

Assignments & Assessments of Learning

1. Observations and Observational Synthesis Paper: Each student must complete a minimum of 6 hours of classroom observation at the pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, elementary, middle, or high school levels. These observations must include at least three different developmental groups; for example, visiting a kindergarten, a middle-school, and a high school class. In addition to conducting the



observations, students will write a paper (approximately 13-15 pages) summarizing their experiences, analyzing their observations and synthesizing their findings with course content. Guidelines for this paper will be provided in class.

NOTE: Observations can be done at the following St. Paul Public Schools ONLY: **Expo Elem., Linwood/Monroe, Highland Park Jr. High, Highland Park Snr. High**, OR at any local private or charter schools. Schools out of the local area are also available options for this project.

2. Concept Papers: Students will write three short (i.e., about 2-3 pages, double-spaced) papers on topics from course material. Choose topics from the topic list attached to this syllabus that are meaningful to you and have applicability to future teaching or other profession. They will be graded on the quality of the four required components (see below), completeness and correctness of concept explanation, depth of discussion, and thoughtfulness of response. Please bring a paper copy to class. The structure of each paper should be FOUR parts:

1. First, fully explain or define the concept.
2. Second, describe what the concept looks like (an example) based on your personal experience.
3. Third, discuss how you will apply that concept in *your* teaching or professional life. Be specific! This is often a difficult but important step. Even if you are not planning to teach, take the leap and create scenarios or make up examples of how the concept could be applied in *your own life*.
4. Fourth, evaluate the importance of this concept to the field of education. Judge why and how it is of value to teachers and students in classroom settings.

3. Assessment Project: Students will create traditional test items and performance assessment tasks from this course's content (lectures and text) at all levels of Bloom's Cognitive Taxonomy. Specific criteria can be found at the end of this syllabus.

4. Exams: There will be two exams. They will be multiple choice and short-answer in format and will contain material from both lecture and text. The purpose of the exams is to measure understanding of the significant concepts and principles presented in the course. Each exam will be semi-cumulative.

5. Research Topic Paper: Students will prepare a short *review of the literature* (5-6 pages) on a topic relevant to educational psychology and approved by the instructor. These topic papers are aimed to expose the student to deeper content related to the reading, but not included in it. The paper must review

current scholarly publications to delve into relevant research on their topic, examining two or three sources beyond the course texts. In general, the review should cover: a.) a working definition of the topic chosen; b.) key questions in the field about the topic; c.) the methods used to examine the topic, as well as a summary of the findings; d.) limitations of such methods; e.) directions for future research—suggested within the articles as well as by you; and f.) your brief critique of the literature reviewed. These components may vary slightly depending upon the topic investigated. Guidelines are provided at the end of this syllabus. Peer review process will be discussed in class.

6. Attendance, Participation & Engagement: Students are required to attend and participate in weekly class sessions as part of the grading scheme because the pedagogy of this course is hands-on and collaborative. The quality of each student’s contribution to the class through participation in in-class group exercises, class discussions, online activities (via Moodle), miscellaneous assignments, etc. will be assessed throughout the term. Students are expected to demonstrate their engagement with the course material during the class meetings and Moodle discussions.

NOTE: Attendance at each class session is required. If an absence is unavoidable, you are expected to contact your instructor as soon as possible. Missing half of a session will be counted as an absence. A minimum of attending 80% of the class meetings is required to pass the course.

Grading

Requirement	Grade Contribution
Observations: Paper	20%
Exams	35%
Research Topic Paper	15%
Concept Papers	5% each (15%)
Assessment Project	10%
Attendance, Participation & Engagement	5%

Grading Scale

95%-100%	A	77.0-79.9%	C+
90.0-94.9%	A-	73.0-76.9%	C
87.0-89.9%	B+	70.0-72.9%	C-
83.0-86.9%	B	64.0-69.9	D
80.0-82.9%	B-	0-63.9%	No Credit

Late Work: Points will be taken off for late work. Any assignment turned in two weeks after the due date will be marked as a zero. Extensions on due dates may be available as determined by the instructor.

The success of all students in this class is important. If you are experiencing obstacles to your academic success (e.g., a documented disability), you are encouraged to contact our Assistant Dean of Students to make an appointment. Then, contact me to address any accommodations as soon as you become aware of your needs. Additional information regarding the accommodations process for students with disabilities can be found at www.macalester.edu/studentaffairs/disabilityservices/

Course Schedule

Class Meeting	Topics	To Do for Class
Week #1: Sept. 4, 6	Introduction to Course Overview/History of Ed. Psych.	Ch. 1, Kohn article (Moodle) Bloom's Taxonomy assignment
Week #2: Sept. 11, 13	Human cognition & development	Ch. 2 "Brain-based" reading (Moodle)
Week #3: Sept. 18, 20	Neuroscience and Education	Ch. 2 9/20: Concept Paper #1 Due
Week #4: Sept. 25, 27	The Self: Social, Moral Development	Ch. 3, Tatum: Prologue, Intro, 2-4, 6, 8
Week #5: Oct. 2, 4	Learner Differences I; Differentiation	Ch. 4 & pgs. 531-537 10/4: Concept Paper #2 Due
Week #6: Oct. 9, 10	Learner Differences II	Ch. 5-6, Tatum: chs. 1, 7, 10, Epilogue
Week #7: Oct. 16, 18	Educational Equity Exam Review	"Connecting the Dots" (Moodle) 10/18 Concept Paper #3 Due
Week #8: Oct. 23	Exam #1 No class 10/25 for Fall Break	
Week #9: Oct. 30, Nov. 1	Measurement & Assessment	Ch. 15 "The Volvo Effect" (Moodle)
Week #10: Nov. 6, 8	Standardized Testing Ed & Advocacy Evening lecture: 11/6 Research in Education: paper prep	Moodle readings Ch. 1 pgs. 14-20 11/8: Assessment Project Due
Week #11: Nov. 13, 15	Behaviorist views of learning Cognitivist views of learning	Chs. 7-9
Week #12: Nov. 20	Social Cognition & Student Motivation No Class 11/22 for Thanksgiving	Chs. 11-12 11/20: Research Topic Paper Due
Week #13: Nov. 27, 29	Teacher expectations, planning and instructional approaches Creating Learning Environments	Ch. 14, 13 Rosenthal article (Moodle) 11/27: Peer Evaluation Due
Week #14: Dec. 4, 6	Constructivism in the Classroom Course Wrap-up & Review	Ch. 10
Week #15: Dec. 11	12/11: Exam #2	12/15: Observation Paper

