

SpEd 553.001 – Fall 2013
Cognition, Learning, and Development

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Office Hours: Tuesday 12:00-5:00 or by appointment

Course Description:

This course is designed for professionals providing learning and transition services to students with special needs. Consideration will be given to cognitive abilities, cognitive styles, information processing, memory, and development.

Text: Bruning, R. H., Schraw, G. J., Norby, M. M. (2011). Cognitive Psychology and Instruction (5th. Ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Course Objectives:

- 1) To understand and apply information processing theory,
- 2) To recognize the impact of belief systems on cognitive functioning,
- 3) To identify means of fostering cognitive growth, and
- 4) To apply knowledge of cognitive processes to instruction in classroom content areas.

Associated TExES Competencies--Generic Certification. The special education teacher...

- 002** understands formal and informal assessment procedures and knows how to evaluate student competencies to make instructional decisions.
- 003** understands and applies knowledge of procedures for planning instruction for individuals with disabilities.
- 005** knows how to promote students' educational performance in all content areas by facilitating their achievement in a variety of settings and situations.
- 008** promotes students' performance in English language arts and reading.

Associated TExES Competencies--Educational Diagnostician. The educational diagnostician...

- 003** understands and applies knowledge of student assessment and evaluation, program planning, and instructional decision making. (light emphasis)
- 005** applies skills for interpreting formal and informal assessments and evaluations.
- 006** understands appropriate curricula and instructional strategies for students with disabilities.
- 007** understands the use of appropriate assessment, evaluation, planning, and instructional strategies for developing students' behavioral and social skills.

Tentative Schedule

Aug 27-Sept 24	Introduction to course and classmates; Ch. 1-5
Oct. 1	Exam #1 (Ch. 1-5)
Oct. 8-Nov. 5	Ch. 6-10
Nov. 12	Exam #2 (Ch. 6-10)
Nov. 19-Dec. 3	Chapter Presentations; Research Roundtable
Dec. 3	Research reports due; Roundtable discussion of research

Course Requirements

Course Attendance and Participation:

Attendance: Regular and punctual attendance is required. Class discussions and activities require participation with the instructor and with your fellow students to learn and to demonstrate your learning. Therefore, your *punctual and regular attendance is important to your success in the class.*

Participation: Active involvement is the key to learning! Your participation is important and required to do well in this course. Students are expected to be well prepared to engage in scholarly discussion of the scheduled subject matter and to fully participate in all class activities. Students are expected to respect (not necessarily agree with) opinions of classmates. Plan to become an active participant by extending ideas presented. You can do this by sharing new information, innovative ideas, and new resources on the topics discussed. Ask questions, demonstrate interest, and be prepared (having read assigned materials). Personal experiences are welcome as used to make a point or extend discussion on a particular topic, but should not be the sole source of your contributions.

Grading: Attendance and Participation are mandatory. Points may be deducted from final grade for failure to attend and participate at sufficient levels.

Exams: Two exams will be given on the scheduled dates. Each exam will consist of some combination of multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and essay items. There will be NO make/up activities or exams for this course unless a true emergency exists. Students are expected to submit relevant documentation (e.g. doctor's note, funeral notice, etc.) when requesting a make/up examination.

Chapter Presentations: Individually or in pairs, you will select a chapter from chapters 11-15 and develop a presentation based on the selected chapter. Each presentation should share a brief introduction to the class and then highlight the *key information* from the chapter. You do not have to cover all of the details in the chapter. Do, however, *make as many practical connections* to Chs. 1-10 as possible when applying your learning to these different content areas. You are encouraged to be creative using videos (self-made or accessed), interviews, case studies, interactive games, avatars/vokis, etc. A sign-up sheet will be provided.

Research Report: For this assignment, each student is to complete a research report from 7-10 double-spaced pages in length [excluding cover page, abstract, and reference page(s)] on cognition in the classroom based on a topic from chapters 11 to 15: Learning to Read, Reading to Learn, Writing, Cognitive Approaches to Mathematics or Cognitive Approaches to Science. **Your topic must be approved by the instructor in advance.** Your research report should be in APA style and include an abstract and reference list – but these do NOT count in your page limit. It is highly recommended that each student purchase an **APA style** manual, 6th edition, as it will be used throughout your graduate career in the Department of Psychology, Counseling & Special Education. On-line APA support can be obtained from many sources (Google, APA format or APA style format). Two useful sites are:

- owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/
- citationmachine.net/

Citations of all your references must be included in the text. A minimum of 5 journal articles must be cited. Feel free to use other citations (web pages, your text book, etc.) as long as each is correctly cited per APA, 6th Ed. Research reports must be posted to the designated eCollege Dropbox where it will be reviewed by “turn-it-in” for plagiarism and excessive use of your source material or excessive direct quotations. If, after review, the professor feels that your paper has unduly used material from other sources, it will be returned to you for

correction or not graded. To avoid this, make sure the majority of your report reflects your original thoughts. Limit your use of direct or verbatim quotations. Note that only changing a few words in a passage of text does NOT constitute “original thought.” Make sure that any use of someone else’s work has been cited appropriately. In addition, work submitted should reflect a professional quality in terms of scope, depth, and writing mechanics. Proofread all assignments carefully as only materials with minimal or no errors will receive high scores.

