



Psychology 312

Psychological Conceptions of Giftedness

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

These hours are subject to change. Contact 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 in 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: 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).

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 2nd week of classes.

Grades: Your grade will be based on the quality of: **1) your participation and attendance** (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** (I will evaluate whether you are reflecting on the meaning and implications of the readings.), **3) your team's leading of class discussion** (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** (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.). 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. If you submit an essay which does not exhibit these characteristics, I will ask you to re-write that particular essay. Please remember to adhere to Oxford College's Honor Code at all times.

Note: I expect this class to be a fun, informal, but demanding class. I would prefer to conduct the class in much the same way graduate seminars are run. However, if you fail to do the readings consistently and do not come to class prepared, I will need to evaluate you using more conventional methods, such as tests and quizzes.

Partial Psy 312 Reading List

(The complete Reading List is available on our BB site.)

All readings are available at:

<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.

8/31- 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

9/2 - 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.

9/9 - 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.