

**The University of Texas at Tyler
Soules College of Business
Department of Human Resource Development**

**HRD 5336: Adult Learning
Summer, 2025**

Online Via Canvas

Course Syllabus

Facilitator: Judy Yi Sun, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: Generally, the facilitator will be available through email Monday through Friday. Emails received during the weekend may not receive a response until the following day.

Required Course: Merriam, S. B. & Bierema, L. L. (2014). *Adult Learning: Linking theory and practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. ISBN-978-1-118-13057-5

Textbook:

[Referred to as: M & B on the Course Schedule]

Supplemental Additional reading material will be added during the semester

Optional Resources: Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association 7th Edition. ISBN: 978-1-4338-0561-5
<http://www.apa.org>

The APA website provides a free tutorial and additional information about the 7th edition. While completing the tutorial is not required, it is recommended and encouraged as this format will be used for all written assignments in this course.

Important Dates:

Class begins: May 12, 2025 (Monday)

Census date: May 27, 2025 (Tuesday)

Last day to withdraw: July 10, 2025 (Thursday)

Course Catalog Description: Theory and methods of instruction in adult and continuing education to include learning principles, curriculum organization, evaluation techniques and effective classroom interaction.

Course Description: This course is a three-hour graduate course concerning the theories and practices of adult learning and continuing education. Concepts, models, theories, and research in the field of adult learning will be addressed, with an emphasis on practical application of adult learning principles. Course participants will be asked to evaluate their own adult learning experiences within this framework of theory and practice.

All work will be performed online. Participants will read assigned materials, engage in personal and online dialogue, and perform research. Products of this course will include a written report on a personal learning project, a personal reflections paper, a journal, and documentation of dialogue.

Course Goals and Objectives:

This course will emphasize theory, research, and practice in the field of adult learning. Participants will have the opportunity to apply concepts and models through personal learning experiences. Upon the completion of this course, participants should be able to:

- Articulate the fundamental issues and concepts of adult learning and adult education.
- Assess personal knowledge and experiences in relation to the broad overview of adult learning through the use of a personal journal, observation of adult learning events, and participation in a personal learning project.
- Integrate personal experiences into a framework of theory and practice.
- Articulate the various aspects of context in which adult learning is conducted.
- Differentiate, critique, and apply various models and theories of adult learning.
- Articulate the physical aspects of adult learning, including individual characteristics, cognitive abilities, memory, intelligence, and aging.
- Review and reflect upon research literature in the field of adult learning.
- Experience adult learning through the online environment, using learning activities, discussions, etc.

- Analyze and articulate the differences and similarities of various learning environments and tools in the academic and practice spheres.
- Discuss ethical issues in the design and application of adult education.
- Identify at least five practical applications of adult learning theory to adult learning practice.
- Increase skills in research, writing, and critical thinking.

Course Structure:

This course is conducted entirely online using the Canvas learning management system. Participants will have reading, discussion, and writing assignments weekly. Discussion and written assignments are made with the assumption that required reading assignments are completed prior to addressing assignments.

Participants should expect to spend as much time on an online course as on a face-to-face course, estimated at six to ten hours per week. The actual amount of time will vary from individual to individual. This estimate includes the time spent in reading, discussions, and assignments.

All course materials, except exams and certain other assignments, will be available from the start of the course to the end. Students may look and study ahead, or go back and review, at any time during the course. Discussions will have specific beginning and ending dates, but will be available for review.

The facilitator reserves the right to administer “surprise quizzes” that will count toward all or a portion of the class participation grade if it is determined that participants are not reading the text and supplemental readings and are not adequately prepared to engage with each other, the facilitator, and the overall community.

Reading Assignments: Each participant is responsible for completing the reading assignments in a timely manner. Deadlines are listed in the Course Schedule.

Discussion Assignments: Each participant is responsible for engaging in the asynchronous discussions each week. This participation will include posting answers to questions posed by the facilitator and replying to other participants’ postings. Quality of answers is as important as quantity. A participant’s comments should add to the discussion. Comments should be supported, as required, with references cited appropriately.

Participants should plan on entering Canvas and the discussion area regularly during the week (not just on weekends) in order to read and comment on others’ postings. Posting answers

to the questions posed in the discussion area should be done the Wednesday before the deadline in order to allow other participants the opportunity to comment.

Comments should be posted directly into the appropriate discussion forum. It is recommended that comments be composed in text software and copied into Canvas to prevent any loss due to power failures/glitches in Canvas, etc. **Do not attach a document with comments into a discussion forum.** This method is difficult for some students to access.

Participants may have special issues and responsibilities that impact weekly participation at times. However, consistent and sustained participation is expected. Lack of preparation and engagement and lack of relevant, timely, and quality postings will affect the grade earned for course participation, and will affect the final course grade.

Discussion postings should be made in a timely manner. Deadlines are listed in the Course Schedule. Please note that all discussion postings must be completed by midnight Central Standard Time on the due date. Excused absences for religious holy days or active military services are permitted according to the policies outlined in the UT Tyler Graduate Handbook.

Written Assignments: All written assignments are to be completed in Microsoft Word or text software recognized by Word, and submitted in a timely manner. Deadlines are listed in the Course Schedule. Please note that all written assignments must be submitted by Midnight Central Standard Time on the due date. Late assignments will receive point reductions (see Grades & Grading).

Please name all submitted documents as follows:

Last Name First Initial Assignment Title.

All written assignments should be submitted through the links provided in Canvas, and in word documents. A secondary option for submitting assignments is through UT Tyler email.

