
University of Georgia
Department of Lifelong Education, Administration & Policy
Program in Adult Education

Course Syllabus

EADU 8020
Adult Education in Social Context

Fall Semester 2005

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Course Description:

The social context of adult education, and the role of adult education in society, including race, class, and gender analyses. Relevant historical, sociological, political and economic factors that influence adult education theory and practice.

General Course Objectives:

The goal of this course is to provide an introduction to the field of adult education through an examination of the role of adult education in society. Students are expected to complete the course with a greater understanding a) of the social context within which adult education takes place; b) of the ways in which race, class, gender and other forms of diversity impact the theory and practice of adult education, c) of the changing nature of adult education theory and practice related to major social and global trends; as well as d) the ability to articulate important social issues related to their area of interest or practice.

Course Requirements:

Adult Education Interviews: Due September 6

This assignment is designed to explore the range of meanings that people hold about the meaning of adult education. Interview 3 to 5 persons (friends, co-workers, neighbors, strangers, family members) about their definition of adult education. Record what they say and summarize it in a short paragraph. We will discuss these definitions in class and review them together looking for particular patterns and themes. We will be interested not only in the patterns that emerge but also in what is missing. These need not be submitted directly to me.

Context of Learning Report: Due: September 20

The purpose for this assignment is to explore factors (individual and social) that affect adult learning. It is intended to be an exercise that will encourage you to integrate the

topics we have covered over the past several weeks. We will take time in class to process these reports.

Select one of the three movies listed in the assignment for this activity. Each one incorporates adult learning as an important aspect of the plot. After viewing the movie, prepare a short description of the learning activity (ies), of the learner(s), and the conditions or circumstances in which the learning takes place. Using Caffarella and Merriam framework, answer the following questions for the assignment: What kind of learning was to be achieved? What factors influenced the learning experience (either to promote or to inhibit learning)? Give your reaction to the learning experience.

Adult education experience observation: Due: October 18

Individually or in pairs select an adult learning experience that you can observe. Analyze the experience to determine social factors influence the experience for the learners and for the practitioners.

Book review: Due: November 15

Prepare a report on one of the books on the reading list. If you wish to do a book not on the list, you should clear this with me. Reports should be typed and double spaced and no longer than 5 pages. Please prepare a one-page summary of the book review to post on WebCT for the other class participants.

Poster session and Final paper: Due: December 9

Poster session on your final paper is due the last class. The poster session is a walk around session to discuss the posters you develop in relation to your final paper.

The final paper is a selection of topic of your choice on the nature and content of adult education as a field of research or practice. The final paper should be no more than 2000 words in length. You should use APA 5th edition as the style guide for completing this assignment. Information about APA can be obtained from the UGA library's web site at <http://www.libs.uga.edu/ref/apastyle.html>.

Approach to the Course and Evaluation:

Your active participation in this course is essential in order to ensure a thoroughgoing and thoughtful discussion of the concepts, models, approaches, and issues that have shaped the practice of adult education in the United States. In this regard, you should consider this a "discussion based" course. To be prepared for each session, I expect that each participant will have read and thought about the relevant text and online materials.

This approach to learning is sometimes termed "constructivist". Constructivism is a viewpoint that understands learning as a process where learners actively "construct" knowledge. Constructivist learning is based on students' active participation in problem-solving and critical thinking regarding a learning activity which they find relevant and engaging. Learners "construct" their own knowledge by testing ideas and approaches

based on prior knowledge and experience, applying these to a new situation, and integrating the new knowledge gained with pre-existing intellectual constructs. In other words, you will have sources of new information, the readings, online materials, co-learners, or me—the instructor. All of these are important sources of “information” but it is up to you to chew it, digest it, and use it in ways that are meaningful to you.

Therefore, course assignments have been developed with the idea that each participant will 1) draw upon his or her own personal or professional experience as appropriate; 2) extend his or her awareness and knowledge of each topic by interacting with other course materials, other participants, and/or the instructor; and 3) raise questions.

Submission of assignments

Assignments should be submitted electronically via email. Please send to my email address (tguy@uga.edu) . Before submitting assignments, please be sure to scan with antivirus software. I can accept assignments in either Microsoft Word format or WordPerfect. If you routinely use another software program for writing your assignments, then please convert the file to rich text format first before sending it to me. All electronic files should be submitted using the following name convention: first initial/last name / name of assignment.doc. For example, for the book review assignment, I would submit using the following file name: “tguy book report.doc” ; for the final paper, I would submit the file as “tguy final paper.doc”. I cannot guarantee receipt of your file if you do not follow this convention.

