



Psychology 312 Psychological Conceptions of Giftedness

Instructor: Dr. Sharon Lewis

Professor of Psychology

Office: 214B Seney Hall, Office Tel: 4-8374

Office Hours: Mon/ Wed 11:00-12:30, TTH 2:15-3:15

These hours are subject to change but you can email me anytime: slewis@emory.edu

Course Description

This is a 4-credit-hour seminar examining the diverse conceptions of giftedness. We will study intellectual giftedness, the many different types of creativity, and even critically examine the evidence for ESP. The course will focus on issues of definition, designing effective educational systems, acceptance by society, and the latest research findings.

The goal of the course is for you to finish with a greater appreciation for: 1) the complexity of these topics, 2) the challenges of integrating research findings into the design of superior educational systems, and 3) the degree to which culture shapes our beliefs about, and reactions to, giftedness, creativity, and ESP. The course will require considerable reading, critical analysis, and the willingness to participate in discussions. Psychology 100 is required as a prerequisite.

Class Organization

Attendance and Participation: Class attendance is required because part of your grade will be based on your participation in our class discussions. Everyone is expected to read and be prepared to discuss the current class day's articles and to respond to specific discussion questions posted on Blackboard (BB).

Texts

Required: R. J. Sternberg & J. E. Davidson (Eds), **Conceptions of Giftedness**, 2nd Edition, 2005 (You can order this online: http://www.amazon.com/Conceptions-Giftedness-Robert-Sternberg-PhD/dp/052154730X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1312575945&sr=8-1). You may also want to order Sternberg, R. J (Ed.) **Handbook of Creativity**, 1999 although the readings from this text will be available via e-reserve http://www.amazon.com/Handbook-Creativity-Robert-Sternberg-PhD/dp/0521576040/ref=tmm_pap_title_0?ie=UTF8&qid=1312576492&sr=1-1

All of our other readings are available through e-reserve (See:

<https://ereserves.library.emory.edu/reserves2/index.php?skin=oxford>). Everyone needs to bring a copy of the day's readings to class along with the day's discussion questions. The readings may **not** be accessed via a laptop while in class. If the cost of copying the articles is prohibitive for you, please talk to me about this. I can pair you with someone else who is willing to share his/her copies of the readings.

Writing: Everyone is required to get on BB before every class and write a very brief, thoughtful reaction to the day's readings. These BB essays should be a discussion of your thoughts about what the authors are saying, not simply a summary of the main points. To get to our BB site, go to <http://classes.emory.edu> and log in using your University Network ID and the password that you use for OPUS. Look for [Psychological Conceptions of Giftedness](#).

Leading Discussion: Each class day, a team of two students will lead the class through a discussion of the day's readings. To facilitate this discussion, the team will post discussion questions on BB before class. Everyone is responsible for reading these before class. Please think about with whom you would like to work. I will assign you the dates you will lead class sometime during the 2nd week of classes.

Grades: Your grade will be based on the quality of: **1) your participation and attendance** (15% of your grade or 75 pts. I will track how often you participate, whether you have missed more than the agreed upon number of absences, whether you contribute meaningfully to our discussions, and if it is clear that you have read the articles.), **2) your BB essays** (30% of your grade or 150 pts. - I will evaluate whether you are reflecting on the meaning and implications of the readings.), **3) your team's leading of class discussion** (10% of your grade or 50 pts. I will assess how thoroughly you read the assigned readings, how thoughtful your discussion questions are, and how much effort you make to keep discussion going.), and **4) two longer integrative or summary essays** (The first is worth 20% or 100pts and the second is worth 25% or 125 pts. I will evaluate how well you articulate your ideas, how thoroughly you answer each question, and the degree to which your answers reflect knowledge of the readings. No outside research will be necessary to write these essays.). You will receive an "A" if you earn a minimum of 450 pts, a "B" if you earn 400-449 pts., a "C" if you earn 350-399 pts., a "D" if you earn 300-349 pts. , and an "F" if you earn less than 300 pts.

All essays written during the semester, whether for the BB conference or the longer essays, must reflect a careful and thorough reading of the course material and thoughtful reflection. Failure to address problems that I have noted in your writing will result in a lower grade.

Please remember to adhere to Oxford College's Honor Code at all times.

Although I have just finished making many statements about how you will be evaluated, I really prefer our primary focus to be on learning about and discussing interesting ideas. I realize that is more likely to happen if you are not anxious about your grade so please don't hesitate to set up an appointment at any time if you would like to talk to me about your performance in the class.

Partial Psy 312 Reading List

A complete list of what we will read this semester is available on our BB site (See Reading List).

All of our readings, except for those taken from Conceptions of Giftedness, can be downloaded from: <https://ereserves.library.emory.edu/reserves2/index.php?skin=oxford>

Giftedness – Intro

Researchers are interested in the following issues: how the definition of giftedness varies across cultures and across time, the origins of giftedness (from genes, from the environment or a combination?), how gender and ethnicity impact judgments and expressions of giftedness, and how research on giftedness should affect the design of educational institutions.

8/29- Monday

- ♦ Sternberg, R.J. and Zhang, L. (1995) What Do We Mean by Giftedness? A Pentagonal Implicit Theory, pp 88-94.
- ♦ Hunsaker, S. L. (1995) The Gifted Metaphor from the Perspective of Traditional Civilizations, pp 255-265.

Intellectual Giftedness

8/31 - Wednesday

- ♦ Sternberg, R. J. (2001) Dr. Jekyll meets Mr. Hyde: Two faces of research on intelligence and cognition. In J. S. Halonen & S. F. Davis (Eds.), *The Many Faces of Psychological Research in the 21st Century*. E-

Book: Society for the Teaching of Psychology. <http://teachpsych.org/resources/e-books/faces/script/Ch06.htm>

♦ Freeman, J. (2005) Permission to be gifted, pp 80-97. In R. J. Sternberg & J. E. Davidson (Eds), *Conceptions of Giftedness*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

9/7 - Wednesday

♦ Winner, E.(2000). The origins and ends of giftedness, (pp 159-169).

♦ Winner, E., Giftedness: Current Theory and Research, 2000 pp 153-156.

♦ Goldsmith, L. T. (2000). Tracking trajectories of talent: Child prodigies growing up. In R.C. Friedman and B. M. Shore (Eds) *Talents Unfolding: Cognition and Development* (pp 89-117). APA: Wash., D.C.