

**University of North Carolina at Greensboro**  
**Department of Curriculum and Instruction**  
**Graduate Studies in Higher Education**  
Course Syllabus for Fall 2006 ONLY

**Course Number:** CUI 607  
**Course Title:** Adult Learning and College Teaching  
**Credits:** 3:3  
**Course Prerequisites:** Graduate standing

**For Whom Planned:**

This course is designed for higher education faculty, college student educators, staff developers, trainers, and others involved in educational programming for postsecondary learners of all ages.

**Instructor Information:**

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**Catalog Description:**

Alternative teaching models; their nature, curriculum foundations, relationship to the adult learner, analysis, and evaluation. Research on teaching and issues in faculty evaluation.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Course participants who take advantage of the learning opportunity will:

1. Evaluate the appropriateness of instructional strategies in light of various sociocultural variables, including institutional setting, technologies, and economic conditions, among others;
2. Reconstruct theoretical explanations for learning in light of personal experiences;
3. Justify stated learning outcomes of a planned learning experience;
4. Formulate a personally meaningful explanation of learning;
5. Explain the complexity of learning, considering cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains;
6. Summarize and apply constructivist learning principles;
7. Critique popular metaphors of learning as manifest in publicly available texts;
8. Explain the role of learning in promoting freedom and justice;
9. Discuss various strategies for facilitating epistemological development.

**Teaching Strategies:**

The instructor will facilitate this learning experience by structuring scholarly discussions; engaging course participants in critical reflection; challenging learners with ill-defined, unstructured problems; presenting case studies for learners to analyze; and providing a list of thought-provoking, timely, and applicable readings. The role of the instructor is to develop a road map of the learning process and to facilitate learners' progress toward course objectives. It is not the role of the instructor to lecture or to speak Truth to course participants. All information pertinent to this course is provided in the course readings. We will take advantage of our time together not by repeating what we have already gathered from the readings but instead by engaging in thoughtful interaction with one another in a way that helps us all to construct personally meaningful knowledge. The role of course participants is to take responsibility for learning and to put forth the physical, emotional, and intellectual vitality required for graduate-level coursework.

## Evaluation Methods and Guidelines for Assignments:

Please do not turn in assignments early or late. Paper copies of all assignments must be submitted to the instructor on time for full credit to be earned.

1. *Planned Learning Experience.* (40%) The purpose of this activity is to facilitate the connection between theory and practice. It offers an opportunity to apply your learning to a concrete experience as you read through the Merriam and Caffarella text and progress through the course.

First, identify a learning experience that you would be interested in facilitating. This learning experience may be a semester-length course, a residence life program, a professional development program, or a non-formal program. The program should include at least three clock hours of instruction. This need not be a learning experience that you will actually facilitate; it may be hypothetical or imaginary. Please select a topic with which you have expertise, however.

Second, refer to the guiding questions provided in the course calendar. Each week, after you finish the readings, respond to these questions with your planned learning experience in mind. Bring your typed responses to class every week and be prepared to share your ideas with the class and to turn the responses in to the instructor. After the class has discussed the readings for the week, you may want to make modifications to your writing so that the final product includes what you learned during class activities.

Third, prepare a synthesis paper of all the reflection papers into a final project and turn it in on the due date. To prepare this paper, review your writings throughout the semester, and identify salient themes. These themes should then constitute the headings for your synthesis paper. Under each heading, please summarize the relevant, main points made in your writing throughout the semester. Please staple or clip the various pages together in the upper right-hand corner. The final paper should be between seven and twelve pages. It should demonstrate scholarly writing skills, critical reflection, and knowledge of the readings. Do not place these papers in plastic covers, folders, or anything of the sort. Just staple them together and turn them in.

