Achievement Motivation  
EPSY 530/PSCH 525, Spring 2017  
Wednesdays 5:00-8:00, 216 Taft Hall

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Hours: Before class and by appointment  
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Purpose  
This advanced research course will help students explore theories and evidence on motivation as it relates to projects they are working on. Some students anticipate reviewing basic theories of achievement motivation, writing a review of research as a final project. Other students anticipate extending their Master’s thesis or dissertation topics into the field of motivation and will be looking for guidance. Still other students have designed a study or an applied investigation project related to motivation and are looking for advice on how to evaluate their data. Regardless of these self-designed forms of inquiry, we will work through the qualities of a strong theory and compare existing research with such criteria. Out of these forms of inquiry everyone should be able to understand the following distinctions

▪ Why is it a problem to “add up” different theories of motivation?  
▪ What is an intention and how are these measured and validated in research?  
▪ How are needs-based theories of motivation different from goals-focused theories?  
▪ What do researchers mean when they use the term engagement? How is “engagement” different from “discourse”?  
▪ What effects does social comparison have on students’ motivation?  
▪ What roles do “personality traits” and “definitions of the self” play in motivation?  
▪ How do situational expectations and personal goals compel action?  
▪ How do learners balance cultural pressures and personal desires in school?  
▪ What sorts of feedback and assessment inhibit and strengthen motivation?  
▪ What is moral motivation and why is that an important feature of education?

Readings  
We will rely on a jigsaw teaching technique that requires each student to develop an area of expertise and demonstrate their knowledge to the whole group. We will also spend time working in pairs or small groups to address research problems that may not be important to everyone, but are necessary for the completion of a targeted research project.

Everyone will be required to identify and make substantial progress on a research project and to keep the instructor and class informed of their research goals. This will inevitably include reading self-selected journal articles, books, and chapters. A reading plan must include at least 15 journal articles and at least one theoretical paper.

In class, students will take turns presenting to one another ideas from their reading and/or research. Students enrolled to gain breadth in the field will find it useful to obtain and compare the content of outstanding textbooks. More specialized reading in group processes, self-regulated learning, situated-cognition, social-emotional learning, and teacher education will also be of interest to our group and are easy to find in online bookstores. Selected books should be highlighted in the goals statement crafted for our course. For students who have no background in this area, I am recommending the following texts for an overview of the ways in which educational psychologists often think about motivation.

For students who are interested in thinking about the moral features of motivation, this book introduces key concepts in the field alongside some of the major ideas in the field of moral development.


For students who are ready for a solid historical foundation for their understanding of the field, I am recommending this educational psychology text.


For students who have mastered the material related to existing theories,

**Assignments**

Students are expected to attend all sessions and participate in discussions. Everyone will be assigned to a “special interest group” that will hopefully align with their professional interests and expertise. It will be important to keep group members informed of absences and, in doing so, to share with group members the content of what they are reading using some form of electronic communication. Everyone is also responsible for making arrangements to obtain any missed information.

To assist with these conversations, each student should outline and submit a *reading plan* for the course as early in the semester as practical. The reading plan should include at least 15 journal articles and at least one theoretical paper. Each group should craft and submit to the instructor a schedule for presenting information from these reading plans to the rest of the group and possibly to the class as a whole. It is important, then, for students to organize their time so that they complete readings *before* coming to class and are prepared to discuss the content of the readings.

Each student should also outline and submit a *writing plan* for this course as early in the semester as possible. Because this course can help students learn skills for conducting original research, assignments should be completed using all the standards of professional discourse (e.g., APA format, reliance on primary sources). At the very minimum, everyone should design and complete an independent project, present details from the readings on a regular basis, and present the content of a final project to the class.

Taking advantage of opportunities to receive feedback, either orally or in writing, can improve comprehension of the technical features of a paper. Therefore, writing plans often take many forms. Students who have no previous knowledge of motivation may want to include reflections on the content of the textbook of their choice in their writing plan. Students who have not read many journal articles may want to write short summaries of various articles and turn them in for critique during the semester.

Participants will also take turns leading the class in ways that include demonstrations and practice talks that will be presented either at conferences or as part of the thesis defense process. From such presentations, more formal written projects can take many forms. Samples include (a) summarizing the findings of a collection of related studies, (b) studying the work of a particular theorist, (c) defending the need for a new study extending an area of investigation, (d) offering a theoretical critique for a specified content area, (e) planning and conducting a practical intervention with students, (f) working on a thesis or dissertation step, or (g) crafting a paper to submit for publication.

**Final grades.** Students who wish to work toward an ‘A’ in the course should show how they have connected a strong research question to ONE theory of motivation and/or made progress on research that is currently ongoing. In doing so, it will be important to include a critique of the strength and scientific validity of the theory using criteria we will discuss as part of the course. Ideally, this will convey an ability to use material from self-designed reading and writing plans to strengthen an overall program of study. Outstanding work should enhance students’ curriculum vita.

**Grades of “B”** will include the completion of all assignments, but in a way that is not quite in compliance with the standards of excellence expected in a graduate program. A *passing grade of “C”* will be possible if students turn in a final project, but come unprepared to participate on a regular basis. In doctoral programs, courses where students earn anything less than a “B” are often retaken.
Enhancing communication. To enhance communication, everyone will be added to a class listserv that is reserved only for doctoral students or other students who want to think about doing research. The syllabus will also be posted on the Web and updated as topics and discussion leaders change from week to week. Group members are also encouraged to share contact information with one another to maintain contact between class sessions. Students and faculty in the COE have learned that when everyone participates, we can all learn, have fun, and avoid unnecessary resentments. As is the case in most academic communities, people who do not join in are typically ignored rather than punished.

