



## Psychology 312 Psychological Conceptions of Giftedness

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Office Hours: Mon: 12:00-1:00, 2:15-3:15, Tues/Thurs: 2:30-3:30, Wed 12-1:00

Other times by appointment. Email me anytime: [slewis@emory.edu](mailto: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 of the gifted 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, be prepared to discuss the current class day's articles, and to respond to specific discussion questions posted on Blackboard (Bb).

#### **Required Texts:**

- 1) Sternberg & Davidson (Eds), Conceptions of Giftedness, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2005.
- 2) Cropley, Cropley, Kaufman, and Runco (Eds), The Dark Side of Creativity, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

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. In addition, I will expect to read about the connections that you are making between what you are learning about giftedness and your experiences in your community placement (See TPSL below). Please keep in mind that your Bb essays take the place of quizzes and exams and therefore are important assessments of your learning. Except for the days when you lead discussion, it is not an option to omit posting a Bb essay. **For every missing Bb essay, you will lose 25 points off your final grade.** 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](#). \*Student work submitted as part of this course may be reviewed by Oxford College and Emory College faculty and staff for the purposes of improving instruction and enhancing Emory education.

**Leading Discussion:** A team of two students will lead the class through a discussion of the day's readings on most class days. To facilitate this discussion, the team will post discussion questions on Bb before class. All team members are to be fully prepared to discuss all assigned readings. Everyone is responsible for reading these questions 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 2<sup>nd</sup> week of classes.

**Theory-Practice/Service-Learning (TPSL):** You will partner with a community agency (e.g., a social service agency or school) to provide service and to develop a greater understanding of giftedness. The benefits of TPSL are that you will be acquiring practical experience and knowledge about the ongoing challenges of educating diversely gifted children, while meeting critical needs in the community. Since it is very important to follow through with any commitment you make to community partners, failure to honor this commitment will result in the loss of points from your final grade.

**Grades:** Your grade will be based on the quality of: 1) your participation and attendance (about 16% of your grade or 80 pts. I will track the frequency of your participation, the number of absences, and whether you contribute meaningfully to our discussions.), 2) your Bb essays (30% of your grade or 150 pts. - I will evaluate the quality of your writing, your critical analysis of the readings, and your reflections on your TPSL experiences.), 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 25% or 125 pts. and the second is worth 20% or 100 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 454 pts., a "B" if you earn 404-453 pts., a "C" if you earn 353-403 pts., a "D" if you earn 303-352 pts., or an "F" if you earn less than 303 pts. **Please remember that failure to honor your commitment to your community partner will result in a lowering of your grade.** Also, 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**).

(The readings can be found either in one of our texts or on E-Reserve

<https://ereserves.library.emory.edu/reserves2/index.php?skin=oxford>)

#### **9/5- Wednesday**

Ms. Crystal McLaughlin talks to the class about TPSL placements

Finish 1<sup>st</sup> Day Exercise

**9/7 – Friday – 1<sup>st</sup> BB essay due by 10:45 AM on our BB Discussion Bd.** (See syllabus for details)

♦ 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.

♦ 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 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. E-Book: Society for the Teaching of Psychology.