

EDUC 111: Empowering Adult Online Learning - Theory and Best Practices

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Harvard University Extension School

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Class Meetings: Tuesdays, 7:40 – 9:40 pm

Course Web Platform: Adobe Connect and Canvas

Course Description:

How do adults learn most effectively online? The online learning environment differs from traditional on-ground approaches and relies heavily on active collaborative techniques to help learners construct knowledge and build community, but why? This course will focus on designing instruction for the unique needs of adult online learners, critically examining related learning theories, instructional design practices and online teaching strategies. Students will examine dynamics that lead to online learning success, developing an appreciation for how adult learning theory informs effective instruction. In addition, as students collaboratively develop online lessons, they will utilize Design Thinking, a framework leveraged by many highly innovative organizations today. In this case, students “learn their way into” inventive instructional solutions by; a) analyzing adult online learner traits, b) acquiring interviewing techniques to identify desired learning outcomes, c) ideating and rapidly creating prototypes, d) pivoting as brainstorming leads to alternative approaches and e) ultimately developing effective learner-centered activities and assessment strategies. Design Thinking challenges the designer to develop empathy for stakeholders - in this case, the adult learner. Given a foundation in adult online learning theory, students will conduct an empathetic exploration of best practices in designing instruction and online facilitation, comparing and contrasting these approaches, as well as examining quality rubrics published by organizations such as Quality Matters and the Online Learning Consortium. This course will be of particular interest to those professionals who contribute to online teaching and learning outcomes in higher education or corporate settings.

Course Learning Objectives:

- Explore learning theories and their application for the online environment.
- Analyze the unique characteristics of online learners.
- Compare and contrast online teaching approaches.
- Apply Design Thinking to understand learner needs, tasks and outcomes, given an instructional scenario.
- Develop and deliver an online lesson, which leverages best practices in instructional design.
- Examine online lessons and evaluate effectiveness, based on instructional design and delivery quality rubrics.

Required Books:

Bonk, C. & Khoo, E. (2014) *Adding Some Tec-Variety*. Bloomington IN: Open World Books.

(Please note: Also available as a free e-book at <http://www.tec-variety.com>)

Merriam, S. & Bierema, L. (2013) *Adult Learning: Linking Theory and Practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Recommended Texts/Journals/Resources:

Boettcher, J. & Conrad, R. (2010) *The Online Teaching Survival Guide: Simple and Practical Pedagogical Tips*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass

Kelley, T., Kelley, D. (2013). *Creative Confidence: Unleashing the Creative Potential Within Us All*. (1st ed.) New York: Crown Business. ISBN: 978-0-385-34936-9

American Society for Training and Development

<http://www.astd.org>

Association for Educational Communications and Technology

<http://aect.org>

EDUCAUSE

<http://www.educause.edu>

The Horizon Report (New Media Consortium)

<http://www.nmc.org/horizon-project>

The Internet and Higher Education

<http://www.journals.elsevier.com/the-internet-and-higher-education>

MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching

<http://jolt.merlot.org>

New Media Consortium

<http://www.nmc.org>

Next Generation Learning Challenges

<http://www.nextgenlearning.org>

The Online Learning Consortium

<http://www.onlinelearningconsortium.org>

Society for Applied Learning Technology

<http://www.salt.org>

Virtual Crash Course in Design Thinking

<http://dschool.stanford.edu/gift>

Academic Writing Expectations

In this course, all written work should be supported by peer-reviewed literature and include citations in APA format. For those who are new to academic writing or using APA citation formats, I would recommend the following resources:

Harvard Guide to Using Sources

<http://usingsources.fas.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do>

APA Formatting

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

Research Help at Grossman Library

<http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k11950&pageid=icb.page50273>

Education Research Toolkit at Grossman Library

<http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k11950&pageid=icb.page176098>

Pacing Guide:

1. Please note Asynchronous Activities will take place within the Canvas Course Platform, unless otherwise stated.
2. Expectations for individual assignments are noted in the “Assignments” section of this syllabus.

