

# CTEC 7270/8270

## Theory-based Problems

### Spring 2011

**1. Course Number:** CTEC 7270/8270  
**Course Title:** Theory-based Problems  
**Credit Hours:** 3 semester hours  
**Prerequisites:** None  
**Corequisites:** None  
**Instructor:** Angela Love  
**Contact:** [angela.love@auburn.edu](mailto:angela.love@auburn.edu)  
**Office:** Haley 5018  
**Office hours:** Tues, 3 – 6pm; Wed, 9 – 11am;  
and by appointment

**2. Date Syllabus Prepared:** August 11, 2006

**3. Texts or Major Resources:**

Halpern, D. F. (2012). *Sex differences in cognitive abilities*. New York: Psychology Press.

Gurian, M., & Ballew, A. (2003). *The boys and girls learn differently: Action guide for teachers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

**Additional readings will be announced on Canvas and/or in class.**

#### 4. Course Description:

In-depth exploration of a problem related to the thought, writings, and research that form the theoretical foundations of constructivist approaches to early childhood education.

#### 5. Course Objectives:

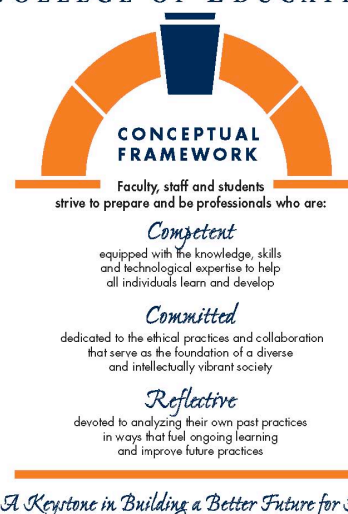
1. Examine the contributions of recent research in understanding the role of gender in cognition.
2. Identify the tasks, observations, and questions used by researchers to examine learning differences in girls and boys.
3. Explore children's ideas, teaching and learning, thought and language suggested by research by recording observations of children.
4. Identify theoretical and research questions stemming from the works of researchers on early learning and teaching that may yet be unanswered and are appropriate problems for future research.
5. Draw on theoretical perspectives and research to discuss implications for instruction and educational practices in early childhood and throughout schooling.
6. Plan experiential activities based on the research and discussion.

### AUBURN COLLEGE OF EDUCATION-CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

#### *Competent*

Competent professionals demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to facilitate the learning of the individuals they serve. Their competence enables them to model and promote active, collaborative, and ongoing learning. Their efforts are enhanced by their abilities to foster learning communities that are safe, stimulating, and enriched with diversity; engage in reasoned and

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purposeful decision making; and implement their professional practices in proactive, flexible, and self-regulating ways. We recognize that the development of professional competence is linked to levels of preparation and experience. We also acknowledge that competence continues to develop over the course of an entire career.

### *Committed*

Committed professionals make reasoned decisions based on thoughtfully constructed values. As a College, we strive to nurture values that support the learning of all people, honor diversity, protect the integrity of learning, and expand the scholarship of our professions. We view these values as professional dispositions, and we define them as filters for responsible decision making. Our College emphasizes the conscious development of commitments related to professional responsibilities and ethics, collaboration, diversity, and intellectual vitality.

### *Reflective*

We choose to frame reflection as a critical and pervasive habit of mind that permeates and fuels the ongoing expansion of competence and the continued development of reasoned commitments. Reflective professionals subject their own competencies and commitments to continuous scrutiny as they systematically monitor the impact of their professional practices on the individuals they serve and make adjustments as needed. Thoughtful reflection emphasizes reviewing and analyzing past practices in ways that influence and improve future practices. This stance inspires self-initiated professional growth and results in increased capacities for addressing the complexities and dilemmas situated within the work of educational and human services professionals.

## **6. Course Content and Schedule:**

The following outline represents a general framework for the specific content.