Class format and meetings

We will employ a mixed design approach. This means that we will meet face to face as well as online through WebCT. If you are not familiar with WebCT, I will provide you with instructions on logging in and using the course.

Face to face meeting dates:

August 23
August 30
September 6
September 20
October 4
October 18
November 15
November 29
December 6

WebCT “meetings”:

September 13
September 27
October 11
October 25
November 1

November 8
November 22

Required texts:

Available through MBS Direct textbook service. (<http://direct.mbsbooks.com/uga.htm>)

Merriam, Sharan and Brockett, Ralph, (1997). *The Profession and Practice of Adult Education: An Introduction*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Wilson, A. L. and Hayes, E.L. (2001). *The Handbook of Adult Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

In the schedule below, MB refers to the Merriam and Brockett text and HB refers to the Wilson and Hayes book.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading
August 23	Initial class meeting Course introduction and overview. A Survey of The Field: Adult education, its scope and definition Knowles video	
August 30	Origins and development of adult education in the United States Radical hillbilly video	Rose, Challenging the System (online) MB, Ch. 1, 2 HB, 1
September 6	A paradigm for the field: Adults as Learners Mezirow or Brookfield video Review lecture outline –Adults as Learners Parts I & II.	MB, Ch. 6, 8
September 13	Adults as learners (continued)	HB, Ch. 4, 5, 6
September 20	Context of Learning Reports Due	

September 27	Agencies institutions	MB 5 HB 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 34 (select 4 from HB)
October 4	Adult education, society, and social policy Cunningham video	HB, Ch. 10, 14, 36 MB 3
October 11	What is the role of adult education in social change movements? Understanding adult education in work, community, and civil society.	MB 9 HB, Ch. 18, 19, 37 HB 21, 22, 24, 26
October 18	Adult education observation reports due	
October 25	Global perspectives on adult education	MB, Ch. 7 HB, Ch. 20, 21
November 1	Social justice versus competence as the aim of adult education	MB, Ch. 11
November 8	Reflective practice as professional growth. Professional associations in adult and continuing education.	HB, Ch. 2, 3, 38, 42
November 15	Book reviews due	
November 22	Trends and directions in adult education	HB, Ch. 15, 33, 31, 27
November 29	Adult Education and the Media	McChensey Bagdikian, Media Education Foundation (online)
December 6	Poster Session Class review and evaluation	

Special assistance

If anyone in class feels that they need special assistance due a physical condition, please feel free to discuss this with me during or after class. The University of Georgia has resources available for students with certain disabilities. In addition, other accommodations may be made in consultation with me or with other students.

Academic Honesty

All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.

Subject to change:

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Appointments:

I am available on request to meet with you at any time. Please call me at my office or contact via email.

Adult Education Interviews – DUE September 6

Interview 3 to 5 persons (friends, co-workers, neighbors, strangers, family members) about their definition of adult education. Record what they say and summarize each interview in a short paragraph. You will post these definitions online and review them together looking for particular patterns and themes. We will be interested not only in the patterns that emerge but also in what is missing based on our reading of Merriam and Brockett.

Suggested questions for interviews:

1. In your opinion, what does adult education mean to you? Is it the same or different than continuing professional education? Or on the job training?
2. Have you ever participated in an adult education program or class? If so describe your experience?
3. How is adult education different from other kinds of education? (e.g., a freshman attending college? Or a high school sophomore?)
4. What qualifies someone as an adult in order for an educational activity to be considered “adult” education?
5. What would you say is the purpose of adult education? Can you give an example?

If the person you are interviewing asks you what adult education is, please do not give them an answer. If they are unable to answer the question, then move on to someone else.

NB: These need not be submitted directly to me—bring your interview summaries to class for discussion.

Context of Learning Report – due September 20

The purpose for this assignment is to explore factors (individual and social) that affect adult learning. It is intended to be an exercise that will encourage you to integrate the topics we have covered over the past several weeks. We will take time in class to process these reports.

Select one of the three movies listed below. Each one incorporates adult learning as a central aspect of the plot. After viewing the movie, prepare a short description of the learning activity (ies), of the learner(s), and the conditions or circumstances in which the learning takes place. What are the factors that seem to influence learning (either to promote or to inhibit) it? What is your reaction to the learning experience in the movie?

1. Stanley and Iris (1990) (PG-13). Jane Fonda, Robert DeNiro.

Synopsis: Two blue-collar workers help each other break free of their own personal prisons. For Stanley, the inability to read or write has plagued him all his life. Iris has just lost her husband and is suddenly emotionally paralyzed. Together they help each other to learn, live and, ultimately, to love again. (1 hr. 47 min.)

