Introduction to Educational Psychology  
Department of Psychology  
The University of Hong Kong

Second Semester, 2020-2021

Course Number : PSYC2035  
Lecture Hours : Friday 12:30 p.m. to 2:20 p.m.  
Lecture Hall : LE5 (or online)  
Instructor : Dr. Kathy Shum  
Phone : 3917-4223  
E-mail : kkmshum@hku.hk  
Office : Rm C6.08  
Consultation Hours : Monday 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. or by appointment

Tutors : Dr. Benise Mak (Coordinator)  
Phone : 3917-8226  
E-mail : benise@hku.hk  
Office : C6.13  
Consultation Hours : Friday 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. or by appointment

Ms. Reanna Hung  
Phone : 3917-7368  
E-mail : reannah@connect.hku.hk  
Office : C7.12  
Consultation Hours : Friday 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. or by appointment

Course Description

This is a course for students who are interested in how psychological theories and results of psychological research are applied to learning and teaching. The topics include major developmental theories and their application to learning and instruction, learning theories from both behavioral and cognitive traditions, effective teaching methods and practices, learners’ individual and group differences, achievement motivation, and assessment. Students will be involved in learning activities that require self-reflection and integration of daily life experience. They are encouraged to examine their own learning and education system in Hong Kong with what they learn in this course. They are expected to actively explore the practical implications and applications of psychological theories in education.

Learning Outcomes

1. You will know how psychological theories and results of psychological research are applied to learning and teaching.
2. You will understand the major developmental theories and their application to education.
3. You will appreciate learners’ individual and group differences. You will learn various strategies that accommodate instruction to meet individual and group needs.
4. You will learn how major learning theories and the results of research are applied to teaching and learning. You will be encouraged to apply these theories to your own learning.
5. You will learn how various theories of motivation and the results of research are applied to learning and teaching. You are encouraged to apply these theories to your own learning.
6. You will know what constitute good teaching methods and practices. You will be encouraged to examine the local education system with your knowledge in effective teaching.
7. You will have a basic understanding of the theories, practices, and research related to evaluation of student performance.
8. You will integrate what you learn with your personal experience and observation. You are encouraged to examine your own learning and the education system in Hong Kong with what you have learned in this course.

9. You will be involved in learning activities that require self-reflection and integration of daily life experience.

10. You will collaborate with your classmates in applying what you have learned from this course to an authentic teaching session.

Course Schedule

Part I: Overview
Week 1    Jan 22   Educational Psychology’s Purposes and Methods

Part II: Development and Students
Week 2    Jan 29   Theories of Development
Week 3    Feb 5    Student Diversity
Week 4    Feb 19   Exceptional Learners

Part III: Learning and Motivation
Week 5    Feb 26   Behavioral and Social Views of Learning
Week 6    Mar 5    Cognitive Theories of Learning
             Mar 12   Reading Week
Week 7    Mar 19   Quiz 1
Week 8    Mar 26   Motivation

Part IV: Teaching Methods and Practices
Week 9    Apr 9    Direct Instruction
Week 10   Apr 16   Constructivist Approaches to Instruction
Week 11   Apr 23   Instruction to Meet Individual Needs
Week 12   Apr 30   Assessment
Week 13   May 7    Quiz 2, Venue: CPD-3.04

Required Textbook

Recommended Reference Books
Course Assignments

Assessment is entirely based on coursework, which consists of four components:
1) Contribution to class learning 20%
2) Individual project 25%
3) Teaching practicum and report 30%
4) Class quizzes 25%

1) Participation in Class Discussion and Tutorials
Your attendance and participation reflect your commitment to the course. You are encouraged to contribute your ideas, questions, and personal experiences to the class and tutorials. What you get from this course is very much a function of what you put into it. Your contribution to class learning includes the assistance you render to your fellow-students, and your participation in discussion during tutorial and on the web forum. Before you go to your tutorial session, read the assigned reading and think clearly on the topic of that week. Post your opinions for the weekly debate or your suggestions on teaching/learning strategies in the discussion corner of the course web page latest by Monday 2:00 p.m. before your tutorial session. Please limit the length of your post to 150 words or less. To login, first login HKU Portal, click My eLearning and then Moodle courses. From your Moodle courses, choose “PSYC2035 Introduction to Educational Psychology [Section 2A, 2020].” During the tutorial, the tutor will chair the debate or the discussion. If it is in a format of debate, participants will be randomly assigned to either the proposition or opposition teams.

