

**ED 530: Cognitive Development in Context**  
**Class Syllabus**  
**Summer, 2012**

**Professor:** Dr. Elizabeth Relling Zettler

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**Office Hours:** MTWRF from 8:30 to 9:00 and from 12:00 to 12:30. Also available by appointment.

**Class Times:** MTWRF from 9:00-12:00

**Required Texts:**

1. Jensen, E. (2009). *Teaching with Poverty in Mind: What Being Poor Does to Kids' Brains and What Schools Can Do about It*. Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development. ISBN 978-1416608844.
2. Payne, R.K. (2005). *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). aha Process, Inc. ISBN 978-1929229482.
3. Tatum, B.D. (2003). "Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?": *A Psychologist Explains the Development of Racial Identity*. Basic Books. ISBN 978-0465083619.
4. Landale, L.S., McHale, S., & Booth, A.(2010). *Growing Up Hispanic: Health and Development of Children of Immigrants*. Urban Institute Press. ISBN 978-0877667636.
5. Many other readings, as noted in the weekly schedule will be provided via e-mail, downloaded by students from Academic Search Premier, or handed out in class. It is imperative that students check their campus e-mail on a regular basis to ensure that they are receiving all of their class material. These readings will primarily be research articles published in academic journals.

**Course Description:** This course deals with the complex interactions between economics, race, ethnicity and gender as they affect cognitive development and academic performance. An emphasis will be placed on raising learning expectations among rural students from low socioeconomic communities.

**Course Objectives:** This is a graduate-level course designed for professional educators. As such considerable demands will be placed on students to direct their own learning while also contributing to the knowledge of their classmates. It is expected that the student will:

- (1) demonstrate an understanding of research on the prevalence and effects of poverty, and the effects of racial, ethnic, and gender roles on school performance;
- (2) exhibit the ability to integrate information about the interacting influences of economics, race, and gender as they affect performance in the classroom;
- (3) reflect upon the ethical and moral implications of these topics;
- (4) effectively communicate their understanding of these topics through class discussions, oral presentations, and formal papers; and
- (5) apply this understanding by developing class assignments designed to foster higher academic expectations among their own students.

**Class Format:** The professor will lead class on Mondays which will largely be dedicated to a “big-picture” view of the issues for the week and focus on discussing national and international data on poverty, race, gender, and education. Although the professor will be primarily responsible for class on this day, students are expected to participate in discussions and in any class projects. On Tuesdays, class will focus more on how these factors have been shown to affect academic performance. Class will still be primarily led by the professor, but the format will be almost entirely discussion or project based. On Wednesdays, students will be primarily responsible for leading class discussions which will be tied to readings selected by the students. On Thursdays, class will primarily focus on student presentations based on possible solutions to real-life problems. Finally, on Fridays, students will present projects they have designed for their own classrooms. During the last hour on Fridays, an exam will also be administered. Some class time will also be regularly available for students to work on their various assignments.

<b>Course Requirements:</b>	<b>Percent of Final Grade:</b>
Contextual Analysis	5%
3 Exams*	30% (10 points each)
Class Discussion Lead*	10%
Problem-Based Project Presentation*	10%
Applied Project*	10%
Reflective Essays	15% (1 point each day)
Research Paper*	10%
Class Participation	10%

\* Items marked with an asterisk are **requirements**, not recommendations. Each of the above must be completed in order to receive a passing grade in the course.

**Contextual Analysis** – On the first day of class, students will turn in an analysis of their teaching context. In this paper, students will examine the factors in their district over which they have no control, but which they must take into consideration when working with their pupils. Some examples might include high poverty rates, limited class space, or communication problems with parents. In the second section of the paper, students will discuss what is being done to work with these issues at both an individual and an institutional level. In this section, students should include any theoretical models that their schools are employing or referencing as they address these matters. It is expected that this preliminary analysis can be accomplished in 5 pages.

