

## EPSY 2130: EXPLORING LEARNING & TEACHING

Fall 2008 – Harper

(T-TR 2:00 – 3:15pm & 3:30 – 4:45; Rm 119, Aderhold)

### Contact Info:

Instructor: Jennifer Le' Shay Harper  
Office: 349 Aderhold  
Email address: [Jennifer\\_harper\\_epsy@yahoo.com](mailto:Jennifer_harper_epsy@yahoo.com); please use web-ct e-mail  
Home Phone: 706.207.9687  
Office Hours: Tues. & Thurs. – noon-2:00pm or by appointment

### Texts and Websites:

Required Text: Woolfolk, A. E. (2006). *Educational Psychology* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Required Readings book (comes packaged w/new texts): Knapp, N. F. (Ed.) (2006). *Readings in Educational Psychology*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Web-CT site—After the first day, I will be adding your name and email to the course WebCT site, which you will need to check **every day** for announcements, assignments, etc. In order to access this site, you will need to get a UGA myID, if you do not already have one. Check with OIT (232 Aderhold) for how to do this.

EPSY Blog – <http://edu-psych.blogspot.com> - Yes, I have a blog and no, you're not required to read it.

However, it does make me feel better when people frequent it and make nice comments. I post current research or news that is relevant to the topics we cover in this class or that I wish we had time to cover in this class.

### What you can expect from this course:

This course is primarily intended for people who are considering a career in education, but it is also very appropriate for those planning to work in other professions dealing with people, such as medicine, law, or even sales. Finally, it is a course for anyone who wants to know more about how people (including themselves) learn, develop, and are motivated. Therefore, we will be studying the psychology of “education” cast very broadly; teachers educate, but so do dietitians, doctors, nurses, therapists, lawyers, good salesmen, and, of course, parents. In this course, you will read about, discuss, and investigate theories, ideas, and research that address the following key questions:

1. How have I myself learned in and outside of school, and how do I learn most effectively?
2. How do personal factors (e.g., motivation, family and cultural background, temperament and learning preferences, prior knowledge and experiences) impact people's learning in various educational settings?
3. How do instructional practices and structures impact people's learning in various settings?
4. How do other factors in the learning environment impact learning in various settings?
5. How may I use this knowledge as a future professional to inform my professional planning and decision-making so as to maximize learning of all types in all students or clients?

### What I expect from you:

I expect you to come into this class with certain beliefs about teaching and learning, but I also expect you to be open to ideas and research that may challenge those beliefs. Most of you have very specific career goals that you are working towards; therefore, always try to apply the readings, lectures, and activities to your

goals so that you can get the most out of this class. I want you to think through these topics and try to understand them within the contexts you plan to work.

More specifically, the course requirements include:

Readings - The assigned readings are an essential part of this course, both the readings in the textbook and the accompanying book of readings. You will need ideas and information from the readings to complete journal assignments, take exams, and above all, to participate in and benefit from class lectures, discussions, and activities, which will focus mainly on applying and discussing issues that arise from the readings, rather than "covering" or restating what you have already read. A schedule of the readings and assignments for the class is attached. Daily reading assignments will also be posted on the Calendar section of the class WebCT site.

Daily Class Participation - (60 points possible) - People tend to understand things best when they have a chance to talk or write about them, preferably both, so I consider your participation in class discussions and activities to be a very important part of your learning. Therefore, you will be doing some in-class activities each week, often in small groups. There will be at least 20 of these activities and each activity will count 4 points toward the class participation portion of your grade. Individuals or groups who turn in activities showing focused thoughtful engagement will earn all 4 points. Those whose work shows less focus or thought will earn 1-2 points. Students who are absent or turn in no work for that activity will earn no points.

Journals - (60 points possible) – You will be turning in eight biweekly journals about the readings and/or discussions we have had in class. These journals have two purposes: to give you a specific occasion to think more deeply about particular aspects or issues we are covering, and to help me get an idea of what you are thinking about, what interests you, what seems confusing, etc. Each journal will be worth 8 points; they will be graded solely on the level of thoughtfulness with which you answered the question. I prefer journals to be typed, double-spaced, hard-copies as this just makes it easier for me to read and make comments. There are two parts to almost every journal, and each part needs to be addressed for full credit.