2) Individual Project
You may choose from Option A, B, C, or D for your individual project. If none of these options engage your interest, you can come up with Option E. However, you should discuss this Option E with your tutor before you proceed. Quality is more important than quantity. Please limit the length of your essay/proposal/report to a maximum of 2,500 words (8-9 pages with double-line spacing). You are encouraged to seek advice from your tutor on your individual project. The due date is Apr 9 (Fri). You should submit an e-copy of your project through Moodle to your tutor by 5:00 p.m. on that day. Late submission is subject to deduction of marks.

Option A: Research project proposal
Pick a phenomenon in educational psychology that intrigues you and then formulate a research question about this phenomenon. Write a research project proposal to explain:
- Your research question (what is it?)
- The background (why is it significant?)
- Method (how would you go about to answer the question?)
If you are a third year student who is now working on your thesis, you are encouraged to pick other options. If you insist on writing a research project proposal, you must discuss with your tutor first. The topic must be substantially different from that of your thesis.

Option B: Research critique
Review 3-4 journal articles on an issue of educational psychology (e.g. Are boys and girls treated differently in classroom? Is cooperative learning effective? Are learning goals really better than performance goals? Does small class size help students learn better? Does inclusive education help students with special needs? Does reward really diminish motivation? Can competition facilitate learning?). These journal articles must be reports of empirical studies. Evaluate the validity of these studies and comment on how their findings can be integrated to answer the questions in concern.
Option C: Mentoring project
Reconnect with your secondary or primary school. Ask your former teacher(s) to refer a mentee to you. In this semester, befriend this student and help him/her to make improvement in one of the following areas:

- Learning strategies
- Motivation
- Social and emotional development

You should have at least 4 times of interaction or contact (can be face-to-face or online) with your mentee during the semester. Try to spread the meetings evenly across the semester. It reflects badly on your effort if you cram all the 4 meetings within the last two weeks prior to submitting your report. Write a report to evaluate the results of your intervention. Your intervention should be based on your knowledge about development, learning, and instruction. You may discuss the difficulties you encounter, the strategies you use, and the effectiveness of your intervention, etc. If you are a private tutor, work with children other than your tutees. Please do not work with your family members or relatives. You should obtain parental consent before you proceed (a sample of parental consent form is posted on the course webpage).

Option D: Educational issue
Identify an educational issue in Hong Kong or your home country and analyze it from the perspective of educational psychologist. You should apply the psychological theories you have learned to the analysis of the issues. Sociological or political perspectives are not appropriate for this assignment. Here are some examples of interesting educational issues:

- Addiction to Internet among Students
- Admission to Direct Subsidized Schools (直資學校)
- Bullying in Schools
- Charisma of Cram School Teachers (補習天王)
- Civic/Moral Education
- Discipline of Students
- Drug or Substance Abuse
- English as Medium of Instruction
- Home-school Collaboration
- Inclusive Education (融合教育)
- Information Technology in Education
- National Education (國民教育)
- Liberal Studies (通識教育)
- Motivation of Band Three Students
- Parent Education
- Portfolio Assessment
- Preschool Education
- Project Learning (專題研習)
- Poverty and Education
- Reform in the Academic Structure of the Senior Secondary Education
- Sex Education
- Students with Specific Learning Difficulties
- Home schooling
- Alternative education
- International Baccalaureate® (IB) programmes
3) **Teaching Practicum**

Form three groups, each with 4-5 members, in your tutorial class. Each group will work together as a teaching team in one of the three tutorials. Each teaching session lasts for **45 minutes** and should be related to the topics covered in Weeks 9-11. The duty of the teaching team is to teach these topics to their fellow students. To make the teaching more focused, you can identify a specific theme in these topics. Here are some examples:

A. Direct Instruction
   - Good practices in direct instruction
   - Direct instruction and student diversity
   - The remedies for the limitations of direct instruction
   - The use of direct instruction in Hong Kong schools
B. Constructivist Approaches to Instruction
   - The comparison of teacher-centered and student-centered approaches
   - Problem-based learning and its application in tertiary education in Hong Kong
   - Cooperative learning and its feasibility in local education
   - Project learning in Hong Kong secondary schools: Difficulties and solutions
C. Instruction to Meet Individual Needs
   - Student diversity in Hong Kong classrooms
   - The pros and cons of heterogeneous and homogeneous grouping
   - The teaching strategies for heterogeneous grouping
   - The different ways of between-class grouping in Hong Kong: Their merits and limitations
   - The pros and cons of heterogeneous and homogeneous grouping