Schedule for developing your research report:

- By Sept. 17 Identify your topic and gain approval from instructor; begin literature search; review APA guidelines for presenting your report.
- By Oct. 22 Check progress with instructor; outline and preliminary references due.
- By Nov. 19 Report should be close to completion; carefully review report for content and formatting; Submit report to eCollege shell for TurnItIn review.
- By Dec. 3 Share your research in a Roundtable Discussion in class; submit hard copy of report in class; submit final copy of report to eCollege and TurnItIn for review.

Research Report Reminders and Helpful Hints:

- Include a cover page and abstract summarizing your topic. Both must be in APA format. The abstract should be approximately 100 words.
- Include 7 to 10 pages of text *with citations throughout* the text.
 - Narrow your topic in order to sufficiently cover your focus. For example, “teaching reading” is much too broad to cover in 10 pages. To narrow your topic, you could focus on teaching reading using a specific technique or approach. Be sure that you are able to relate your technique back to a theoretical model of cognitive processing.
- Include a reference page.
 - Use at least 5 journal articles. You can use any number of additional references (your text, websites, etc.).
 - All references cited in the report must be included in the reference list and all references included in the reference list must be cited in the report.
- Double space your report and put your name on it.
- Turn your paper in to the appropriate eCollege Dropbox.

Grading and Evaluation

Exams (2 @ 100 points each)	200
Research Report	100
Chapter Presentation	100
Total Possible Points	400

Point Distribution:

A = 358-400
B = 318-357
C = 278-317
D = 238-277
F = 237 or lower

Technology Requirements & Support

Communication & Support:

If you have questions between class meetings that others in the class may have, please post those questions to my Virtual Office on eCollege. I will post a response in the eCollege shell. Please make it a habit to consult my Virtual Office for questions and responses.

As a student enrolled at Texas A&M University-Commerce, you have access to an email account via **MyLeo**. **ALL class emails from your instructor will be sent from eCollege (and all other university emails) and WILL GO TO YOUR MyLeo ACCOUNT. Be sure to check this account frequently and regularly.**

Technology Requirements:

The web-supported part of this course will be conducted within eCollege. It is strongly recommended that you perform a “Browser Test” prior to the start of the course. To launch a browser test, login to eCollege, click on the “myCourses” tab, and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services. To get started with the course, go to: <https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu/login.aspx>. You will need your CWID and password to login to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903-468-6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Contacting eCollege for Technical Support:

The following support options are available 24 hours a day / 7 days a week:

- Help: Click on the “help” button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e., “How do I submit to Dropbox?”, “How do I post to discussion board?”, etc.
- Chat Support: Click on the “Live Support” on the toolbar within your course to chat with an eCollege representative.
- Phone: 1-866-656-5511 (toll free) to speak with an eCollege Technical Support Representative.
- Email: helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

Other Important Notes

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library, Room 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 - Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

- All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*)
 - All students are expected to display professional behaviors (dispositions) expected of educators and to demonstrate these behaviors in their interactions with your colleagues, the professor, and communities at all times. This includes such behaviors as professional responsibility, professional and personal integrity, collegiality, and commitment to learning. Failure to display professional behaviors can result in counseling by the professor and result in lowering of the course grade.
 - Academic Dishonesty. To be successful in this class, you must invest time for study. Honesty is expected. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, collusion) will NOT be tolerated and will result in a grade of zero (0) for the assignment. A second infraction will result in automatic failure of the class. Dishonesty is defined as (i) the use of unauthorized materials, (ii) any communication with peers during examinations, (iii) representing another's work as one's own (i.e. plagiarism) or (iv) fabricating information. The professor reserves the right to determine occurrences of cheating.
 - Plagiarism occurs at any time that another's ideas or words are used as your own without attribution. Direct quotations must be cited and set off from other text by quotation marks (".."). Paraphrasing of another's ideas must also be cited (although this does not require quotation marks). Copying from other students also constitutes plagiarism.

- Posted due dates will be honored. *Unexcused assignments turned in after the due date will be returned ungraded. If work is accepted late, it will carry a substantial penalty. No work will be accepted more than one week past the due date.* Ensure that the assignment guidelines presented in the syllabus are followed.

- Person First Language: Our language is a reflection of our attitudes. Always refer to persons with disabilities with respect. *Degrading terminology will not be tolerated.* In this class we will strive to use "people first" language at all times. "People First" language always refers to the person first and not as a label or a category. For example, refer to "a student with autism" and not "an autistic" or "students with disabilities" and not "disabled students." In addition, avoid such stigmatizing terminology as "confined to a wheelchair" (say "uses a wheelchair" instead). Lastly, the special education community supports the use the term "general education" instead of "regular education."

- Use of Cell Phones and other Electronic Devices: Common courtesy and professional behavior prohibit the use of cell phones or other electronic devices during class unless use is directly associated with the topics being discussed. In situations other than this, it is expected that all cell phones will be turned "off" during class time. If there is a personal emergency that necessitates keeping your cell phone on "vibrate" during class, notify the instructor prior to class that you may receive a call during the class period.