Human Development for School Leaders

EPSY 535/ EDPS 535
Summer 2015, ETMSW 2435
Tuesdays - Thursdays 4:00-8:30 pm,

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Purpose
This course focuses on key developmental concepts that are central to school leadership. We will focus on key concerns associated with supporting adult development as well as common dilemmas faced by young people who are making the transition from childhood through early and middle adolescence. We will draw age-related comparisons between children, adolescents, and adults as each participates in school, family, and neighborhood contexts and ending with a study of how humans themselves are also best understood as dynamic systems who are constantly in transition. Media representations of lives in progress and research findings will be compared to identify common stereotypes that limit or support development. Ideally, school leaders who finish the course will have a greater understanding of common developmental concerns of individuals who are likely to be involved in educational activities situated in particular communities.

Readings
The readings will come primarily from journals and book chapters. Most articles can be found online. Students will be expected to take advantage of online journal services and to master the technology needed to find course readings. Those articles that are not online will be distributed to the class. For those students who do not have their own computer connections to the library, the ETL on the second floor of ETMSW is available along with other labs on campus. That said, individuals may find the following books to be useful in their reference library.

**Format**
School leaders are expected to read and critique all assigned readings before coming to class. We will begin each class working online to find ways to embellish themes related to the theme of the class. The remainder of our time together will be spent clarifying misunderstandings and/or controversies associated with the material and drawing connections between theory, empirical research, and opportunities to imagine the role of human development in designing learning environments. We will also compare research findings with media stereotypes and with details of lives in progress, generating conclusions about how to build nurturing environments. Needless to say, these forms of knowledge cannot be generated if school leaders come to class unprepared or fail to collect and study the appropriate readings.

**Assignments**
To remain responsive to the ebb and flow of the discussion, assignments will not require a fixed set of readings and students are encouraged to share suitable materials with the class by writing key ideas and distributing them to their working group. The syllabus will be posted online and will be changed prior to each session. To comply with programmatic needs, a predetermined set of topics has been established and are listed in the tentative schedule, but we will also be looking for opportunities to broaden our collective understanding of how to build strong schools that support human development.
Weekly written assignments will be used to evaluate the degree to which school leaders are able to construct general relationships between topics and back up their ideas with research and practical evidence. In preparation for these, guiding questions will be posted on the syllabus as well.
Final grades will involve a combination of 3 tasks: reading summaries and discussion questions, a group discussion log, and a final written account of the new knowledge gained from interviewing at least one person about emerging theories of how to build a supportive environment. These are designed to assess how well student leaders are able to integrate the research information about human development with practical plans for nurturing individuals’ growth. Across assignments we will evaluate three sources of evidence; research findings, media representations, and details of lives in progress. These sources will be weighted differently in various segments of the course.

*Reading summaries.* To ensure that we are able to cover a wide range of topics during our time together, the course will rely heavily on jigsaw learning. School leaders will be assigned to small groups based on interests and reasons for becoming a school leader. Each week, groups will meet during class time to discuss the readings and imagine ways to use the information in practice. Because everyone will probably want to keep a personal copy of the reading summaries and gather those written by group members, school leaders are encouraged to use e-mail, Google+, or Box.com to keep track of all work. On the rare occasion when someone is unable to attend class, school leaders are responsible for submitting article summaries to the group as a whole as soon as is practical. It is also your responsibility to obtain any assigned readings and procedural information that might have occurred in missed class time. When reading selected articles, please include at least one extension question in any summary of key ideas and practice critical thinking skills.
Discussion activities. Along with the article summaries, school leaders will be asked to create a discussion log, an activity that is similar to the generation of minutes in a business meeting. To assist in connecting the research information with media representations and details of lives in progress, we will complete a range of activities in class. Group members will ideally take turns recording minutes for group discussion to practice the types of listening and validation skills that are required of an effective school leader. The note-takers of the week will be responsible for recording the content of each discussion as well as documenting who offered each contribution. Some groups may prefer to record the discussion and transcribe their conversation, but an accurate gist is perfectly acceptable. Just be sure to document where each group member has contributed to the discussion. The notes should be typed up for critiqued by group members in the following class. Members may edit these notes, add amendments, or delete any material they do not feel is accurate. Group discussions, in other words, will include a critique of the accuracy of the transcript from the previous week as well as a new conversation. Once notes are approved by the group, a set of the final notes should be placed in a log that will be collected and evaluated at two points in the course. If someone should miss a class, he or she is responsible for making a contribution to the group discussion by adding a response to the readings and/or to the discussion that is represented in the notes. I will look for signs of intellectual growth over time and the degree to which school leaders are coordinating information from research, media sources, and lives in progress in these discussions. Labeling participants in each conversation ensures that your grade is not caused by variation in group dynamics.

