

PSYC*1300, Course Outline: Winter 2020

General Information

Course Title: Learning Disabilities: Experience to Understanding

Course Description:

This is a course for credit (may count towards your degree) for students diagnosed with a specific learning disability and is offered jointly through the Department of Psychology and Student Accessibility Services (SAS).

This unique course is designed to provide students with an understanding and acceptance of their learning needs. It aims to help students become more self-directed, active and successful learners.

Lectures will introduce students to central issues in the area of specific learning disabilities (LD) and seminars provide an opportunity for discussion, question asking and group sharing. A variety of modules are offered to assist students in applying and practicing strategies to aid in their understanding of their specific learning needs. Please note that space in the course is limited.

Credit Weight: 0.5

Academic Department (or campus): Psychology

Semester Offering: Winter 2020

Class Schedule and Location:

Lectures: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:30 - 2:20, ROZ 107

Seminars: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:30 - 3:20, MCKN 034A

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Rachel Moline, MA, PhD Candidate

Instructor Email: rmoline@uoguelph.ca

Office location and office hours: By appointment, Blackwood Hall, rm 105

GTA Information

GTA Name: Jessie Heaman

GTA Email: jheaman@uoguelph.ca

GTA office location and office hours: By appointment, MacKinnon 118A

GTA Name: Ivana Marcincinova

GTA Email: imarcinc@uoguelph.ca

GTA office location and office hours: By appointment, Location TBA

Course Content

Specific Learning Outcomes:

This course is a part of the Learning Opportunities Program for students at the University of Guelph who have a learning disability. The goal of this course is to foster a high level of motivation and sense of self-responsibility, an understanding of learning disabilities in general and one's own ability-disability profile, and the acquisition and enhancement of strategies to become a good information processor. The course is also aimed at helping students understand themselves as learners, at enhancing self-determination, and at developing proactive internalized approaches to successful task completion. By the end of this course, successful students will develop a rich understanding of the key concepts of learning disabilities, especially their own learning profile. Students will be able to apply a variety of effective learning strategies to improve their memory, reading, and writing skills, time management, organization, active learning skills, and oral presentation skills. Students will develop self-advocacy skills and be able to conduct scholarly literature reviews. Please see the course schedule for detailed lecture and seminar topics, assigned readings, and major assignments with due dates.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Critical and Creative Thinking

- 1.1 Depth and Breadth of Understanding: Understand basic concepts from core areas in the field of child abnormal psychology
- 1.2 Inquiry and Analysis: Understand the process of evidence-based inquiry in the field
- 1.3 Problem Solving: Identifying and evaluate solutions. Create and follow a resulting plan.
- 1.4 Creativity: (With 1.3) students will find personal solutions to their own style of learning

2. Literacy

- 2.1 Information Literacy: The ability to know when there is a need for information, where to locate it and the ability to identify the value and differences of potential resources in a variety of formats
- 2.2 Technological Literacy: The ability to select and use appropriate technology (e.g., learning & reading "assistive technology")
- 2.3 Visual Literacy: Read and apply information as presented in graphs, tables, images, and visual media

3. Global Understanding

- 3.1 Civic Knowledge and Engagement: Working locally and globally to make a difference in the civic life of communities and being aware of different perspectives (e.g., advocacy for self and others)

4. Communication

- 4.1 Oral Communication: Includes interpersonal skills, oral speaking and active listening as they apply to psychology
- 4.2 Written Communication: Write clearly and demonstrate general knowledge in the field.
- 4.3 Reading Comprehension. The understanding of theoretical and empirical literature in psychology.

5. Professional and Ethical Behaviour

- 5.1. Personal Organization/ Time Management: An ability to manage several tasks at once and prioritize accordingly

Lecture Content:

Lectures will introduce students to central issues in the area of learning disabilities and provide an opportunity for discussion, question asking, and group sharing. Topics will highlight the continuum of cognitive characteristics associated with learning disabilities, what is known about successful and unsuccessful learners, and research findings and psychological concepts to support the strategies practiced in accompanying seminars. As such, they will serve as a foundation for the application in the seminars and students' ongoing work. Assigned readings will accompany lectures.