Module 1: Getting Started	
Week 1 (8/31 – 9/6): Overview	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss syllabus and course expectations 2. Get acquainted with classmates and team members 3. Investigate online course layout/materials in Canvas 4. Develop a team communication plan 5. Contextualize adult learning theory foundations
Resources	Read: Merriam & Bierema - Chapters 1-3
In-Class Activities	Discuss: Personal introduction and your course goals Discuss: Team Communication Expectations
Asynchronous Activities	Discuss: Online Discussion Forum #1 Submit: Virtual Field Trip Results Submit: Team Communication Charter
Module 2: Learning Theory and Online Application	
Week 2 (9/7 – 9/13): Learning Theories Defined	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore foundational adult learning theories 2. Compare behavioral, humanism, cognitive, social cognitive learning and constructivist theories 3. Analyze constructivism as a paradigm for online andragogy.
Resources	Read: Merriam & Bierema - Chapters 4-6
In-Class Activities	Debate: Directed vs. Constructivist approaches
Asynchronous Activities	Discuss: Online Discussion Forum #2 Begin: Adult Learning Theory (Team Presentation)
Week 3 (9/14 – 9/20): Instructional Theory	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate core online learning principles 2. Identify the tenants of instructional theory 3. Apply the instructional theory process to real world scenarios
Resources	Read: Merriam & Bierema Chapters 7-9
In-Class Activities	Discuss: Application of learning theories in online classroom settings
Asynchronous Activities	Discuss: Online Discussion Forum #3 Continue: Adult Learning Theory (Team Presentation)

Week 4 (9/21 – 9/27): Online Instructional Design	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore how learning theory translates to online instructional design 2. Examine, compare and contrast Instructional Design models 3. Describe best online instructional practices
Resources	Read: Merriam & Bierema Chapters 10-12 Instructional Design Models and Methods: http://www.instructionaldesigncentral.com/htm/IDC_instructionaldesignmodels.htm
In-Class Activities	Discuss: As an online learner, what instructional design strategies do you recognize in our course?
Asynchronous Activities	Discuss: Online Discussion Forum #4 (Reflection) Submit: Adult Learning Theory (Team Presentation)
Module 3: Online Teaching Approaches	
Week 5 (9/28 – 10/4): Online Learner Characteristics	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe differences between andragogy and pedagogy 2. Discuss the unique characteristics of adult online learners. 3. Evaluate online learner characteristics as related to instructional design.
Resources	Read: Bonk & Khoo, Chapter 2 Reference: Merriam & Bierema, Chapter 3; Bonk & Khoo, Chapter 4
In-Class Activities	Discuss: What are your characteristics as an online learner? How do you feel the online environment supports/challenges you?
Asynchronous Activities	Discuss: Online Discussion Forum #5 (Reflection) Begin: Identify Teaching Strategy
Week 6 (10/5 – 10/11): Quality Rubrics	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examine leading online course quality rubrics 2. Evaluate an online course module, leveraging quality rubrics
Resources	Read: Quality Matters (QM) Rubrics Read: Online Learning Consortium (OLC) Scorecard Reference: Instructional Ideas and Technology for Online Success (used for evaluation); Bonk & Khoo, Chapter 4
In-Class Activities	Debate: OLC Scorecard vs QM Rubric
Asynchronous Activities	Discuss: MOOC/online course module evaluation Continue: Teaching Strategy

Week 7 (10/12 – 10/18): Teaching Strategies Part I	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore TEC-Variety construct 2. Discuss online motivation within learning theory context 3. Apply TEC-Variety “setting tone” and “interactivity” activities
Resources	Read: Bonk & Khoo, Chapter 1 & 3 Reference: Bonk & Khoo, Chapter 10
In-Class Activities	Team: Adapt a TEC-Variety “Interactivity” activity to a real-world instructional scenario
Asynchronous Activities	Discuss: Online Discussion Forum #6 Submit: Teaching Strategy Contribution
Week 8 (10/19 – 10/25): Teaching Strategies Part II	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss online instructor motivation 2. Review additional TEC-Variety activities
Resources	Read: Bonk & Khoo, Chapters 14 & 15 Reference: Bonk & Khoo, Chapters 5-9; 11-13 (Choose One)
In-Class Activities	Team: Adapt a TEC-Variety activity of your choice (excluding “tone” and “interactivity”) to a real-world instructional scenario
Asynchronous Activities	Discuss: Online Discussion Forum #7 Submit: Evaluation of Teaching Strategy (Graduate Level Only) Submit: Anonymous Course Feedback
Module 4: Applying Design Thinking for Effective Instruction	
Week 9 (10/26 – 11/1): Design Thinking I	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop empathy for the online learner via Design Thinking 2. Define the Design Thinking “job-to-be-done” as related to learning objectives. 3. Explore service-blueprinting 4. Examine Adult Learning Theory research literature (graduate students)
Resources	Design Thinking Crash Course
In Class Activities	Team: Design Thinking Bootcamp I
Asynchronous Activities	Discuss: Online Discussion Forum #8 Begin: Article Analysis (Graduate Level Only)
Week 10 (11/2– 11/8): Design Thinking II	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ideate solutions, which might address the “job-to-be-done” 2. Apply Design Thinking to prototype solution.
Resources	Design Thinking Crash Course
In Class Activities	Team: Design Thinking Bootcamp II
Asynchronous Activities	Discuss: Online Discussion Forum #9 Continue: Article Analysis (Graduate Level Only)