Try your best to integrate what you learn from this course in your teaching practicum. Each group will submit a report on their teaching practicum, which includes a lesson plan and an evaluation of their teaching. The report should be about **8-9 pages (2,500 words)**, excluding the appendices. Here is the suggested format of the report:

A. Topic
B. Instructional Objectives (What did you want your fellow students to achieve in this lesson?)
C. Learning Activities (What activities did you plan so that your fellow students could achieve the instructional objectives?)
D. Evaluation (Have the instructional objectives been achieved? What would you change if you were given a chance to redo the instruction?)
E. Appendices (powerpoint files, teaching materials, worksheets, etc.)

Please let your tutor know the topic of your lesson by **Feb 22 (Monday)**. You are encouraged to consult your tutor early on to seek for guidance and feedback. The report is due on **May 14 (Friday) by 5:00 p.m.**

4) **Class Quizzes**

There will be one in-class quiz on **March 19 (Friday)** and one at the end of the semester on **May 7 (Friday)**. The quizzes will consist of essay questions.
Policies

Academic Honesty
Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in any form of academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating on exams, plagiarism, interfering with grading) will receive a grade of F in this course and will be reported to the Department/Faculty Office/University Disciplinary Committee for further disciplinary action. There will be no exceptions. If you are not sure what constitutes the academic offense of plagiarism, checkout the webpage at http://www.hku.hk/plagiarism.

Plagiarism
A softcopy is required for all written assignments. The softcopy will be checked for plagiarism against a database of articles, books, webpages, and essays submitted by students at HKU and other universities. No credit will be given for an assignment that contains plagiarized materials. Further penalties will also be applied. These penalties include a zero mark for participation in course tutorials and a zero mark for the course. Plagiarism will also be reported to your Faculty for consideration of possible disciplinary action.

Provision of Feedback
Students can expect to receive feedback within 2-3 weeks after submitting written assignments and taking the class quizzes. Students can get individual feedback about their assignments through meeting with the course tutors. Weekly consultation hours are set up for individual consultation.

Weekly Readings
(Optional readings are marked with asterisks)

Week 1 Educational Psychology’s Purposes and Methods
Chapter 1: Educational psychology: A foundation for teaching


Week 2 Theories of Development
Chapter 2: Cognitive, language, and literacy development

Chapter 3: Social, moral, and emotional development

Read Chapter 2 “Summary” (pp.3-26) or the Executive Summary published in September 2001 (https://www.e-c.edu.hk/en/publications_and_related_documents/education_reform.html).

Week 3 Student Diversity
Chapter 4: Student diversity


**Week 4**  
Exceptional Learners

Chapter 12: Learners with exceptionalities


**Week 5**  
Behavioral and Social Views of Learning

Chapter 6: Behavioral theories of learning


**Week 6**  
Cognitive Theories of Learning

Chapter 5: Information processing and cognitive theories of learning


**Week 7**  
Quiz 1

**Week 8**  
Motivation

Chapter 10: Motivating students to learn


**Week 9**  
Direct Instruction

Chapter 7: The effective lesson

**Week 10**  
**Constructivist Approaches to Instruction**

Chapter 8: Student-centered and constructivist approaches to instruction


**Week 11**  
**Instruction to Meet Individual Needs**

Chapter 9: Grouping, differentiation, and technology


**Week 12**  
**Assessment**

Chapter 13: Assessing student learning


**Week 13**  
**Quiz 2**  
**Venue: CPD-3.04**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutorial</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Feb 1</td>
<td>Theories of Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Debate: The developmental needs of children and adolescents are catered for by the education system in Hong Kong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Feb 8</td>
<td>Student Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Debate: Educational equity has improved in the past decade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Feb 22</td>
<td>Exceptional Learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Debate: All students with exceptionalities should be educated in mainstream schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mar 1</td>
<td>Behavioral and Social Views of Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Suggestions: From behavioral theories of learning, what teaching strategies would you suggest to primary and secondary school teachers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mar 22</td>
<td>Cognitive Theories of Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Suggestions: From the perspective of cognitive theories of learning, what study strategies would you suggest to your fellow students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mar 29</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Debate: Educators should promote learning goals instead of performance goals in Hong Kong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Apr 12</td>
<td>Teaching Practicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Apr 19</td>
<td>Teaching Practicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Apr 26</td>
<td>Teaching Practicum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>