*Part I:* This part will change with each journal and will be posted on the web-ct calendar. Some journals will give you a choice of prompts for Part I.

*Part II:* This part never changes. In this part, you are asked to write about ONE thing that “struck” you in the previous week’s readings or discussions. You may want to talk about something surprising, confusing, fascinating, or something I or the authors said that you disagreed with.

Outreach Project - (60 points possible) - This project is intended to help you extend your learning beyond the boundaries of this class. There are many different ways to do this--see the Outreach Project description that has been handed out and is posted on web-ct.

In-Class Midterm – (60 points possible) More information about this exam will be forthcoming.

Final Exam - (75 points possible) - More information about this exam will be forthcoming.

The exams are applied written exams. They focus on applying the ideas we have been discussing in class to various real-life classroom situations. That is, you will not be asked to *remember* a specific "right" answer from your readings or class discussions, but rather to *construct* and *support* reasonable explanations of and solutions for common classroom problems. You will be given the questions ahead of time, and you will be allowed to use a note-card of your own notes during the exams.

**Hint:** As you read, I want you to do two things. First, try to really *understand* what the author is saying and why he or she is saying it. Second, "talk with" the author in your head: ask questions where the author seems to be unclear; notice the ideas that seem particularly interesting or horrible to you; remember things in your own life, or that you have read or heard elsewhere, that seem to support or contradict what the author is saying.

In-class activities CANNOT be turned in late. I will not take these late in part because they are most useful for your learning when they are done as the topics are covered in class, and in part because I simply won't be able to keep up otherwise. If you miss class you will simply miss the points for that day (with the exception of UGA pre-approved absences, such as those for religious holidays or sports participation. Exams may be taken early by prior arrangement, but **they can only be made-up late in the case of unforeseen, documented emergencies that can be verified by the UGA Office of Student Affairs.**

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.

### **What you can expect from me:**

Just as you come to this class with beliefs about teaching and learning, so do I, but you can expect me to listen, consider, and respect your beliefs. I truly enjoy teaching this class and I am committed to helping you apply the information to your own goals. I will always try to answer your questions or help when you are confused. I can't promise to be the best or most interesting teacher you'll have, nor can I promise to do or say all the right things each day in class – but you *can* expect me to teach the best way I know how, which is with honesty and enthusiasm.

Grading. When I grade your assignments and journals, you'll find a lot of comments and questions written on them. That's because I view grading as a conversation about your demonstration of what you have learned. Roughly 300 points are possible in this class and the grade distribution is below. Your grades so far and point totals will be listed as they are completed on the class WEB-CT site (if you cannot see your grades in Web-CT, *let me know!*). Incompletes are rare and are only given with the advice of Student Affairs. Withdrawals will follow the University policy.

A = 270 and over  
B+ = 260-269  
B = 240 -259  
C+ = 230 -239  
C = 210 -229  
D+ = 200-209  
D = 180 - 199  
F = below 180

**Schedule of Topics and Readings**  
EPSY 2130, Fall 2008

**About the readings:** Please complete the assigned readings *before* coming to class each day. “Woolfolk” refers to the required text, *Educational Psychology*, 10<sup>th</sup> edition by Anita Woolfolk. “REP” refers to the additional book of readings, *Readings in Educational Psychology*, edited by Nancy Knapp. REP also contains some handouts you will need for in-class activities, and I will often ask you to refer to the readings in your activities or journals so please *bring both books to class each day!!*

**Introduction**

8/19 - Introduction to the course and each other – *Read Woolfolk, xix-xxiv after class*

8/21 - Evaluating Educational Research - *Woolfolk, 8-17 & REP, 2-10*  
*[last day of drop/add; register for EPSY 2130L if desired]*