Week 11 (11/9 – 11/15): Design Thinking III	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply Design Thinking to test prototype 2. Develop plan to refine prototype
Resources	Design Thinking Crash Course
In Class Activities	Team: Design Thinking Bootcamp III
Asynchronous Activities	Discuss: Online Discussion Forum #10 Submit: Design Thinking Team Project Continue: Article Analysis (Graduate Level Only)
Module 5: Online Lesson Development	
Week 12 (11/16 – 11/22): Identifying Learning Objectives	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define lesson 2. Describe learner population 3. Develop learning objectives
Resources	Suggested Reference: Merriam & Bierema
In-Class Activities	Lesson Design Lab I
Asynchronous Activities	Begin: Online Lesson Development Submit: Lesson Learning Objectives Submit: Article Analysis (Graduate Level Only)
Week 13 (11/23 – 11/29): Identifying Assessment Strategy	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate types of assessment strategies 2. Define lesson assessment strategy
Resources	Suggested Reference: Merriam & Bierema, Bonk & Khoo
In-Class Activities	Lesson Design Lab II
Asynchronous Activities	Continue: Online Lesson Development Submit: Lesson Assessment Plan
Week 14 (11/30 – 12/6): Identifying Activities	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate types of lesson activities 2. Develop activities, which best address learning objectives
Resources	Suggested Reference: Bonk & Khoo
In-Class Activities	Lesson Design Lab III
Asynchronous Activities	Continue: Online Lesson Development Submit: Lesson Activity Plan

Week 14 (12/7 – 12/13): Implementation	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review lesson deliverables (learning outcomes, assessments and activities) 2. Implement lesson into asynchronous learning platform 3. Describe any challenges in implementing the lesson in an online format.
Resources	Suggested Reference: Bonk & Khoo
In-Class Activities	Lesson Design Lab IV
Asynchronous Activities	Discuss: Online Discussion Forum #11 Submit: Online Lesson
Module 6: Evaluation	
Week 15 (12/14 – 12/20): Examine Lessons for Effectiveness	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate lessons based on QM Rubrics or OLC Scorecard 2. Recommend improvements based on overall best practices 3. Individually evaluate a lesson based on QM Rubrics or OLC Scorecard (Graduate level)
Resources	Suggested Reference: QM Rubric and OLC Scorecard
In-Class Activities	Team: Evaluate an assigned lesson, based on supplied rubric
Activities	Submit: Peer Review Submit: Online Lesson Evaluations (Graduate Level Only)

Assignments (Please review rubrics published on Canvas)

- UG: Undergraduate Level
- Grad: Graduate Level

UG & Grad: Team Communication Charter

Each learner will be assigned to a team. The team will create a communication charter, which lists contact information, member skills & expertise, ground rules for engagement, communication methodology and conflict resolution strategies. A template is posted on Canvas. The Team Charter should be submitted through Canvas "Assignments"

UG & Grad: Weekly Discussions (Real-time & Canvas Discussion Board)

Participation is key to success in this course. In-class discussions and debates, as well as online discussion groups will allow us to construct and build upon our collective knowledge as a learning community. The parameters for the real-time discussions will be set during that class session. Expectations for online discussions are posted on Canvas.

UG & Grad: Adult Learning Theory (Team Presentation)

In 10-12 Power point slides, fully describe an adult learning theory. In addition, include a description of an exemplar online application, which leverages this adult learning theory. Submit through Canvas "Assignments."

UG & Grad: Teaching Practices Contribution

In 300 words, submit an effective adult online teaching practice. Please include a rationale, appropriate references and the teaching/learning context in which you feel it would be best applied. Submit via the Week 7 "Teaching Practices" discussion forum.

Grad: Teaching Practices Evaluation

In 200 words, evaluate an assigned "Teaching Practice" from Week 7 and submit via Canvas Assignments. Rubric/template for evaluation is posted to Canvas. Please include your rationale and appropriate references. Please submit via Canvas "Assignments."

