



University of Waterloo

Fall 2010

COURSE NUMBER: Psychology 312R
Course Name: Learning Disabilities

Instructor: Virginia Nusca, Ph.D., C.Psych.

Email: vmnusca@uwaterloo.ca

Class Times/Location: Mondays 6:30 – 9:20 pm; Renison Room 2107

Office Hours: By appointment or email

Course Description:

The field of learning disabilities is multi-faceted, ranging from theoretical and philosophical debates as to the nature of learning disabilities to more practical issues such as assessment of learning disabilities and interventions to ameliorate learning difficulties. This course will discuss a variety of theoretical, research, assessment, and intervention issues important to understanding and treating learning disabilities.

Course Objectives:

- Understand and critically evaluate conceptualizations of learning disabilities
- Understand learning disabilities across the life span
- Understand theories and treatment of reading, writing, and math disabilities
- Understand, explain, and critically evaluate best practices in assessment and remediation/treatment of learning disabilities

Texts: Courseware for Psychology 312R

Edmunds, A. & Edmunds, G. (2008). *Special Education in Canada: First Edition*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

Geary, D.C., (2004). Mathematics and Learning Disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 37, 4-15.

Kozey, M. & Siegel, L.S. (2008). Definitions of Learning Disabilities in Canadian Provinces and Territories. *Canadian Psychology. Special Issue: Literacy Development in Canada*. 49, 162-171.

Course Requirements:

Students will complete THREE on-line assessments/tests, ONE take home exam/assignment, and ONE in-class presentation of a strategy or tool useful to students with learning disabilities.

Assessments and assignments are designed to have students explain and critically examine course concepts.

Grading:

On-line Assessments	
Due September 28	10%
Due October 19	25%
Due November 16	25%
15 Minute Student Presentation	10%
Take Home Exam/Assignment	
Due December 13	30%

S Y L L A B U S

The following table summarizes the topics to be discussed although the dates assigned may vary:

Date	Topic	Reading
Sep 13	What are learning disabilities?	Lyon, G.R., Fletcher, J.M. & Barnes, M. (2005) Learning Disabilities. In Mash, E.J. & Barkley, R.A. <i>Child Psychopathology: Second Edition</i> . New York: Guilford Press. Kozey, M. & Siegel, L.S. (2008). Definitions of Learning Disabilities in Canadian Provinces and Territories. <i>Canadian Psychology. Special Issue: Literacy Development in Canada</i> . 49, 162-171.
Sep 20	Assessment of Learning Disabilities	Lyon, et. al. (2005) Edmunds, A. & Edmunds, G. (2008). <i>Special Education in Canada: First Edition</i> . Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson. Chapters 3 and 5.

Date	Topic	Reading
Sep 27	Models of Learning Disabilities LD and Comorbid Disorders Assessment One Due Sept 28 (10%)	Lyon, et. al. (2005). Edmunds & Edmunds (2008). Chapter 6.
Oct 4	Understanding and Treating Reading Disability Part I: Word Reading	Hoskyn, M. (2004). Language Processes and Reading Disabilities. In Wong, B. (Ed.) <i>Learning About Learning Disabilities: Third Edition</i> . New York: Elsevier Academic Press.
Oct 11	No Class	
Oct 18	Understanding and Treating Reading Disability Part II: Reading Comprehension Assessment Two Due Oct 19 (25%)	Hoskyn, M. (2004).
Oct 25	Understanding and Treating Disorder of Written Expression 15 Minute Student Presentations	Graham, S., Harris, K.R. & MacArthur, C. (2004). Writing Instruction. In Wong, B. (Ed.) <i>Learning About Learning Disabilities: Third Edition</i> . New York: Elsevier Academic Press.
Nov 1	Understanding and Treating Mathematics Disability 15 Minute Student Presentations	Geary, D.C. (2004). Mathematics and Learning Disabilities. <i>Journal of Learning Disabilities</i> , 37, 4-15.
Nov 8	LD Across the Life Span Part I: Young Children and Developmental Risk Factors for LD 15 Minute Student Presentations	

Date	Topic	Reading
Nov 15	LD Across the Life Span Part II: Adolescents and Adults 15 Minute Student Presentations Assessment Three Due Nov 16 (25%)	Butler, D.L. (2004). Adults with Learning Disabilities. In Wong, B. (Ed.) <i>Learning About Learning Disabilities: Third Edition</i> . New York: Elsevier Academic Press.
Nov 22	Social/Emotional/Behavioural Development of Children and Adolescents with LD 15 Minute Student Presentations	Vaughn, S., Sinagub, J. & Kim, A (2004). Social Competence/Social Skills of Students with Learning Disabilities: Interventions and Issues. In Wong, B. (Ed.) <i>Learning About Learning Disabilities: Third Edition</i> . New York: Elsevier Academic Press.
Nov 29	Special Education for Students with LD 15 Minute Student Presentations	Edmunds & Edmunds (2008). Chapters 2 and 6.
Dec 6	Critical Review and Wrap Up 15 Minute Student Presentations Take Home Exam Due Monday December 13, 2010 (30%)	

UW-ACE

The UW-ACE site for PSYCH 312R will be used to post the following important information: this course outline, power point lecture notes, links to library reserves and other websites, assessment instructions and drop boxes, and contact information for Dr. Nusca. It is important to check the UW-ACE site regularly for course announcements and information.

IMPORTANT UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Accommodation for Illness or Unforeseen Circumstances:

The instructor follows the practices of the University of Waterloo in accommodating students who have documented reasons for missing quizzes or exams. See http://www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/students/accom_illness.html

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Academic Integrity website (Arts):

http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Academic Integrity Office (UW):

<http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity [check www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/] to avoid committing academic offences and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration, should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or Renison’s Administrative Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71, Student Discipline. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to this policy www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm . For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm .

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if grounds for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm .

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

Final Examination Policy

For Fall 2010, the established examination period is December 9 - 22, 2010. The schedule will be available in October. Students should be aware that student travel plans are not acceptable grounds for granting an alternative final examination time (see: <http://www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/finalexams.html>).