**Learning Theories**

8/26 - Behaviorism - *Woolfolk, Ch. 6*

**Journal 1 due**

8/28 - Behaviorism in the classroom – *Woolfolk, 330-33, 496-501 & REP, 12-17*

9/2 - Intro. to Cognitive Science - *Woolfolk, Ch 7*

**Outreach Project Description form due**

9/4 - Cognitive Science in the classroom - *Woolfolk, 301-305, 311-324. 485-496*

9/9 - More Cognitive Science (schema theory) - *REP, 18-28*

**Journal 2 due**

9/11 - Piaget's individual constructivism - *Woolfolk, 27-38*

9/16 - Vygotsky's social constructivism - *Woolfolk, 39-45, 343-348 & REP, 30-31*

**Outreach Paper introduction draft due**

9/18 - Constructivism in the classroom - *Woolfolk, 46-51, 348-362 & REP, 32-35*

9/23 – Review for the Midterm - *Woolfolk, 362-365*

**Journal 3 due**

**Individual Differences in Learning**

9/25 - Differentiated Instruction – *Woolfolk, 514-515, 121-127; REP, 36-45*

9/30 - **MIDTERM - in class**

10/2 – Intelligence – *Woolfolk, 109-121 & REP, 46-53*

10/7 - Standardized Testing – *Woolfolk, 521-534*

**Journal 4 due**

10/9 – Assessment and Grading – *Woolfolk, 561-579; REP, 54-59*

10/14 – Temperament – *REP, 60-79*

10/16 -- Families – *Woolfolk, 74-76; REP, 90-116*

10/21- Culture – *Woolfolk, Chapter 5 (except 177-182)*

**Journal 5 due**

10/23 – Culture (continued) - *REP, 118-140*

10/28 – Gender – *Woolfolk, 177-182 & REP, 159-167*

10/30 – Poverty – *Woolfolk, 72-74; REP, 141-158*

11/4 – Other forms of diversity – Read at least ONE of the following, but feel free to read as many as you like!

Student athletes – *REP, 168-175*

Gay/Lesbian students – *REP, 176-181*

Gifted students – *REP, 182-187*

Students with chronic or serious illnesses – *REP, 188-201*

**Journal 6 due**

11/6 – Identity and Adolescence – *Woolfolk, 66-72, 85-92, and 202-208*

11/11 – Peers – *Woolfolk, 76-81, 414-429 & REP, 219-233*

**Outreach Paper “First thing” draft due**

**Classroom Environment**

11/13 – Motivation – *Woolfolk, 371-395 & REP, 209-218*

11/18 – Motivation in the classroom – *Woolfolk, 396-407 & REP, 234-241*

**Journal 7 due**

11/20 – Classroom Management – *Woolfolk, Chapter 12*

11/24 – 11/28 – NO CLASSES – UGA THANKSGIVING BREAK

12/2 – Classroom Management cont. – *Woolfolk, 429-434 & REP, 242-260*

**Final Outreach Paper due**

12/6 - Inclusive classroom learning communities – *REP, 261-276*

**Journal 8**

12/9 - NO CLASS – UGA FRIDAY CLASSES MEET THIS DAY

12/11 - FINAL EXAM, 3:30 - 6:30 pm (for 2pm class)

12/16 - FINAL EXAM, 3:30 - 6:30 pm (for 3:30 class)

**About this syllabus:** The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by me may be necessary. I will not necessarily announce every assignment in class. I expect that you will read the syllabus and keep up with the readings on your own. I will only announce deviations from this course.

## ABOUT THE OUTREACH PAPER

The purpose of this project is to encourage you to extend your thinking and learning beyond the walls of this classroom. Below are several ideas for projects, but there are many others possible, so feel free to discuss any ideas you might have with me. Although most people may choose to work individually, you may work in pairs or even larger groups if you can provide a rationale for the benefit to your learning of working together. You must complete at least **10 hours** in whatever setting you choose, and you will present this project in an 8-12 page paper (see attached description), tying your project in with some of the ideas from the class. Keep a journal of your observations, questions, and thoughts related to your Outreach Project.