Seminars:

Seminars are designed to complement what is learned in lecture and to assist in the completion of course assignments. One purpose of the seminars is to help students apply information processing strategies and to help students regulate their thoughts and cognitive state. Assigned readings and exercises accompany the seminars.

Course Assignments and Tests:

This is a 0.5 credit course, requiring the regular amount of time associated with a credit course (10 -12 hours per week for the average student). While percentage grades will be given, **THE FINAL GRADE IS A PASS OR FAIL**. This alternate grading scheme has been selected to minimize competition between students and maximize focus on the process of the learning. Students' performance will be monitored in five major areas to determine whether the credit will be awarded. Due dates are to be met.

1. Seminars (20%)

DUE: April 2: The Learning Strategies Log are completely on a weekly basis. These are to be submitted along with the other materials in the final Appendix section of the Individual

Learning Plan (ILP) at the end of term. All students are required to attend and participate in the seminars accompanying the lectures. . It is important to attend student presentations even if it is not your turn to present. In each seminar, students will complete a portion of their Learning Strategies Log, which aims to support the completion of the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) submitted at the end of the semester. Attendance is key. Students will be evaluated on their completion of the seminar assignments and preparedness/participation within the seminar. If a seminar is missed, it is the student's responsibility to contact the teaching assistant and complete any exercises that were done at the missed seminar

2. Assignments (20%)

DUE: Jan 16: Hypothetical Advocacy E-mail

Given what you know about your own individual learning profile, your task is to write a professional, assertive, and respectful e-mail to a professor advocating for an accommodation that you believe your learning profile merits in their course (e.g., an extension for a particular assignment, extra time for a quiz, etc.). Choose any course that you are currently taking and write a hypothetical e-mail to this professor. This will be submitted to your TA in seminar and marked on spelling, grammar, and professionalism. This is not intended to be sent to your professor. Rather, this assignment gives you the opportunity to increase your confidence in advocating for your learning needs in a respectful and assertive manner.

DUE: Mar 5: Mock exam questions

Students are to compose a mock term test. Two questions and answers from each week's readings and/or lectures (Weeks 2-9) are required for a total of 16 questions and their answers. Questions with three different formats, such as multiple-choice (4 choice options), short-answer, fill in the blank, and list-type formats should be included. This assignment can be completed each week as you go along.

DUE: Mar 12: In-class quiz

All students will receive time and a half to write a brief in-class quiz on material from the course.

3. Written Research (20%)

DUE: Feb 4: Essay Backbone (see separate handout for more detailed instructions)

This assignment requires you to select a topic in the field of learning disabilities, gain primary sources, note key ideas from these sources, and prepare an annotated bibliography in standard APA reference format. You do not have to write the essay; the emphasis is on the research process and preparing to write. A library seminar is provided to help develop library research skills. Your essay backbone will be evaluated according to how well you have followed the requirements as noted in the assignment instructions. You may use the research you do here as the material for your oral presentation if you wish.

4. Presentations (20%)

Scheduled Mar 12 & 17. Students will complete an 8-minute presentation on an aspect of learning disabilities followed by group discussion during their seminar. You may elaborate on material learned in readings and lectures using your own experience or present new

information acquired while preparing your essay outlines. To encourage you to plan your talk carefully and to assist in scheduling presentations, a written outline of your presentation (point form is acceptable) must be submitted Outline due date below. Evaluation will be based on submission of the outline, the presentation, and participation following your own and other students' presentations. Presentations should have a: Brief Introduction (ends in a general purpose statement), Main body of content points, Conclusion.

DUE: Mar 12: Outline of Presentation (upload to DropBox). This outline should include the title of your presentation as well as brief statements about what you plan to cover in your presentation.

DUE: Mar 12 & 17: Student Presentations (upload to DropBox PRIOR to presentation). Specific presentation schedule is to be announced after presentation outlines are collected.