Accessibility
UIC strives to ensure the accessibility of programs, classes, and services to students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations can be arranged for students with various types of disabilities, such as documented learning disabilities, vision or hearing impairments, and emotional or physical disabilities. All students should know that the University of Illinois at Chicago is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that individuals with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities at UIC. Students with disabilities who require accommodations for full access and participation in UIC Programs must be registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Please contact DRC at (312) 413-2183 (voice) or (312) 413-0123 (TDD). UIC also offers a wide range of resources for students who need extra help. Doctoral students may want to pay attention to the resources available at the UIC Writing Center. It is essential that students get in the habit of writing at least something as often as possible, preferably every day. More details on support services can be found at: http://www.uic.edu/academics/student-support

Academic Honesty
One major issue that seems to be cropping up across classes in the COE is some form of academic dishonesty, intentional or accidental. Two issues seem especially important to discuss as part of our course activities: plagiarism and the use of assignments for more than one course.

First, your review of research should represent your version of the main information you obtained from the readings. You should ideally try to avoid quoting information directly from the articles you are reading, but may want to do so on a rare occasion. This is an acceptable practice if you accurately cite the place in the article you are quoting from; including the last name of all the authors, the year of the publication, and the page number where the language appears. Similarly, you should ideally try to support all your ideas with empirical evidence. The APA style manual includes a wide variety of information that would qualify as evidence and a set of formal rules for citing these sources properly. You can find the rules that we use in the field of Education in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Failure to cite your sources for borrowed ideas is an act of plagiarism.

Second, in this course, you are encouraged to use information from other courses. That sort of sharing is very helpful among professionals. Many students will be using this course as one of several lenses into which they explore their area of research. Be sure to consider the evaluation rubric that will be used to evaluate your review of research, but it is perfectly acceptable to invite more than one professor to read your literature review. Grading rubrics offer an outline of how to meet the requirements of the assignments and differ across courses, but adapting material for each course is accepted professional practice as you become less dependent on coursework and have your own research identity. We will discuss academic dishonesty further as part of the course, but for more information on the UIC’s guidelines, please go to the following: https://dos.uic.edu/conductforstudents.shtml
## Structural Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>SUGGESTED PREPARATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 11th</td>
<td>Introduction, identification of interests, and establishing procedures.</td>
<td>Definitions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>What sort of psychologist are you?</td>
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<td>Jan. 18th</td>
<td><strong>What is a Theory?</strong></td>
<td>Books of potential interest</td>
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<td>Personal, civic, and civil discourse—<em>card sorting activity</em></td>
<td>Resources of historic interest</td>
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<td>Jan. 25th</td>
<td><strong>Curiosity</strong>—Alex Carstensen</td>
<td><em>Craft a Research Problem Statement</em></td>
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<td><em>Submit your personal course plan</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 1st</td>
<td><strong>Mentoring and Motivation</strong>—Persis Driver</td>
<td>Personal reading schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 8th</td>
<td><strong>Vocational Intentions</strong>—Diane Mitchell</td>
<td>Personal reading schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 15th</td>
<td><strong>Moral Motivation</strong>—Terri Thorkildsen</td>
<td>Personal reading schedule</td>
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<td>Feb. 22nd</td>
<td><strong>Predict &amp; Control in Motivational Research</strong>—Sierra Ryan</td>
<td>Personal reading schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 1st</td>
<td><strong>Expectancy-Value Theory</strong>—David Banzer</td>
<td>Personal reading schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 8th</td>
<td><strong>Attribution Theory</strong>—Matt Zellner</td>
<td>Personal reading schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 15th</td>
<td><strong>Mastery Motivation</strong>—Jasmine Jones</td>
<td>Personal reading schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 22nd</td>
<td><strong>SPRING BREAK</strong></td>
<td><strong>NO CLASS—Keep writing</strong></td>
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<td>Mar. 29th</td>
<td><strong>Self-Determination and Self-Control</strong>—Claudia Espinoza &amp; Ashley Thompson</td>
<td>Personal reading schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 5th</td>
<td><strong>SRCD—No class</strong></td>
<td>Personal reading schedule</td>
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<td>Apr. 12th</td>
<td>Motivation Through Story or Understanding Multiple Selves—Chris Fry</td>
<td>Personal reading schedule</td>
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<td>Attachment and Motivation—Xue Jiang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 19th</td>
<td>Cooperative Learning and Peer Coaching—Persis Driver &amp; Jill Rothamer-Wallenfeldt</td>
<td>Personal reading schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 26th</td>
<td><strong>AERA—No class</strong></td>
<td>(No class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 5th</td>
<td>Finals week</td>
<td><em>Final paper due by May 5th</em></td>
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*Final paper due by May 5th*
Suggested Readings

January 11th Definitions and central questions


January 18th Review of some classics


January 25th Curiosity


February 1st Mentoring


Department of Education; https://www2.ed.gov/pubs/OR/ConsumerGuides/mentor.html

Entering Mentoring: A seminar to train a new generation of scientists.


University of Michigan’s Rackham School of Graduate Studies (2007). *How to get the mentoring you want: A guide for graduate students at a diverse university*. Ann Arbor, MI: The Regents of the University of Michigan.

February 8th Intentional Systems Theories


February 15th Moral Motivation


February 22nd Predict and Control in Motivational Research
http://setosa.io/ev/ordinary-least-squares-regression/


March 1st Expectancy-Value Theory

March 8th Attribution Theories


**March 15th Mastery Motivation**


**March 29th Self-Determination and Self-Control**


**April 12th Motivation Through Story**

**April 12th Attachment and Motivation**