2. *Final essays.* (40%) The purpose of this activity is (a) to engage course participants in critical reflection upon course material, and (b) to enable course participants an opportunity to demonstrate achievement of course objectives. No later than two weeks prior to the due date, the instructor will distribute a set of prompts to course participants. Course participants will then write a series of short essays in response to these prompts. Beforehand, course participants and the instructor will set criteria against which the essays will be judged. Responses should be written in APA style (5<sup>th</sup> edition), which includes a title page formatted according to APA specifications, (no abstract is necessary), title, running header, page number, double-spaced throughout (no triple spacing), punctuation and proper use of commas, references, in-text citations, bias-free language, and pronoun/antecedent agreement, among others.

3. *Attendance and participation.* (20%) Although the readings present the majority of course content, attendance and participation is important, because the course is designed to facilitate personal understanding through interaction with class colleagues. Please make arrangements to your calendar so that you may be present for each class meeting. Also, it is important for you to come to class having completed all readings and with typed responses to reflection questions in hand (for the first half of the semester). Course participants who demonstrate sustained engagement with the literature and with class activities and who are present for each class meeting will receive full credit for this portion of the final grade.

## Required Texts:

Merriam, S.B., & Caffarella, R.S. (1999). *Learning in adulthood: A comprehensive guide* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mezirow, J. (2000). *Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

## Required Readings:

Krathwohl, D. R. (2002). A revision of Bloom's Taxonomy: An overview. *Theory into Practice, 41*, 213-218.

NASPA/ACPA. (2004). Learning reconsidered: A campus-wide focus on the learning experience. (TBA).

## Topical Outline and Tentative Course Calendar:

8/14 Introductions

### SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXTS OF ADULT LEARNING

8/21 Readings due: Merriam & Caffarella, Chapter 1 – *Adult Learning and Contemporary Society*  
Merriam & Caffarella, Chapter 2 – *Learning Opportunities in Adulthood*

Questions:

- Describe the institutional context of your planned learning experience. Is it to be offered through a formal institutional setting or some other type of setting? How does this setting shape the design of the learning experience?
- How does the planned learning experience relate to contemporary issues such as the global market economy, technology, and demographic trends?

8/28 Readings due: Merriam & Caffarella, Chapter 3 – *Participation in Adult Education*  
Merriam & Caffarella, Chapter 4 – *Providing Learning Opportunities*  
Krathwohl (2002) – *A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy: An Overview (skim)*  
NASPA/ACPA. (2004). Learning reconsidered: A campus-wide focus on the learning experience. [Downloadable from the ACPA website].

Questions:

- Who do you expect to participate in the planned learning experience? What might be some of the motivating factors leading to participation? What barriers might limit participation, and how will you minimize these barriers?
- What are the desired outcomes of the learning experience? Who decided upon these desired outcomes? Who will benefit and how? Are these outcomes likely to be ideologically contested?
- Write the stated objectives that participants will have completed by the end of the learning experience. Use the terminology set forth by Bloom's Taxonomy (old or revised) and defend your choice to set these objectives (i.e., why did you choose synthesis and not evaluation?).

9/4 Labor day—Remember, labor produces all wealth.

### ADULT DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

9/11 Readings due: Merriam & Caffarella, Chapter 5 – *Biological and Psychological Development*  
Merriam & Caffarella, Chapter 6 – *Sociocultural and Integrative Perspectives...*  
Merriam & Caffarella, Chapter 7 – *Cognitive Development in Adulthood*

Questions:

- What developmental considerations must you acknowledge in planning this learning experience? How can you apply a knowledge of adult development toward making the learning experience more meaningful and motivating for participants?
- What developmental levels might you expect among participants? Will the developmental levels be varied? How will the learning experience promote cognitive, intellectual, epistemological, or moral development? Refer to one or more specific models of human development.

### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING

9/18 Readings due: Merriam & Caffarella, Chapter 9 – *Memory, Cognition, and the Brain*  
Merriam & Caffarella, Chapter 10 – *Experience and Learning*

Questions:

- How will you help participants connect new information with their existing knowledge? In other words, how will the learning experience build upon what participants already know?
- What can current knowledge about the brain contribute to your instructional design?
- How might reflection upon experience enhance learning outcomes?