Even though it is summer and most schools are not in session there are still opportunities to work with students, adult learners, or children. Here are my suggestions for things you can do, with those I believe you will find MOST HELPFUL listed first. Consider your own schedule, goals, and interests when choosing your Outreach Project.

### Outreach Project Options

1. Are you already doing a project that qualifies? Do you babysit, teach Sunday School, coach a team or teach gymnastics (or anything along these lines)? Then you're set – just *keep a journal this summer and relate your observations and experiences to the ideas discussed in class.*
2. Work or Volunteer with an Individual Learner or Group
  - A. Work with a class or group of kids through a school, community, or church group (e.g., Girl Scouts, Little League, Sunday school, YMCA, Vacation Bible School). *Again, keep a journal of your observations, activities, and techniques to discuss in your paper.*
  - B. Volunteer at a nursing home. *You can teach and learn from older people, too, keeping track, of course, in your journal.*
  - C. Go to <http://www.coe.uga.edu/earlyexp> for a HUGE list of possible sites you can work in or volunteer for around town.
3. Spend 10 Hours Observing Learning and Development
  - A. If you can't coach a team, ask to observe 10 hours of practice and games. Take notes in your journal on how the coach and players interact, teach, learn, and communicate.
  - B. Observe children playing at a park, or other public area. Take notes on the children's activities, social interactions, and moments of learning. Consider the cognitive and social development of these children and relate that to the course material.
4. If you have another idea, come talk to me about it.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** It is probably obvious to you that some of the project options listed above will take more time than others. If you choose a service (#1 or 2) project that takes at least 15 hours, you may qualify to register for an extra 1-3 credit hours for your work, through ESPY 2130L. For more information, please see the 2130L handout on web-ct.

## What will the Outreach paper look like?

**The whole purpose of the Outreach Project is to give you a chance to connect the ideas we have been talking about in class to a real-world experience.** Much of the learning value in the project lies in the actual experience. The paper is intended to offer you a chance to stop and reflect a bit on what you've seen/done; it cannot "cover" everything you have learned from the experience. Whether you have chosen to observe a classroom, work with a group or an individual in an educational setting, or shadow someone, your paper should look something like this:

I. An Introduction - telling me what you did, where you went, and why you chose to do this particular thing, what you were hoping to learn or what questions or ideas you went into the experience with. (10 pts.)

II. A discussion of three main things you learned from doing the project (14 pts. each). This learning may be in the form of finding out something new, changing your ideas, developing new questions, concerns or interests, etc. This does not mean you necessarily have arrived at final answers on these issues, but rather that they reflect some of the most valuable learning you believe you did. In discussing each of these three points, you should:

- explain exactly what you learned and how you learned it, illustrating your learning with quotes from your journal or pieces from your personal notes on observations or conversations (7 pts.)
- discuss how what you learned extends, confirms, contradicts, or in some way relates to something we have been studying in class (i.e., you must **connect your learning with specific readings, lectures, discussions or activities from the class**) (7 pts)

III. A conclusion - talking about how all this learning will affect you in the future- as a person, parent, teacher or other professional. You need to be specific here, giving actual examples of how this learning might affect your future actions. You can also include any questions you still have (15 pts.).

In addition, you **MUST** sign the Outreach Project Honesty Form and turn it in with the Outreach Paper, along with your *journal entries, personal notes of observations or conversations, or whatever constituted your basic data* for the paper in their original form (i.e., they can be informal and hand-written). **You cannot get credit for this paper at all without both of these.**

All papers must be typed and double-spaced. Although there is no formal page limit, I think it would be very hard to write specifically and well about your experience in less than 8 pages, and I hope you won't need much more than 12 (not counting your verification form and basic data, which must be turned in as well).

Later, I will be giving you a copy of the rubric I will be using to grade these papers. They are worth 60 points total, divided as follows:

- 5 points for timeliness of submission
- 8 points for writing quality and clarity (please proofread!)
- 62 points for content (see above)

**NOTE: If you have also registered for EPSY 2130L**, you must e-mail *an additional electronic copy of your paper* as well as turn in the hard-copy for the regular course credit.