Final project. A final project consisting of a written paper and a formal interview with at least one person will be used to determine if school leaders have coordinated the information on human development with practical plans for designing a suitable educational climate. School leaders can begin thinking about how to find at least one person to interview about how they understand an ideal school.

Academic honesty
Academic dishonesty, intentional or accidental, seems to be cropping up across classes in the COE. 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, article summaries should represent your version of the main information you were able to obtain from the readings. You do not need to quote information from the articles, 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. You will also be asked to support all your ideas with evidence in the final paper. There is 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 free to use materials from other courses if that information helps you better understand the developmental processes that occur in educational settings. That sort of sharing is very helpful among professionals. In addition, it will be important for you to use information from the article summaries and discussion group logs as well as the grading rubric for your final paper. Grading rubrics offer an outline of how to meet the requirements of the assignments. We will discuss academic honesty/dishonesty further as part of the course.

**Resources for students who need extra help**

UIC also offers a wide range of resources for students who need extra help. School leaders may want to pay particular attention to the resources available at the UIC Writing Center. It is essential that school leaders 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](http://www.uic.edu/academics/student-support)

**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).
### Tentative Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Resources</th>
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| May 19<sup>th</sup> | **Value of Theories to Practice**  
Developmental theories  
Motivational models | **Guiding questions**  
Film Critique: *I Am a Promise* |
| May 21<sup>st</sup> | **Adult Learning and Development**  
Stage-environment fit  
Plasticity in adults  
Self-efficacy and success  
Relationships and social capital | **Guiding questions**  
**20 Principles of Instruction** |
| May 26<sup>th</sup> | **Neighborhoods, Families, and Family Support**  
Development is pan-contextual  
Social problems or social opportunities?  
Parent-child attachments  
Parental involvement in education  
Siblings and sibling support  
Extended family support | **Guiding questions**  
DCFS advice |
| May 28<sup>th</sup> | **Support for Development in Schools**  
Epistemological support  
Resilience and responsible intervention  
Emotional support  
Interpersonal support  
Culture and learners’ needs  
Age differences in learners’ needs | **Guiding questions**  
Film Critique: *Growing up Online*  
**Learning cases**  
**Motivation cases**  
Preliminary review of group longs  
(article summaries and discussion notes)  
**Guiding questions**  
Film Critique: *Inside the Teenage Brain* |
| June 2<sup>nd</sup> | **Learning with the Whole Body**  
Physical development in K-12 settings  
Brain growth  
Sexuality in schools  
Intentions and attributions  
Mental health and physical growth | **Guiding questions**  
Film Critique: *I Can’t Do This, I Can Do That* |
| June 4<sup>th</sup> | **Accommodating Individual Differences**  
Working with talents of all youth  
Respecting learners’ limitations  
Supporting growth beyond school | **Guiding questions**  
Film Critique: *I Can’t Do This, I Can Do That*  
**Final paper due** |
| June 9<sup>th</sup> | **CPS Training**  
**CPS Training** | **Final paper due** |
Possible Readings

May 21st
Stage-environment fit

Plasticity in the aging brain

Self-efficacy and success

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Relationships and social capital


May 26th
Development is pan-contextual


Social problems or social opportunities?
Parent-child attachments


Parental involvement in education


Siblings and sibling support


Extended family support


May 28th

Epistemological support


**Resilience and responsible interventions**


**Emotional support**


**Interpersonal support**


**Culture and learners’ needs**


Age differences in learners’ needs

June 2nd
Physical development in K-12 settings

Brain growth

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**Sexuality in schools**


**Intentions and attributions**


**Mental health and physical growth**


**June 4th**

**Working with talents of all youth**


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Respecting learners’ strengths and limitations