Week 1 11 JAN	Intro to course
Week 2 18 JAN	Why study sex differences in cognition?
Week 3 25 JAN	Searching for sex differences in cognitive abilities Background: How the brain learns
Week 4* 1 FEB	Bonding, attachment, & discipline
Week 5 8 FEB	Empirical evidence for cognitive sex differences
Week 6* 15 FEB	Math, science, spatial learning
Week 7 22 FEB	Biological hypotheses: part I
Week 8* 29 FEB	Language, reading, writing, social science
Week 9 7 MAR	Biological hypotheses: part II
Week 10 14 MAR	SPRING BREAK
Week 11* 21 MAR	Physical learning & nutrition
Week 12 28 MAR	Psychosocial hypotheses: part I-II
Week 13* 4 APRIL	Special education, structural innovations
Week 14 11 APRIL	Using a biopsychosocial perspective
Week 15 18 APRIL	Project presentations
Week 16 25 APRIL	Project presentations

\*Designates online class discussions (no class meeting)

## 7. Course Requirements/Evaluation:

### ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY (30% OF FINAL GRADE)

Each student will choose a topic from a list provided by Dr. Love and then select 15 articles from an ERIC/PSYCINFO literature search on the topic, prepare a bibliography with a *brief* summary and analysis of research questions and findings.

\*\*Each student taking the course above the master's level will select two of the empirical articles and compare and contrast the findings in more detail, writing the critical analysis for the benefit of the rest of the class.

### DISCUSSION FACILITATION (30% OF FINAL GRADE)

Each student will choose a discussion topic from the weeks we discuss the Gurian & Ballew text online, and facilitate the online discussion.

\*\*EdS/PhD students will choose a topic that is one discussed in class from the Halpern text.

The facilitator's role is to:

- Provide clarification
- Expand ideas with conceptual understanding, personal observations & experience
- Pose researchable question
- Provide outside resources.
- Suggest further reading
- Probe others' thinking about other relationships that drawn between readings and classroom/personal observations from their project (described below), as well as from other experience.

### PROJECT AND PRESENTATION OF A PLANNED EXPERIENTIAL ACTIVITY (40% OF THE FINAL GRADE)

Each student will plan an experiential series of activities to be conducted with girls and/or boys, locate relevant research findings that support the activity series, and document the findings from the activities. The student will formulate questions and/or tasks to use in collecting data from observations of a child or children. The student will write a summary with interpretations of the findings and include a discussion guide for parents. The project will be presented to the class.

The report and presentation will be evaluated on the degree to which

- ❑ the relationship between the research read in class and the planned activity series is made explicit;
- ❑ the observations and data collected address the question;
- ❑ interpretations of the data and recommendations for parents are made explicit;
- ❑ the information in the report & presentation is organized, planned, and presented effectively within the time available.

### Grading and Evaluation Procedures:

ASSIGNMENT	% OF TOTAL GRADE
Annotated Bibliography**	30%
Discussion Facilitation**	30%
Project, Paper, and Presentation on a Research Problem	40%

\*\* AS STATED IN REQUIREMENTS: Each student taking the course above the master's level will select two of the empirical articles and compare and contrast the findings in more detail, writing the critical analysis for the benefit of the rest of the class; secondly, EdS/PhD students will choose a topic that is one discussed in class from the Halpern text instead of the Gurian & Ballew text.

Final grades are based on the weight and grade of each of the above requirements. The instructor according to the criteria specified above evaluates all requirements. The grade ranges are:

90 - 99 = A  
 80 - 89 = B  
 70 - 79 = C  
 60 - 69 = D  
 00 - 60 = F

### 8. Class Policy Statements:

Participation: Students are expected to participate in all class discussions and participate in all exercises. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor if assignment deadlines are not met. Students are responsible for initiating arrangements for missed work.

Attendance/Absences: Attendance is required at each class meeting. If you miss a class because of illness, provide a doctor's statement for verification of sickness and clear the absence with the instructor the day you return to class. Other unavoidable absences from campus must be documented and cleared with the instructor **in advance**.

Unannounced quizzes: There will be no unannounced quizzes.

Accommodations: Students who need accommodations are asked to arrange a meeting during office hours the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have a conflict with my office hours, an alternative time can be arranged. To set up this meeting, please contact me by e-mail. Bring a copy of your Accommodation Memo and an Instructor Verification Form to the meeting. If you do not have an Accommodation Memo but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Office of Accessibility at 1244 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).

Honesty Code: The University Academic Honesty Code and the Tiger Cub Rules and Regulations pertaining to cheating will apply to this class.

Professionalism: As faculty, staff, and students interact in professional settings, they are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors as defined in the College's conceptual framework. These professional commitments or dispositions are listed below:

- Engage in responsible and ethical professional practices
- Contribute to collaborative learning communities
- Demonstrate a commitment to diversity
- Model and nurture intellectual vitality