

Psychology 3410M 3.0

General Description

The purpose of the course is to develop an understanding of psychological concepts and psychological research relevant to education, as well as to consider the application of these to educational practice. Psychological constructs such as learning, motivation, cognitive processes and social construction will be used as bases from which to examine contemporary educational practice. The theoretical and practical ideas of John Dewey are given special attention, particularly as they relate to the current constructivist approaches to education. The material considered is relevant to the education of both children and adults (including oneself) in a wide variety of settings

Course Director

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Course Format

The course meets on Tuesdays from 8:30 to 10:20 and on Thursdays from 8:30 to 9:20 in Curtis Lecture Hall A. Students are expected to attend class regularly, to complete the assigned readings for each week before coming to class, to participate in small-group discussions of the readings and exercises during class and online, and to work consistently towards completion of a project related to the readings.

Course Activities

Discussion groups

. A central feature of the course is a small-group discussion period held during each Tuesday class meeting. Students are divided into groups of four to discuss questions based on the assigned reading. The purpose of this discussion is collaborative development of the group's understanding of the authors' concepts. Each group is asked to document their discussion, typically by writing minutes of the discussion. These minutes are handed in to the Course Director immediately after the discussion. Following the class each student will post a reflection on at least one of the items from the small-group discussion on the Psychology Dialogue Forum

Preparation for discussion

. Discussion of assigned material is most productive when the participants read and review the material prior to the discussion. Therefore, students are expected to study each assigned chapter before the relevant class meeting. Documentation that one is prepared is by means of a brief quiz held at the

beginning of each Tuesday class, just prior to the small-group discussion. The expectation is that students will routinely answer most of the questions correctly. Those who do not do so will be asked to meet with one of the course instructors to discuss the relevant material.

Examinations

. A midterm examination will be held on February 11th, and a comprehensive, three-hour final examination will be held during the April examination period. The purpose of the examinations is to allow students to demonstrate their ability to integrate course concepts into meaningful patterns. The examinations are composed primarily of essay questions.

Project

. The purpose of the project is to allow students to elaborate the course concepts in a more practical setting. The project will involve formulating a question or issue about some psychological aspect of education and investigating it as thoroughly as possible within the constraints of the course. Various assignments and class activities will be given to assist students both in formulating a question and in investigating it. Students will prepare a report of their investigations in essay form. The primary component of the project is an interview with a person professionally engaged in education. Locating relevant psychological material and observing appropriate educational situations will also be components of the project. At a few points in the course students will be required to submit reports of their progress to that point. The expectations for these stage reports will be circulated in the early weeks of the class. Feedback will be provided on the stage reports, but no grade will be recorded. The completed project will be due on April 4.

Evaluation

The course is designed to facilitate basic comprehension of the readings and to encourage elaboration and integration of the concepts in those readings. Achievement of these outcomes is evaluated by means of the activities described above. These activities are weighted as follows in the computation of a final grade:

20% Participation [class attendance (10%) and online reflections(10%)]

15% Quizzes

20% Midterm Exam (February 11)

20% Course Project (April 4)

25% Final Exam (April exam period, April 8 – 24)

Course Website

<http://www.yorku.ca/rsheese/3410>