DUE: Mar 26: Creative Metaphor on Learning Disabilities

Essays and spoken presentations are not the only way of communicating meaning and experience. Non-text formats can be a powerful means of expression for the creator and insightful learning for the viewer. Your creative metaphor on learning disabilities can be a picture, poem, song, sculpture, found object, etc. – something that conveys an aspect of learning disabilities in a novel fashion. A brief commentary about the meaning of your metaphor should accompany your creation. These “metaphors” are to be brought to class on **Mar 26 and handed in at that time**. We will spend the class time browsing each others' presentations.

5. Individual Learning Plan (ILP; 20%)

See separate handout for detailed instructions. The ILP will bring together your work across the term and serve as a basis for future skill development. In it, you are to explain the psychological concepts that describe your learning disability, note your strengths and weaknesses, and outline how you use and plan to develop different strategies and accommodations to address your particular LD.

DUE: Feb 25: First draft of Section B – Individual Profile Section is due. You will receive detailed feedback on this section prior to submitting the final copy.

DUE: April 2: The final ILP should be submitted to the DropBox on CourseLink. The project will be evaluated according to how well students have followed the requirements in the outline and reflected on their learning profile. The ILP takes the place of a final exam for this course and must be submitted in order to pass the course.

Assignment or Test	Due Date	Contribution to Final Mark (%)	Learning Outcomes Assessed
Seminars	- 2 Seminars completed each week	20%	1.1, 1.2; 4.1, 4.3
Assignments	- Jan 16 Hypothetical Advocacy e-mail - Mar 5 Mock Exam Questions - Mar 12 In-class quiz - Mar 26 Creative Metaphor on Learning Disabilities	20%	1.1 to 1.4; 2; 3.1
Research	-Feb 4 Essay Backbone	20%	1.1 to 1.4; 2; 4.2
Presentations	- Mar 12 Presentation outline due - Mar 12 & 17 Class Presentations	20%	1.1 to 1.4; 2; 4.1
Individual Learning Plan (ILP)	- Feb 25 Part B - April 2 Final ILP	20%	1.1 to 1.4; 2; 3.1

Final examination date and time: The ILP takes the place of a final exam for this course and must be submitted in order to pass the course (See ILP section above).

Final exam weighting: 20%

Course Resources

Required Texts:

1. Luckie, W.R., & Smethurst, W. (1998). Study Power. Cambridge, MA: Brookline.
2. Additional readings. Links to Primo are provided below. <https://www.lib.uoguelph.ca> [Retrieve online]
3. Copy of your psychological report

Recommended Texts:

Useful resources will be posted on CourseLink, including guides to the readings associated with some of the lectures, templates to assist with note taking in lectures, and course handouts. Some readings will also be found online through the University of Guelph library website or through the Ares Course Reserves System. See the course schedule for full details of where to access the readings for each lecture and seminar.

Course Policies

Grading Policies

See specific grading policies within each course assignment section. In general, you are required to contact your teaching assistant or course instructor if you are unable to complete the assignment at the required due date. Note, the ILP takes the place of a final exam for this course and must be submitted in order to pass the course [Undergraduate Grading Procedures](#)

Please note that these policies are binding unless academic consideration is given to an individual student.

Course Policy regarding use of electronic devices and recording of lectures:

Electronic recording of classes is expressly forbidden without consent of the instructor. When recordings are permitted, they are solely for the use of the authorized student and may not be reproduced, or transmitted to others, without the express written consent of the instructor.

University Policies

Academic Consideration

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for

Academic Consideration:

[Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions](#)

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring.

University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:
[Academic Misconduct Policy](#)

Accessibility

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) as soon as possible.

For more information, contact SAS at 519-824-4120 ext. 54335 or email accessibility@uoguelph.ca or the [Student Accessibility Services Website](#)

Course Evaluation Information

Please refer to the [Course and Instructor Evaluation Website](#) .

Drop date

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is April 03, 2020 . For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the [Schedule of Dates in the Academic Calendar](#). Instructors must still [provide meaningful and constructive feedback to students prior to the 40th class](#) day. [Current Undergraduate Calendar](#)