**Exams** - Three exams will be given. The tests will be comprised of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Questions will be taken from both the text and class discussions. A study guide will be presented prior to each exam.

**Class Discussion Lead** – Each student will pick an article for the entire class to read and then lead a discussion on this topic. Discussion questions will then be written based on these articles. The student will then lead a 15 minute discussion section on these topics. Some of these questions should involve reflection on ethical issues.

**Problem-Based Project Presentation** – Based on their readings and an analysis of their teaching context, students will present a problem-based project. In doing so, students will begin to formulate possible solutions to the problems that they are facing in their own schools. While this presentation will be context based, it is expected that students will draw from a variety of theoretical (e.g., school improvement models) and empirical sources in developing possible solutions. Students will also be asked to reflect on the ethical issues involved in these plans. The presentation of this project should be designed to take 10-20 minutes and should be approved by the professor prior to that day of class. Students are also required to turn in a written version of this project.

**Applied Project** – Because the ultimate goal of this course is to enhance the teaching that is employed in one's classroom, students will also be required to create a project for their own students. While it is not necessary for students to treat their classmates as their students, they should present a lesson plan or otherwise explain a project that is designed to be used in their classrooms. It is expected that these will be a continuation of the problem-based project, but more specific and concrete in nature. The project should be designed to take 10-15 minutes to describe to the class. Students are also required to turn in a written version of this project.

**Reflective Essays** – At the end of class each day, students will be given a brief writing prompt related to their daily topic. They will then spend approximately 10 minutes reflecting and writing on this topic. A special focus will be placed on ethical issues related to the readings.

**Research Paper** - Students will write a paper focusing on the research related to a particular topic of their choosing. The paper will be between 9-11 pages and should demonstrate an understanding of both theory and research as it relates to practice. While this paper can take many forms and a more detailed list of requirements will be provided, there must be a clearly stated thesis and evidence must be presented to support this thesis. The paper must double-spaced, in 12-point Times font, and include one-inch margins so that the professor has adequate space for providing comments. The paper must be stapled and should not be encased by folders or binders. Students may rewrite any paper if not satisfied with their initial grade. Nonetheless, it is recommended that students make a strong effort on their first paper rather than assume that the paper can simply be rewritten at a more convenient time. The original draft must be turned in with the rewrite.

**Class Participation** -- Students will also be graded based on their contributions to classroom discussion. Although differences of opinions are encouraged in this class, meaningful classroom discussion requires both listening and responding to others in a responsible and respectful manner.

**Academic Integrity** - Illinois College has a clear policy on academic integrity stated in the Blue Book. You will be asked to sign each paper saying it represents your original work for this assignment. If you have any questions about conducting and integrating research, or about the difference between paraphrasing, quoting, and plagiarism, please see the professor. Plagiarism of sources (and of entire papers) is not only academically dishonest but also a crime and will be punished. Any instances of Academic Dishonesty will go before the Illinois College Judicial Review Board.

### **Grading Scale -**

A	92-100%	C	72-77%
A-	90-91%,	C-	70-71%
B+	88-89%	D+	68-69%
B	82-87%,	D	62-67%
B-	80-81%	D-	60-61%
C+	78-79%	F	59% or less

### **Guiding Principles**

It is always important, especially given the nature of our topic, to remember that every course taught at Illinois College is designed to make you a better thinker and a better citizen of our community and the world. As such, it is important to examine the Mission of Illinois College and our Affirmation of Community Responsibility.

### **Illinois College Mission Statement**

True to its founding vision in 1829, Illinois College is a community committed to the highest standards of scholarship and integrity in the liberal arts. The College develops in its students qualities of mind and character needed for fulfilling lives of leadership and service.

### **Affirmation of Community Responsibility**

Illinois College is committed to the development and welfare of every member of our community: student, faculty, staff, and administration.

