



Psychology 312 **Psychological Conceptions of Giftedness**

Instructor: Dr. Sharon Lewis

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Office Hours: Mon 2:15 - 3:15, Wed 10:15 –11:15 TTH 2:30 – 3:30

These hours are subject to change. Other times by appointment.

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 of: 1) the complexity of these topics, 2) the difficulties in applying the research findings to the design of effective and practical 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 (available on reserve in the library), and to respond to specific discussion questions posted on LL.

Writing: Everyone is required to get on LL before every class and write a brief, thoughtful reaction to the day's readings. This means that I want to see 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.

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 LL 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, 2) your LL essays, 3) your team's leading of class discussion (I will assess how well prepared you are, how thoughtful and thorough your discussion questions are, and how much effort you make to keep discussion going), and 4) your unit summary essays. All essays written during the semester, whether at the end of the units or for the LL 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. You and I

will work together to evaluate your performance three times during the semester: late September, mid-October, and mid-November. I will discuss the details of the evaluation process with you in more detail later. 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.