## How People Learn

05:300:202  Section 01  
Fall 2021  
3 Credits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hebbah El-Moslimany</th>
<th><a href="mailto:hebbahelmoslimany1@gmail.com">hebbahelmoslimany1@gmail.com</a></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location: Canvas</td>
<td><a href="http://www.canvas.rutgers.edu">www.canvas.rutgers.edu</a></td>
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**Office Hours:** by arrangement (contact me via email to set up an appointment)  
**Prerequisites or other limitations:** NA

**Mode of Instruction:**

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**Permission required:**  
_X_ No  
_Yes_  

**Directions about where to get permission numbers:**

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**Disabilities Statement:**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University’s educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentations: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’ disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form
Course Catalog Description

Education occurs not just in schools but in nearly every setting where people live and work—workplaces, organizations, communities, families, museums, and so on. Nearly all professions involve educating others. This course helps students learn to be effective educators in out-of-school contexts. It examines processes of effective learning and motivation in a variety of learning settings, such as learning through games, learning in after-school programs, and learning through cultural apprenticeships. It also examines connections of learning with issues of equity, diversity, and culture within and across these settings.

Class Materials

Books for this course are:


Additional readings will be provided on Canvas.

Features of this Online Course

As I am sure you all know, an online course differs from a traditional face-to-face course in several ways. Here are some particulars to keep in mind for this class.

A. There is a strong emphasis on student-driven learning. The instructor role is of overall facilitator and coordinator.

B. You will be able to work at your convenience. But it is important to be seriously engaged at least four days during each and every week. This is quite different from a traditional course, in which it is perfectly fine to prepare the day before, go to class the day of class, and then not think about the course the other five days a week.

C. We focus on asynchronous rather than synchronous activities. This course will--officially--be all asynchronous.

D. Students do more of the integrative work than in a face-to-face class. This is good, because as we'll discuss in this course, your active thinking and is likely to support understanding and long-term memory development.
Learning Goals

This course is designed to help you acquire the knowledge and skills shown in the following table. (The alignment of the learning goals with the overall learning goals of the LCD Master’s degree is also shown in the table. In addition, the table shows how each goal will be assessed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LCD master’s program goals</th>
<th>Course goals</th>
<th>Assessment of course goals</th>
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</table>
| 1. Attain mastery of constructs and theories relevant to learning and instruction as applied primarily to out-of-school educational settings. | 1a. Gain knowledge of effective and ineffective strategies for learning and education  
1b. Gain knowledge of relevant theories of learning and educational practices.  
1c. Gain knowledge of empirical results on learning and educational practices. | Prompted reflection papers will allow you to articulate your understanding of key issues.  
Four course projects will also involve articulating key conceptual underpinnings for your projects.  
Class discussions and group activities will provide you with further occasions to express ideas you are developing. |
| 2. Appropriately apply these constructs and theories to applied settings. | 2. Develop skills of planning instructional programs to promote strategy development. | The four course projects will involve you with applying what you are learning to propose educational approaches to promote learning in out-of-school settings. |
| 3. Attain competence in oral and written communication on topics related to learning and educational practices. | 3a. Develop skills in writing about educational issues.  
3b. Develop skill in understanding and analyzing academic research articles. | This will be assessed through written work throughout the semester, as well as through evaluations of your class participation in class and group discussions. |
Rutgers Policies and Services

Student Success Statement: The faculty and staff at Rutgers are committed to your success. Students who are successful tend to seek out resources that enable them to excel academically, maintain their health and wellness, prepare for future careers, navigate college life and finances, and connect with the RU community. Resources that can help you succeed and connect with the Rutgers community can be found at success.rutgers.edu, and nearly all services and resources that are typically provided in-person are now available remotely.

The Learning Centers provide tutoring, study groups, and review sessions for your courses. They also host workshops and provide individual academic coaching to help you further develop your study strategies and self-management skills. To learn more about how the LCs can help you succeed, visit https://rlc.rutgers.edu/.

Academic Integrity Policy: The Office of Student Conduct supervises issues related to violations of academic integrity (see http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu). To avoid interaction with this office, it is important to understand university policy on academic integrity. Rutgers University’s Academic Integrity Resources for Students can be found at: https://nbprovost.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-students. Please familiarize yourself with this web page that provides not only policy, but resources that can support your academic success.