Topic Options for Concept Papers

Paper #1

- Accommodation and assimilation
- Zone of Proximal Development & scaffolding
- Private speech
- Cultural tools
- Neural pruning

Paper #2

- Self-concept & self-esteem
- Moral reasoning
- Racial & ethnic identity formation
- Parenting styles
- Learning Styles
- Multiple intelligences
- Learned helplessness
- Learning disabilities

Paper #3

- Academic language
- Funds of knowledge
- Resistance culture
- Gender biases in education
- Culturally relevant pedagogy
- Stereotype threat
- Resilience
- Topic from Tatum book (your choice)

Conducting Classroom Observations

A. For each observation, prepare a log that includes all of the following:

Objective Questions:

- Record the date and time of observation
- Record the name of the school, grade level, and details describing the school (urban, rural, suburban setting, private or public, etc.)
- Describe the physical setting of the classroom: the layout of the desks/tables, the walls, etc.
- Describe the lesson and activities you observe: how are they introduced? How are they reacted to by students?
- Identify examples of the teacher motivating the students to be active in their learning.
- Note the diversity of the class: gender, race and ethnicity, ability, special needs.
- How are individual differences allowed for in this class?
- Describe the instructional style of the teacher: look for examples of his/her questioning and use of wait time, direct instruction, withitness, classroom management, enthusiasm, concern for students
- At what level of cognitive development do the students seem to be? To what level of cognitive development is the lesson directed?

Interpretive Questions:

1. What is your overall impression of the school? Why?
2. What is your overall impression of the teaching you observed? Why?
3. How was your observation of this age level similar or different from your prior expectations?

B. Guidelines for conducting observations:

- Respect the teachers' schedules and be flexible in your observation times.
- Try to be as unobtrusive in the class as possible. You may go in pairs, but preferably no more than 2 students observing at time.
- Maintain the confidentiality of the teachers and students by avoiding the use of full names in your reports.
- Keep the information as factual as possible. Report only observable behavior. Cite lots and lots of examples!
- Avoid making premature judgments. The purpose of your classroom visits is to observe how the concepts you learn about in this course are applied in actual classrooms, not to assess teacher performance.

Research Topic Paper Guidelines

1. Select a topic. Consider a topic that expands on something from the reading, a topic that you have a question about, or one of the suggestions:

Summer learning loss	Test anxiety	Arts integration in the classroom
Multi-age classrooms	Outdoor education	Language Immersion programs
Looping classrooms	Flow (Csikszentmihalyi)	
Sleep and learning		

2. Get approval from instructor if you choose a topic not on the suggestion list.
3. Find (use an electronic index such as ERIC or PsycInfo) and read approximately three articles from a scholarly (peer-reviewed) journal, such as:

<i>Journal of Educational Psychology</i>	<i>Journal of Social Psychology</i>
<i>Child Development</i>	<i>Developmental Psychology</i>
<i>Journal of Educational Research</i>	
<i>American Educational Research Journal</i>	

4. Summarize across the literature to create a brief review about the topic. The contents of this paper (about 5 pages) should include: a.) a working definition of the topic chosen; b.) a description of some questions in the field about the topic; c.) the kinds of methods used to examine the topic and a summary of the findings; d.) limitations of such methods; e.) directions for future research; and f.) *your own* brief critique of the literature reviewed; this is a reflective paragraph about your process of researching. These components may vary slightly depending upon the topic investigated.
5. Include a bibliography at the end of the paper.
6. Use APA style, based on examples below:

In Bibliography:

Magnuson, K.A., Meyers, M.K., Ruhm, C.J., Waldfogel, J. (2004). Inequality in preschool education and school readiness. *American Educational Research Journal*, 41, 115-157.

In body of paper:

Experience in high-quality preschool settings has been linked to improved kindergarten readiness (Magnusen, et al., 2004) and gains in learning and development (Barnett & Hustedt, 2003).

Assessment Project Requirements

Part I. Traditional Assessment

A. Write FOUR multiple-choice questions at the following levels of Bloom's cognitive taxonomy:

- One question at the Knowledge Level.
- One questions at the Comprehension Level
- One question at the Application Level.
- One question at the Analysis Level.

B. Write TWO essay questions:

- One at the Synthesis Level
- One at the Evaluation Level

Guidelines:

- Use content from this course's text only.
- For each question, provide the **answer** (including an answer for the essays), and the **source** for the question's content.
- Clearly state what **taxonomy level** each question is and a one-sentence **justification** for its level.

Part II. Authentic Assessment

Imagine you are teaching a class (grade level and subject of your choosing). Write a learning objective and design an authentic assessment that measures your students' mastery of the objective. Provide:

- The subject and the grade level you are "teaching"
- The learning objective you will be assessing
- The product intended to demonstrate achievement of the objective
- The process the students must undertake to produce the product
- Your "Analytic" rubric for measuring learning. Rubric must clearly delineate criteria, scores, and descriptions of what constitutes each score *for each criteria point*.