Grad: Article Analysis

Select a peer-reviewed journal article, focused on adult online learning theory or adult online learning best practice. In two double-spaced APA-formatted pages, please include your analysis of the article. Rubric for the Article Analysis is posted to Canvas. Please submit via Canvas "Assignments."

UG & Grad: Online Lesson Development

Learners will leverage their experiences and knowledge constructed throughout the semester to build an online lesson. This lesson will be built by the student and shared via an online learning platform (made available by the instructor). The online lesson should include objectives, as well as assessments and activities aligned with meeting them. Rubric for the Online Lesson is posted to Canvas. Please note: Several in-class sessions will be devoted to Lesson Design Labs to assist learners with this project.

Grad: Online Lesson Evaluation

Learners taking EDUC 111 for graduate credit will be asked to individually evaluate an individual lesson. In 300 words, graduate learners should evaluate an assigned lesson using the OLC Scorecard or QM Rubric. The evaluation should be submitted via Canvas "Assignments."

UG & Grad: Peer Review

Throughout the semester, learners have worked in teams on various in-class debates, discussions, presentations and projects. Please review your team members with the rubric provided on Canvas. Keep in mind the Team Communication Charter that was developed at the beginning of the semester as well. Peer Review points in the final grade will be determined by feedback from the team through this process. Please submit via Canvas "Assignments."

Deliverable	Due Date	UG Points	Grad Points
Team Communication Charter	9/6/15	5	5
Weekly Discussions	On-going	20	10
Adult Learning Theory (Team Presentation)	9/27/15	20	10
Teaching Practices Contribution	10/18/15	15	10
Teaching Practices Evaluation (Grad Only)	10/25/15	--	5
Article Analysis (Grad Only)	11/22/15	--	20
Online Lesson Development	12/13/15	35	25
Online Lesson Evaluation (Grad Only)	12/20/15	--	10
Peer Review	12/20/15	5	5

Course Policies

Disability Services

The Extension School is committed to providing an accessible academic community. The Disability Services Office offers a variety of accommodations and services to students with documented disabilities. Please visit www.extension.harvard.edu/resources-policies/resources/disability-services-accessibility for more information.

Academic Integrity

You are responsible for understanding Harvard Extension School policies on academic integrity (www.extension.harvard.edu/resources-policies/student-conduct/academic-integrity) and how to use sources responsibly. Not knowing the rules, misunderstanding the rules, running out of time, submitting "the wrong draft", or being overwhelmed with multiple demands are not acceptable excuses. There are no excuses for failure to uphold academic integrity. To support your learning about academic citation rules, please visit the Harvard Extension School Tips to Avoid Plagiarism (www.extension.harvard.edu/resources-policies/resources/tips-avoid-plagiarism), where you'll find links to the Harvard Guide to Using Sources and two, free, online 15-minute tutorials to test your knowledge of academic citation policy. The tutorials are anonymous open-learning tools.

Additional Harvard University Extension School Policies

Please see Harvard University Extension School's policies regarding:

- Publishing or distributing course materials
- Submission of written work

- Exclusion from a course
- Duplicate assignments
- Scientific research
- Computer and network use
- Library use
- Conduct

These policies are available at the following link:

<http://www.extension.harvard.edu/exams-grades-policies/student-responsibilities#integrity>

In addition, the following course-level policies apply:

Attendance: The success of this course will depend largely on the participation and engagement of each student. Therefore, it is imperative that students be present each week and contribute fully to both synchronous (webinar-style) and asynchronous (online) classroom activities and discussions. Since this class only meets once a week and is delivered webinar-style, students are expected to inform the instructor as soon as possible of an expected absence. Excused absences are at the discretion of the instructor and may include death in the student's primary family and serious illness. Absences will result in a "0" for that week's discussion grade. The course is collaborative in nature. Therefore, more than two unexcused absences may result in a failing grade.

Communications: All student correspondence will be answered within 48 hours. Typically, students will receive a reply within 24 hours. However, for your planning purposes, please consider a 48 hour turnaround.

Late Work: Grade penalties for late submissions are listed on the rubrics for each assignment. Rubrics are available in our Canvas course site.

Citations: While the objective of this course is not to test learners on APA-formatting, learners are asked to leverage APA formatting in written work to the best of their ability. Please see the Purdue OWL APA style guide for helpful information:
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/>