



University of Waterloo, Fall 2015
COURSE NUMBER: Psychology 312R
Course Name: Learning Disabilities
Class Time: Tuesday, 6:30 – 9:30pm

Instructor: Dr. Carolyn Wilson, PhD, CPsych
Email: via LEARN
Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description: A critical examination of the concept of learning disability and of current issues in the assessment and remediation of learning disabilities.

Prerequisite: One of PSYCH 207, 211, 212/212R, 213/213R. Level at least 2B
Cross-listed with PSYCH 312

If you have a similar transfer credit from another university, please check to make sure that both credits will be allowed.

Text: Lerner, J.W. & Johns, B.J. (2012). Learning Disabilities and Related Disorders (13th edition). Boston: Cengage Learning.

Course Objectives:

1. Develop an understanding of the characteristic features, etiology, and teaching strategies of various learning disabilities.
2. Develop an awareness of the importance (and complexity) of distinguishing learning disabilities from related disorders.
3. Develop an appreciation of how gender and cultural issues inform (or misinform) our understanding of learning disabilities.
4. Exposure to material that will assist in determining if one is interested in pursuing a profession that involves working with individuals with learning disabilities.

Class format: There are two sources of material for the course: the textbook and the lectures. The lectures will focus on specific topics and are not meant to provide coverage of all material in the text. Lectures will elaborate and build upon the text material. It is recommended that you attend the lectures and complete the readings beforehand.

Evaluation:

- a) Exams (the mid-term and final) will consist of multiple choice questions. Note that the tests will cover lecture material as well as assigned textbook readings. You will also be required to complete an essay (further information to follow).
- b) **Class Presentation:** all students will be expected to participate in a group presentation. The format will be a mock IPRC meeting in which a parent, classroom teacher, learning support teacher, and psychologist discuss a student's suitability for an Individual Education Plan (IEP), including results of aptitude and achievement testing, and outline contents of IEP. Once you have formed a group of four, notify the professor of group membership. Each group will choose a case study (available on LEARN). Class presentations will take place on November 17 and 24, 2015. More details to follow.

Schedule:

September 15, 2015: Week One	Introduction to Course Ch. 1, Learning Disabilities and Related Disabilities: characteristics and current directions
September 22, 2015: Week Two	Ch. 2, Assessment and the IEP Process
September 29, 2015: Week Three	Ch. 3, Specialized Instruction and Technology Ch. 4, Educational Settings and the Role of the Family
October 6, 2015: Week Four	Ch. 5, Theories of Learning Ch. 6, Social, Emotional and Behavioural Challenges
October 13, 2015: Week Five	Ch. 7, Related Disabilities: Autism Spectrum Disorders & Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
October 20, 2015: Week Six	Ch. 8, Young Children with Disabilities Ch. 9, Adolescents and Adults with Learning Disabilities and Related Disabilities
October 27, 2015: Week Seven	Midterm exam on topics from chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9 View documentary (<i>The Big Picture: rethinking dyslexia</i>)
November 3, 2015: Week Eight	Ch. 11, Spoken Language Difficulties: Listening and Speaking Ch. 12, Reading Difficulties
November 10, 2015: Week Nine	Ch. 13, Written Language Difficulties: Written Expression, Spelling, and Handwriting
November 17, 2015: Week Ten	Ch. 14, Mathematics Disorders
November 24, 2015: Week Eleven	Class Presentations
December 1, 2015: Week Twelve	Class Presentations

Grade distribution:

Mid-term:	35%
Group Presentation:	30%
Final Exam (non-cumulative):	35%

Final Examination Policy

For fall 2015, the established examination period is December 8 – 12, 2015. The final exam 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>).

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:

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

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, 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 professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71>.

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, <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70>. In addition, consult <http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/student-grievances-faculty-arts-processes> for the Faculty of Arts' grievance processes.

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 a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72>.

Academic Integrity website (Arts):
http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Academic Integrity Office (uWaterloo): <http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/>

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

Note for students with disabilities: The AccessAbility Services (AS) Office, 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 AS Office at the beginning of each academic term.

Cross-listed course:

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

A respectful living and learning environment for all

1. It is expected that everyone living, learning or working on the premises of Renison University College will contribute to an environment of tolerance and respect by treating others with sensitivity and civility.

2. Harassment is unwanted attention in the form of jokes, insults, gestures, gossip, or other behaviours that are meant to intimidate. Some instances of harassment are against the law in addition to Renison University College policy.
3. Discrimination is treating people differently because of their race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, colour, age, creed, marital status, or other personal characteristics. The Ontario Human Rights Code considers actions and behaviours rather than intentions.
4. If you experience or witness either harassment or discrimination, you may contact the Renison University College Harassment and Discrimination Officer at c7mcmillan@uwaterloo.ca (519-884-4404, ext. 28723).