To achieve the working and learning environment most conducive to everyone's well-being and growth at the College, all members of the community must assume responsibility. Individually and collectively, we should:

- Pursue excellence in academic and co-curricular experiences, and in all activities which support the academic program;
- Exhibit integrity in intellectual development;
- Practice responsible and effective communication; and
- Foster tolerance and respect in our community.

We affirm that we are all caretakers of our community and recognize that our individual responsibilities are essential for nurturing collaborative relationships, critical exploration, and global awareness in our community. A quality liberal education requires our commitment to excellence, integrity, communication, tolerance, and shared responsibility for the success of Illinois College.

## Class Schedule

### Week 1: The Effects of Poverty

- Mon.      Begin Discussing Readings for Week 1:
1. Jensen, E. (2009). *Teaching with Poverty in Mind*
  2. Payne, R.K. (2005). *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*
  3. “Family poverty, school-based parental involvement, and policy-focused protective factors in kindergarten” (2010) from *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*
  4. “Early feeling about school and later academic outcomes of children with special needs living in poverty” (2007) from *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*
  5. “Mitigating the effect of family poverty on academic and behavioral outcomes: The role of school climate in middle and high school” (in press) from *Children and Youth Services Review*
  6. “Smooth and rough roads to academic achievement: Retention and race/class disparities in high school” (2006) from *Social Science Research*
  7. “Finding Fairness for Rural Students” (2011) *Phi Delta Kappan*
  8. “Sending Off All Your Good Treasures: Rural Schools, Brain-Drain, and Community Survival in the Wake of Economic Collapse” (2011) from *Journal of Research in Rural Education*

#### **Contextual Analysis Due**

Tues.      Further Discussion of Readings

Wed.      Review for Exam #1  
Discussion Leaders:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Thurs.     Class Presentations/Project Leaders:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Fri.      Applied Project Leaders:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**Exam #1**

## **Week 2: Controversies**

Mon. Begin Discussing Readings for Week 2:

1. Tatum, B.D. (2003). *Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?*
2. “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Backpack” (1988) from *White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming To See Correspondences through Work in Women's Studies*
3. “Long-term effects of Head Start on academic and school outcomes of children in persistent poverty: Girls vs. boys” (2010) from *Children and Youth Services Review*
4. “Diversity study circles in teacher education practice: An experiential learning project” (2008) from *Teaching and Teacher Education*
5. “Sexuality, schooling, and teacher identity formation: A critical pedagogy for teacher education” (2009) from *Teaching and Teacher Education*

### **Paper Thesis Due**

Tues. Further Discussion of Readings

Wed. Review for Exam #2

Discussion Leaders:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Thurs. Class Presentations/Project Leaders:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Fri. Applied Project Leaders:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**Exam #2**

### **Week 3: Ethnicity and Gender**

Mon. Begin Discussing Readings for Week 3:

1. Landale, L.S., McHale, S., & Booth, A. (2010). *Growing Up Hispanic*
2. "Gender Theory as a tool for analyzing science teaching" (2009) from *Teaching and Teacher Education*
3. "Technology in the classroom: Burning the bridges to the gaps in gender-biased education?" (2008) from *Computers and Education*
4. "Gender differences in students' mathematics game playing" (2011) from *Computers and Education*
5. "Where the boys aren't: Non-cognitive skills, returns to school and the gender gap in higher education" (2002) from *Economics of Education Review*
6. "Male Primary school teachers: Helping or hindering a move to gender equity?" (2010) from *Teaching and Teacher Education*
7. "The Possibility of Place: One Teacher's Use of Place-Based Instruction for English Students in a Rural High School" (2011) from *Journal of Research in Rural Education*

#### **Paper Due**

Tues. Further Discussion of Readings

Wed. Review for Exam #3

Discussion Leaders:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Thurs. Class Presentations/Project Leaders:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Fri. Applied Project Leaders:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

#### **Exam #3**

**All rewrites and late work due**