2. Renaissance Man (1994) (PG-13). Danny Davito, Gregory Hines, Cliff Robertson.

Synopsis: An advertising executive loses his high-paying job and finds work teaching remedial classes to Army recruits; he soon finds out that he doesn't really belong in the armed forces, but fights for his job and his style of doing things anyway. (2 hr. 8 min.)

3. Back to School. (1986). (PG-13). Rodney Dangerfield, Sally Kellerman, Robert Downey.

Synopsis: A self-made millionaire decides to join his only son who is having difficulty in fitting in at school as a freshman in college. This impulse gesture sets him on a path to much laughter, a little romance, a lesson in things that money can't buy and unanimous acclaim as the most popular man on campus. (1 hr. 36 min.)

Adult Education Observation - due October 18

This assignment has two purposes. First, it is to expose you to an adult education process with which you are not familiar; second, it is to give you an opportunity to apply some of the theoretical concepts relative to social context we have been discussing in class.

Visit an adult education class or experience. This can be a formal, non-formal, or informal experience. Take the opportunity to schedule some time with the person in charge of the program. Learn about the purpose and its goals of the educational experience. You may also acquire some of the written information available about the program if it is available.

Once you have educated yourself about the program, then go and observe it. Take notes, just as you would if you were conducting research. Note the relationship between the teacher and the students. Note the atmosphere of the class. Are all participants equally recognized? How is power shared in the class? Are there any social, financial, or political issues that shape the class? (NB. Some of these may be difficult to "see". You may have to ask questions of program staff or the director to learn more about these.)

It will be helpful to review some of the class readings to identify key concepts from the literature that will help you during your "observation".

Then summarize what you have learned in a report. The report should be no more than five pages and should be prepared for submission. Please come to class prepared to discuss your findings.

It is helpful, though not necessary, to do these observations in pairs. The reason is that two observers can usually "see" more than one. If you choose to do an observation in pairs, take note, during the write up of the differences between yours and your partner's comments. We'll want to hear more about these when you come to class.

Book review: Due: November 15

Choose and review an adult education book. The professor must approve the book in an effort to avoid duplication. The book review should follow the guidelines below. Prepare a report on one of the books on the reading list. If you wish to do a book not on the list, you should clear this with me. Reports should be typed and double spaced and no longer than 5 pages. Please be sure to bring a one-page summary of the book review to share with each of the other class participants.

1. Describe purpose, general content, and intended audience of the book.
2. Summarize book's key insights or themes.
3. Discuss relevance of the book to some aspect of the course or your own practice as an adult educator.
4. Give your informed reaction or commentary on the book.

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Final paper - Due December 9

Please write a on one of the following (1500 words total length) in response to one of the following questions or statements:

- a) How has your understanding of adult education changed from the beginning of this course? In considering your answer, provide your opinion about what you see as the meaning and purpose of adult education in society. Support your answer with reference to the literature we have covered in class.
- b) Have corporate interests co-opted American adult education causing it to largely abandon its social action orientation to improve lives and promote the public good.
- c) Does adult education, under the influence of western, industrial/technological societies, meet the fundamental developmental needs of third world nations?
- d) American adult education is primarily concerned with technicist interests and is not concerned with achieving social justice goals.
- e) "Adult education is not pursued for ulterior rewards: entrance requirements, exams, academic degrees count for naught in true adult education." - Eduard Lindeman, *The meaning of adult learning*" *Progressive Education* Jan. - Mar 1929.
- f) "The truly artistic teacher of adults . . . conscientiously suppresses his (*sic*) own compulsion to teach what he knows his students ought to learn in favor of helping his (*sic*) students learn for themselves what they want to learn." Malcolm Knowles, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: Pedagogy versus Andragogy*, 1970.

Important resources:

1. Adult Basic Education, Commission on Adult Basic Education, American Association of Adult and Continuing Education.
2. Adult Education Quarterly. Journal of American Association for Adult Education (AAACE).
3. Adult Learning. Journal of the American Association of Adult and Continuing Education.
4. Adult Literacy and Basic Education. Journal of the Commission on Adult Basic Education associated with the AAACE.
5. Continuing Higher Education Review : the Journal of the National University Continuing Education Association.
6. Convergence. Journal of the International Council for Adult Education.
7. Evaluation Practice. Sage Publications.
8. Human resource development Quarterly, Jossey-Bass, American Society for Training and Development.
9. Innovative Higher Education. Human Sciences Press.
10. International Journal of Lifelong Education. Barcombe, East Sussex, England, Falmer Press.
11. New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers.
12. Training and Development Journal, American Society for Training and Development Press.