Academic integrity policy proscribes any form of cheating, including plagiarism. Plagiarism will be addressed in accordance with the University policy. Please keep in mind that the penalty for plagiarism can include suspension and even permanent expulsion from the university.

Here’s a thinking tool to help you decide whether you have committed plagiarism, even if it was unintentional. Imagine that Google had every word ever written on its servers (all published and unpublished writing, including all students’ writing from all courses at the GSE and other universities, from all of history through this moment). Would a Google search on any extended phrase or clause in your document yield a hit on even one of these papers recorded through history? (Remember: this includes your own past papers, classmates’ papers, text on any website, and all published papers.) If the answer is yes, and you have not cited that document and quoted the text, there may be a plagiarism problem.

Office of Disability Services: Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form.

Student Wellness Services: As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily life. If you or someone you know is experiencing challenges to mental or physical health or well-being, you can access helpful information and resources. If you or a friend is experiencing a mental health crisis, you can easily contact CAPS or RUPD on your smartphone or tablet. In a crisis situation, or after hours, contact RUPD at (732) 932-7211 or the Police at 911. The National Suicide Prevention hotline also offers a 24-hour hotline at 800-273-8255.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA): The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual
and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. (848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.vpva.rutgers.edu

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS): CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students’ efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners. (848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/ www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu

Scarlet Listeners: Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space. (732) 247-5555 / http://www.scarletlisteners.com

Overview of the Course

This course focuses on key theories and principles for education out of school. Because much of the important research on learning and motivation comes from work in schools, we do attend at times in this course to research on learning in schools. But a majority of the readings focus on learning and motivation in a variety of educational settings out of classrooms—workplaces, homes, communities, sports, museums, game settings, community volunteer programs, and after-school programs.

The course is divided into four broad parts.
1. First, we develop an understanding of important theoretical perspectives on learning. This includes a strong focus on both cognitive theories and theories of how people learn within their cultural settings. We examine the construct of intelligence as a case study to examine the applications of these theoretical perspectives.

2. Next, we turn to motivation, examining core theories of motivation. The book Drive by Pink provides an overview of key theoretical constructs and discusses their application to workplaces. Toward the end of the chapters we read by Pink, he discusses Carol Dweck’s work on mindsets, and we then turn to a deeper examination of this topic through reading some of Dweck’s work. We conclude this part of the course examining two cases relevant to these theories: motivation in sports and the notion of “grit.”

3. In the third part of the course, we examine approaches to learning inspired by an analysis of how and why people learn as they engage in games. This part of the course starts with Gee’s book What video games have to teach us about learning and literacy and builds on these discussions to consider more generally learning through solving problems.

4. Finally, we bring many of the ideas we have been exploring together in the last part of the course, learning in youth programs. Here we examine recent research and development on programs that can be implemented in after-school programs. (Some of the programs we examine are classroom-based, but all could also be implemented in out-of-classroom settings such as youth organizations or after-school programs.) We will examine service learning, after-school programs designed to promote STEM learning, and Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR). In this culminating section of the course, you will see many of the principles of learning that we have discussed in earlier sections of the course come to fruition in these programs for youth.

As you will see from the syllabus, there is substantial reading and writing in this course. Why? One reason is that a highly influential book entitled Academically Adrift reported data from large national surveys indicating that university students gain substantial thinking skills from their university education only if they engage in substantial reading and writing in their courses. This course is designed to meet these recommendations and play its part in promoting intellectual growth among RU undergraduates.
In addition, the broad range of readings in the course are designed to provide you with a broad base of knowledge that you can use in the real world to design educational programs out of school. We have endeavored to design a course that can substantially enhance your professional competence in a variety of settings.

**Weekly Schedule**

The asynchronous discussions allow an extended time to reflect on what we have read. Here is a typical schedule:

Each weekly cycle begins on **Tuesday** and ends on the following **Monday**. The main activities each week are as follows:

1. **Discussions of readings. Tuesday through the following Monday.**
   There will be discussion threads to contribute to each week. I expect everyone to start contributing no later than Wednesday of each week; you should also contribute regularly throughout the week, not just at the beginning of the end of the week.

