



## **Psychology 312**

### **Psychological Conceptions of Giftedness**

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Professor of Psychology

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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](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 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:** All of our 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 up 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. At the end of each topic unit, you will write a longer essay discussing what you have learned. 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 2<sup>nd</sup> week of classes.

**Grades:** Your grade will be based on the quality of: **1) your participation and attendance** (approximately 20% of your grade or 9 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** (approximately 30% of your grade or 12pts. - I will

evaluate whether you are reflecting on the meaning and implications of the readings.), **3) your team's leading of class discussion** (approx. 20% of your grade or 9pts. - 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) your unit summary essays** (approx. 30% of your grade or 12pts. - 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.). You must receive a minimum of 37.8 pts. to earn an "A", 33.6 pts. to earn a "B", 29.4 pts. to earn a "C", 25.2 pts. to earn a "D", and if you receive less than 25.2 pts. you will earn an "F". Please see the grading rubric sheet on our BB site for more information about grading.

All essays written during the semester, whether at the end of the units or for the BB conference, must reflect a careful 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 several 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 readings 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.

#### **8/30- 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**

##### **9/1 - 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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.

##### **9/8 - 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.