

EDPSY 581 LS&HD Proseminar
Becoming a Member of the Learning Sciences & Human Development Communities

Fall 2014

Tuesdays, 1:30 to 3:20

Miller 215

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COURSE OVERVIEW

This course serves as the introductory experience for graduate students entering the Learning Sciences & Human Development program in the College of Education. I approach the design of the course by attending to what we know about the contemporary goals and generative practices of graduate education, the development of professional expertise in interdisciplinary science fields, and the sociocultural experience of becoming a contributing member of a professional community. Many of you bring relevant expertise to your graduate studies, so it will be important for us to function like a collaborative learning community so that we can benefit from that knowledge. I will attempt to be supportive of orienting students to important aspects of the history, knowledge, practices, and social networks of the field while realizing that individuals bring specific interests and expertise to their studies that they must incorporate into their professional growth (e.g., joining other academic communities that relate to your interests, developing methodological expertise from another field).

One of the complexities with joining an interdisciplinary field is the sheer breadth of theory, method, research topics, and social networks. An additional complexity for us to consider is how the learning sciences and human development fields deeply overlap, but also have distinct aspects. As scholars develop their expertise, it is not that helpful to only develop a thin understanding of many parts of the field. It is more productive to develop significant expertise in one or two areas of work—on a multi-year timeline—while consistently orienting somewhat to the broader landscape of current and emerging areas of work. It is also productive to delve into other scholarly communities outside of learning sciences and human development. You should start attending to the breadth and depth of your own learning. Although it is important to understand how your personal commitments relate to and can drive your own academic work, I believe it is equally important to cultivate *epistemological empathy* for the broad range of traditions that relate to the learning sciences and human development fields—so that we can be thoughtful consumers and critics of such research and learn to draw out and benefit from novel synergies between multiple fields in our endeavors. This interdisciplinary stance is the most practical way to work against the ills of intellectual silo-ing and balkanization.

Joining a professional community is a complex endeavor that involves coming into an understanding of the central and perhaps divergent values, knowledge, and practices of the field while working to develop meaningful relationships and collaborations with others while finding ways to contribute to and shape the goals and work of a community. In the process, you will also need to develop and refine your professional identity within this broader community. I will spend significant time developing community locally within the practice and research worlds that are available to us while also realizing that we need to seek out and interact with others who have relevant knowledge and share our pursuits. We will discuss opportunities to interact with the local and the far-flung learning sciences and human development communities (e.g., via participation in conferences, societies, research networks, special interest groups, informal networks).

Graduate school is an intensive time of learning, relationship building, collaboration, community organization, and research. We will have an ongoing discussion of how to navigate the range of related experiences and goals to best effect, and we will do my best to attend to issues that emerge for you early in your studies. You are also entering graduate school at a peak time of cultural diversification for communities in this part of the world and of cultural migration around the globe. Graduate education

experiences, and research more generally, need to orient to the details of this diversification and engage in efforts to interconnect local and global communities in order to understand how learning, teaching, and educational progress are attentive to cultural variation, global flows of information and activity, and long-standing issues of educational equity. These issues will be a fixture of our discussion.

ASSIGNMENTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Class Readings & Discussion. All members of the class are expected to read the materials for class and actively participate in the discussions each week. A central activity of the course will be the close, critical reading of two central texts (Bruner's *Process of Education* and Lave and Wenger's *Situated Learning*). This will give us a bit of an opportunity to collectively understand the shifting theoretical perspectives and methods that have been used to understand issues of learning, development and teaching and to enter into the core, disciplinary practice of engaging with and closely interrogating academic text. The citations for the texts, available at the University Bookstore, are:

Bruner, J. (1960). *The process of education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

For background on the practice of close, critical reading you might want to read:

Packer, N. & Timpane, J. (1989). Critical Reading. In Nancy Packer, *Writing Worth Reading* (pp. 95-108). New York: St. Martin's Press.

These texts will be supplemented by short pieces that we will read periodically from week to week. These readings will be distributed through the class web site.

<https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/914895/>

Annotation. Each person will be asked to annotate part of the shared readings and help frame the discussion of the piece in class. In the early phase of your graduate studies, I encourage you to start refining your note-taking practice for papers you think might be of importance to you in the future. The annotation (or summary) that you share with the class should include the following sections: (a) a one paragraph *response* to the piece, (b) a *summary of main points*, (c) *key concepts, ideas & terminology* used in the piece, (d) *linkages you see to other class readings*, (e) *linkages you see to your own research*, (f) a *possible class discussion question or topic*, and (g) *additional readings* that you want to related to the piece you want to bring to everyone's attention. You should make and bring copies of your summary to distribute to others in class.

Research Interest Presentation & Short Annotated Bibliography. It is important that each of you starts trying to relate their personal / academic interests to historical and contemporary traditions, studies / lines of work, and associated research methods. Each individual will be asked to identify research articles that relates to their interests, pull together a short annotated bibliography, and present and discuss their interests with the broader group. We will follow an "inspiration/vexation and venture" approach for this assignment as I will discuss in class.

All written products should follow American Psychological Association ("APA") formatting and citation styles (unless it makes professional sense for you to do otherwise). More information on APA style can be found online and at the reference section of Suzallo Library.

Sharing of Resources. We will use the Canvas online learning management system to share resources with each other (e.g., organizations, papers, journals, conferences, etc.). We will discuss the approach we will use to accumulate resources.

CLASS MEETINGS & READING ASSIGNMENTS

September 30 th	Orientation to the LS&HD program and the class. Individuals will have a chance to review potential readings for their presentation from a broad collection of handbooks, consensus volumes, and core texts related to research in the learning sciences.
October 7 th	NO CLASS
October 14 th	Read Bruner Preface 1977, Preface (original) & Chapter 1
October 21 st	Bruner Chapter 2 & 3
October 28 th	Bruner Chapter 4
November 4 th	Bruner Chapters 5 & 6
November 11 th	NO CLASS – HOLIDAY (Veteran’s Day)
November 18 th	Lave & Wenger Forward & Chapter 1
November 25 th	Lave & Wenger Chapter 2 & 3
December 2 nd	Lave & Wenger Chapter 4 & 5
December 9 th	Class Reflection & Celebration (Note: This is exam week.)