   I will sometimes pose follow-up questions on Friday or Saturday, so it is also important that you are participating in the discussion threads all the way through the last two or three days of the cycle (Saturdays, Sundays, Mondays) as well as earlier in the week.

2. **Weekly assignment. Monday.**
   Your weekly individual assignment based on the readings is due on the last day of the cycle. This gives you a chance to reflect on ideas that your fellow students and I bring out in the discussion as you are writing your responses to the assignment.

3. **Reading for the next week. Tuesday through the following Monday.**
   As we participate in discussions each week, we will simultaneously begin and complete the readings for the following week. Please complete the readings for the next week by **Monday** so that you are ready to contribute to the discussions on **Tuesday**.

To reiterate, it is important that you get onto the discussion threads and contribute on 4 or 5 different days spread out throughout the weekly cycle.
## Schedule

Schematically, the weekly schedule is simple and looks like this. (The exception is Week 1. Please see Canvas for details about Week 1.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion for current week begin on Tuesday morning.</td>
<td>Continue contributing to discussions.</td>
<td>Continue contributing to discussions.</td>
<td>Continue contributing to discussions.</td>
<td>Continue contributing to discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Begin reading the next week’s readings.</td>
<td>Continue the next week’s readings.</td>
<td>Continue the next week’s readings.</td>
<td>Continue the next week’s readings.</td>
<td>Continue the next week’s readings.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The cycle repeats in the next week.</td>
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In addition to assignments within the weekly cycle, you will have four additional due dates for larger papers. Please see the “Schedule by Week” for these due dates.
**Schedule by Week**

Please note: Some weeks will also have videos to view, or short additional online articles to read in addition to what is listed here. These will be included in the Canvas instructions for that week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Specific Topics</th>
<th>READINGS due before this week begins (before Tues)</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Getting started</td>
<td>See special instructions for week 1 in Canvas. NRC, <em>How People Learn</em>, Ch 3. Learning and Transfer</td>
<td>Week 1 discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Learning &amp; development</td>
<td>Rogoff (1990), Chapter 5 Stanovitch (2009), pp. 1-19</td>
<td>Week 4 discussions Application paper 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Pink (2009), Chapters 2, 4</td>
<td>Week 5 discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Pink (2009), Chapters 5, 6</td>
<td>Week 6 discussions Reflection 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Learning through games and problem solving</td>
<td>Gee (2007), chapters 2-3</td>
<td>Week 8 discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Learning through games and problem solving</td>
<td>Gee (2007), chapters 4-5</td>
<td>Week 9 discussions Reflection 3</td>
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</table>
Week 13  
11/23-12/6  
Note: this week is 2 weeks because it includes Thanksgiving Recess.  
Learning in youth programs  
Mirra, Filipiak, & Garcia (2015)  
Rubin & Jones (2007)  
Week 13 discussions  
Reflection 4  

Week 14  
12/7-12/13  
Learning in youth programs  
Week 14 discussions  

Week 15  
12/14-12/20  
Final project due  
Final project paper due on 12/17

Netiquette


1. Check the discussion frequently and respond appropriately and on the subject.  
2. Focus on one subject per message and use pertinent, informative, and not-too-long subject titles  
3. Capitalize words only to highlight a point or for titles. Capitalizing otherwise is generally viewed as SHOUTING.  
4. Be professional and careful with your online interaction.  
5. Cite all quotes, references, and sources.  
6. It is inappropriate to forward someone else's message(s) without their permission.  
7. Use humor carefully. The absence of face-to-face cues can cause humor to be misinterpreted as criticism or flaming (angry, antagonistic criticism). Feel free to use emoticons such as :-) or ;-) to let others know that you’re being humorous.

Norms for Discussion

This is an example of norms for participating in constructive controversies. Smith, K., Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1981). Can conflict be constructive? Controversy versus concurrence seeking in learning groups. *Journal of Educational Psychology,* 73, 651-663.

- I am critical of ideas, not people.  
- I remember that we are all in this together.  
- I encourage everyone to participate.  
- I listen to everyone’s ideas, even if I do not agree with them.  
- I restate what someone has said if it is not clear.  
- I try to understand both sides of the issue.  
- I first bring out all the ideas, then I put them together.