9/25 Readings due: Merriam & Caffarella, Chapter 11 – *Key Theories of Learning*  
Merriam & Caffarella, Chapter 12 – *Andragogy and Other Models of Adult Learning*  
Additional reading on constructivism, TBA

Questions:

- How will you incorporate constructivist learning principles into the learning experience? Please go into some detail about how participants will construct personally meaningful understanding through their participation in the learning experience?
- How are constructivist learning principles different from the way learning experiences were conducted in your own educational history?
- What is your role in the learning experience? What is the role of the learner? What is the theoretical basis for your ideas? Why did you select this theory or these theories?

### **FACILITATING ADULT LEARNING**

10/2 Assignment due: Planned Learning Experience  
Class activity: Analysis of major scholarly journals in the field

10/9 Fall break

### **ETHICS AND ADULT LEARNING IN AND AGE OF INEQUALITY**

10/16 Readings due: Merriam & Caffarella, Chapter 15 – *Critical Theory, Postmodern, Feminist Perspectives*  
Mezirow, Ch. 1 – *Learning to Think Like an Adult: Core Concepts...* (Mezirow)  
Mezirow, Ch. 2 – *What “Form” Transforms?...* (Kegan)

Questions for reflection:

- What are the relationships among critical theory, critical pedagogy, and transformative learning? How does learning promote democracy and justice?
- Do you see human capital development programming as instrumental learning or communicative learning? Why? Reflect upon a time when you participated in a communicative learning experience: In what context did it occur?
- How does Kegan build upon constructivist learning principles? How do constructivist learning principles explain the way adult learners make meaning of their experience in the world?
- In what way have you demonstrated a self-authoring mind in past experiences? Did it lead to intransigence, or were you able to distance yourself from your transformed frame of reference to the extent that you were open to other ways of understanding?

10/23 Readings due: Merriam and Caffarella, Ch. 16 – *Ethics and Learning*  
Mezirow, Ch. 3 – *Inequality, Development, Connected Knowing* (Belenky & Stanton)  
Mezirow, Ch. 4 – *Transformative Learning for the Common Good* (Daloz)  
American Political Science Association – *Rising Inequality* (TBA)

Questions for reflection:

- Who benefits from economic development programming? Whose voice is heard in job-training, economic development, or human capital development programming?
- Think about what we read in *Learning Reconsidered*. How might the college experience be transformed so that it helps members of marginalized populations find their voice?

## **IDEOLOGY AND EMANCIPATION**

10/30 Readings due: Mezirow, Ch. 5 – *Transformative Learning as Ideology Critique* (Brookfield)  
In-class activity, TBA

11/6 Readings due: Re-read Mezirow, Ch. 5, and keeping the film in mind, think of the following  
TBA

## **FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE AND BACK AGAIN**

11/13 Readings due: Mezirow, Ch. 6 – *Teaching with Developmental Intention* (Taylor)  
Mezirow, Ch. 11 – *Analyzing Research on Transformative Learning Theory* (Taylor)

Questions for reflection:

- What might a transformational learning experience look like within the context of a college-level course? How might an undergraduate instructor promote transformational learning?
- How might a college student educator working within the context of student affairs teach with developmental intention?
- What advances in the transformative learning theory have occurred since the text was published?

11/20 Work on final essays

11/27 Final essay due

12/4 No class—you're free to focus on assignments in other courses

### **Academic Honor Code:**

Please read the Academic Integrity Policy carefully. By continuing in this course you agree to abide by this code. (<http://saf.dept.uncg.edu/studiscp/Honor.html>)

### **Attendance Policy:**

Participants are required to attend all scheduled class meetings. Please plan your calendar accordingly. If a conflict cannot be avoided, please notify the instructor.

### **Principles for Good Practice in Graduate Education:**

Please read the guidelines at the following link:

[http://www.uncg.edu/grs/bulletin/good\\_practice\\_guidelines.html](http://www.uncg.edu/grs/bulletin/good_practice_guidelines.html)