be done in teams and will not be graded. For the second session, you will lead the discussion of a single article. Our goal is to give you practice in presenting and critiquing scholarship. The grade for the second critique session will be 10% of your course grade.

**Comparison of Conceptual Models:** On February 13, we will focus on the task of conceptualizing phenomena and research. Before class, you will hand in a short paper that compares three conceptualization that have been forwarded by higher education scholars to guide studies of student persistence. The grade for this paper will contribute 25% of your course grade.

**Proposal for Student-led Session:** Each student in the course will propose a topic and a set of relevant articles that he/she will lead during the final four weeks of the course. You will hand in a short proposal on February 20 that will identify a topic that you are interested in exploring and provide initial ideas about readings for the group. The proposal will not be graded; instead we will provide feedback, ask clarifying questions, and make suggestions to help you develop your session.

**Student-led Session and Paper:** Your major assignment for the course will be development of your session and a paper that explores your topic, focusing in particular on how the scholars you have asked us all to read have conceptualized the phenomenon and studied it empirically. We will work with you on the design of the class session, and your paper will reflect the thinking you have done to prepare for the session. Your paper will be due after your session, on Monday, April 20. The grade for your session and paper will be 40% of your course grade.

**Details:** All written assignments should conform to – and include – APA (American Psychological Association) style for citations and references. Written assignments must be double-spaced, 12-point Times Roman, with one-inch margins.

**Evaluation Criteria:**
In general, assignments will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- demonstration of complex understanding of subject, indicated by quality of research, analysis, argumentation, and elaboration of important ideas;
- knowledgeable and effective use of relevant literature to support claims;
- organization (logical progression of ideas and arguments);
- clear and engaging writing;
- balanced and critical discussion of ideas or arguments; and
- thoughtful integration of ideas across studies.

**Grading Scale:** The scale used for determining final course grades will be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>3.7 - 4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.4 - 3.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.1 - 3.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>2.8 - 3.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.5 - 2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.2 - 2.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0 - 2.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.1 - 1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 - 1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Rewrite Policy:** Students who receive grades of B or less on the first assignment have the option to rewrite this paper. (Credit lost due to lateness cannot be regained through rewriting.) There is no grade limit for a voluntary rewrite. A *rewrite does not guarantee an increase in your grade*. To improve your grade, you must demonstrate significant improvement by addressing my comments. Rewriting typically requires attention to the conceptualization, content, and organization of a paper. It may also require attention to synthesis, evaluation, and/or analysis.

Please submit the original copy of your paper with your rewrite. **Rewrites will be accepted until February 28. Please inform us if plan to do a rewrite.** It may be useful to set up a time to discuss our comments before begin your rewrite.

**Academic Integrity:**

Students are expected to comply with the Rackham Policy on Academic Integrity ([http://www.rackham.umich.edu/policies/academic_and_professional_integrity/statement_on_academic_integrity/](http://www.rackham.umich.edu/policies/academic_and_professional_integrity/statement_on_academic_integrity/)). Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, falsifying or fabricating information, plagiarizing the work of others, facilitating or failing to report acts of academic dishonesty by others, submitting work done by another as your own, submitting work done for another purpose to fulfill the requirements of a course, or tampering with the academic work of other students. If you are unsure what constitutes a violation of academic integrity, please come talk with me.

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:**

If you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way I teach may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the office of Services for Students with Disabilities to help us determine appropriate accommodations. I will treat any information you provide as private and confidential. See [http://www.umich.edu/~sswd/](http://www.umich.edu/~sswd/) for more information about services for students with disabilities.

**Religious Observation:**

This class observes University defined holidays (such as Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Fall break). Because other days may be of more significance than a University-designated holiday, please inform me as soon as possible if a class day or due date for a class assignment conflicts with your observance of a holiday important to you. I will work with you to accommodate your needs.

### Introduction: How is “academic success” conceptualized and assessed?


### Building Theoretical Frameworks


### Critiquing Theory and Methods

- Also, see Handout on Critiquing Research on CTools
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Examples of mid-level studies: 
Examples of macro-level studies: 

**Recommended:**  
*For an alternative conceptualization of social capital:* 
For an example of a deficit approach:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>February 13</th>
<th>Session 6</th>
<th>Adjustment Part I: Emphasis on Conceptualization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DUE: Comparison of Conceptual Models</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>February 20</th>
<th>Session 7</th>
<th>Adjustment Part II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DUE: Initial Proposal for Student-Led Session</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**February 27**  
**Session 8**  
**Motivation: Self-efficacy**


---

**March 13**  
**Session 9**  
**Learning: Cognitive Perspectives**


---

**March 20**  
**Session 10: Learning: Sociocultural and Situative Perspectives**


Thiry, H. & Laursen, S. L. (2011). The role of student-advisor interactions in apprencticing undergraduate researchers into a scientific community of
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>March 27, April 3, April 10, April 17</th>
<th>Student-Designed and -Led Sessions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


*Recommended – Applying learning theory to faculty work:*