Although obviously written for younger students, these norms work well for online discussions among adults, too. At the same time, however, let’s add these norms:

Critical to the advance of knowledge are:  
a. Criticizing ideas, and having our ideas criticized by others.  
b. Taking up criticism.  
c. Exploring ideas without fully believing them, or without believing them at all.

Needless to say, **respect of each other** is essential in all discussions.
Evaluation

1. Weekly Discussions (25%)

Each week, you will discuss the readings within Canvas discussion threads. We will focus on:

- Clarifying understanding of the readings. For research articles, this includes the research question, what the method was, what the results were, and whether the authors’ conclusions are appropriate.
- Discussing applications and implications of the ideas you have read about.

To earn at least 18 of 20 points in a given week, you will contribute about 5-6 substantive posts. Higher scores are merited by more and/or particularly high-quality entries. Fewer substantive entries merit a smaller number of points.

Your contributions to the discussions should collectively indicate that you have read all the readings, and they should show that you are using and applying the ideas you have learned about. Discussion posts should be thoughtful and make use of the ideas in what you have read, but they need not be highly polished prose. Proofread your posts before posting them, but you need not worry about crafting multiple drafts of ideas before posting. I would like to see thoughtful use of the ideas in the texts, but highly polished prose is not the goal here. Instead, we are looking to participate in meaningful, interesting discussions.

You should also contribute regularly throughout the week, not just at the beginning or the end of the week. I may pose follow-up questions in the latter half of the week that I would like us to reflect on.

Evaluation will be based on the number of contributions as well as the quality and timing (throughout the week) of your contributions. Good quality means that you are using important ideas from the texts in meaningful ways.

Discussions are places to explore and entertain ideas. There should be no presumption that we are always firmly committed to positions that they are presenting arguments for. It’s fine to entertain different ideas as we go along.

Please be sure to review the class expectations, students’ rights and responsibilities, and confidentiality statements above regarding discussion board etiquette.
It is prudent to write and save your discussion posts in a text editor such as Word or Google Docs to avoid losing a post due to a computer error.

2. Reflection papers (25%)

Four reflection papers will be due as listed on the syllabus. These are short papers (2 to 3 double spaced pages) that are posted to encourage you to synthesize what you have been reading and discussing in class. The questions will be questions that require integration of what you have read and/or application of the ideas to address educational problems. The questions to be addressed will be posted one week in advance of their due date.

3. Application papers (30%)

Three application papers will give you an opportunity to apply the ideas you are learning about to real educational situations.

   The first paper will invite you to analyze your own learning in terms of what you have learned about effective learning and to propose ways in which you could improve your learning, drawing on what you've learned.

   The second paper will ask you to evaluate a motivational environment in terms of what you have learned about effective principles of motivation; you will receive a set of optional environments to choose from, or you can select your own.

   In the third paper, you will propose and develop a learning environment for an out-of-school setting that employs the principles of learning through games and solving problems that we have explored in the third part of the class.

   Rubrics to be used in evaluating each assignment will be provided at the time of the assignment.

4. Final project (20%)

The final project will be a project that draws on everything you have learned in the course to propose and develop a program for youth. The project should explain how the proposed program implements the principles of learning that have been discussed throughout the semester. The rubrics to be used in evaluating the project will be provided at the time of the assignment.

General note: Late assignments will be given a lower grade unless you negotiate with me in advance. If you have circumstances that merit an extension, please email me.
Reading List

Part I. Theories of learning and intelligence

Week 1. Getting started


Week 2. Theories of Learning and Development


Week 3. Theories of Learning Development


Week 4. Theories of Learning and Development


Part II: Motivation out of school

Week 5. Motivation


Week 6. Motivation


Week 7. Motivation


Part III. Learning through Games and Problem-Solving

Week 8. Learning through games and problem solving


Week 9. Learning through games and problem solving


Week 10. Learning through games and problem solving

Watch 15 minutes of this video—a talk by Manu Kapur—from Minute 26:00 to Minute 41:00. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LnljG9I33KM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LnljG9I33KM)


Part IV. Learning in Youth Programs

Week 11. Learning in youth programs


Week 12. Learning in youth programs

knowledge, confidence, and perceptions of fit in stem amongst black and brown middle school girls. In *Moving Students of Color from Consumers to Producers of Technology* (pp. 152-173). IGI Global.


**Week 13. Learning in youth programs**


**Week 14. Learning in youth programs**