All written assignments do go through plagiarism detection programs. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense. Please avoid the consequences of academic dishonesty by citing all sources used. Academic dishonesty, such as unauthorized collusion, plagiarism and cheating, as outlined in the Handbook of Operating Procedures, University of Texas at Tyler, will not be tolerated. University regulations require the instructor to report all suspected cases of academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action. In the event disciplinary measures are imposed on the student, it becomes part of the student's official school records. Also, please note that the handbook obligates participants to report all observed cases of academic dishonesty to the instructor.

Grades and Grading

- A - 90-100
- B - 80-89
- C - 70-79
- D - 60-69
- F - Below 60

Grading components are assigned weights based upon the work required of the participant and the importance to the course. The work performed for this course is weighted as follows:

- 25% - Personal Reflections Paper
- 25% - Personal Journal
- 25% - Active Class Participation
- 25% - Adult Learning Analysis Assignment

Course Assignments

Assignments are due on the date scheduled. Participants should notify the facilitator as soon as possible of special circumstances that could interfere with the timely completion of assignments. **Late papers and projects will not be accepted without prior approval and late papers will be subject to a reduction in letter grade.** Even with prior approval, the facilitator reserves the right to lower grades in accordance with the tardiness of submitted late assignments.

Personal Reflections Paper (25% of Final Grade)

The reflections paper serves as the synthesis and culmination of the course for participants. Participants will select three significant adult learning concepts that have impacted their adult learning and document and reflect upon their understanding of course concepts and content about adult learning. Participants will discuss how personal experiences have impacted their adult learning, as well as how knowledge of these three concepts can be useful for the future design and implementation of personal and professional learning experiences.

All written assignments must be prepared using Word or text software recognized by Word. The final paper should be formatted using APA 6th or 7th edition standards, with a length of 8-10 pages (exclusive of title page, references pages, and appendices). **Due date: August 3th, 2025 by midnight Central Standard Time.**

Journal (25% of Final Grade)

The journal serves to document the accumulation of ideas, concepts, feelings, and responses to the materials presented during the course, with the intent that the journal will provide the material for the final Personal Reflections Paper.

At the beginning of the course, each participant will write Journal Entry #1 that reflects current thoughts, experiences, and expectations for this course. Then, for each chapter, addressed in the course, participants will make notes of important points and thoughts. Chapters will be bundled into two units for submission during the course.

Journal entries should be one to two (1-2) pages in length per entry. All written assignments must be prepared using Word or text software recognized by Word. This is an informal document: complete sentences, APA 7th standards, and complete outlines of the chapters are not required.

Journal entries will be prepared weekly, but submitted periodically, see the weekly course schedule on page 11.

Active Class Participation (25% of final grade)

Dialogue is a very important part of any formal university learning. Active class participation requires participants to be involved in the course on a regular basis. This includes introductions, responses to all topic questions, feedback to other participants, and willingness to ask questions and to assist others with learning activities.

Discussions will occur for each chapter on a weekly basis, beginning on Mondays and ending on Sundays.

For maximum points in each general discussion forum, participants must respond with their answer to questions/comments posed, and **respond to the postings of at least two (2) other participants.**

Adult Learning Project Analysis Paper (25% of Final Grade)

This assignment provides participants with an opportunity to study and evaluate their own adult learning activities in conjunction with the adult learning models and theories addressed in this course. Each participant will agree to learn something new, document the results of his or her learning activities, and then prepare a written analysis.

The assignment will consist of two parts: the submission of a learning project proposal for approval and the analysis paper. The **learning project proposal** outlining the desired topic and anticipated activities is due **June 1st, 2025 by midnight Central Standard Time**

The **written analysis of the project** will include: 1) a compare/contrast discussion of the individual learning experience with a selected model or theory of adult learning; 2) a discussion of the strengths and/or weaknesses in the learning experience relative to the specific model/theory that was selected for comparison purposes; and 3) a discussion of what improvements could be made to the individual process of learning. All facets of the learning experience (environment, facilitator, participant, content) should be addressed. Evidence of attendance should be provided in an appendix to the paper.

All written assignments must be prepared using Word or text software recognized by Word. The Adult learning paper should be formatted using APA 7th edition standards, with a length of 6-10 pages (exclusive of title page, references pages, and appendices). **Due date: July 13, 2025 by midnight Central Standard Time.**

Grading Procedures

Written Assignments: Depending upon the size of the class, grading may take several days to a week to complete.

A letter grade will be deducted for each day an assignment is late.

Papers will be evaluated based upon the following criteria:

1. Inclusion of all required content;
2. Clarity of expression on the topic;
3. Selection and expression of relevant ideas, concepts, and information;
4. Quality of the support of evidence for statements included.

Discussion Assignments: Discussion assignments consist of two parts: responding to the discussion prompt as provided by the facilitator (half of the maximum points of the discussion) and then responding to at least two (2) other participants' comments made in that discussion (half of the maximum points of the discussion).

The following rubric will be used at the end of the course to evaluate overall Discussion postings, and allocate facilitator's evaluation points.

Points	1	2	3	4
Promptness and Initiative	Does not respond to most postings; rarely participates freely	Responds to most postings several days after initial discussion; limited initiative	Responds to most postings within a 24-hour period; requires occasional prompting to post	Consistently responds to postings in less than 24 hours; demonstrates good self-initiative

Delivery of Post	Utilizes poor spelling and grammar in most posts; posts appear "hasty"	Errors in spelling and grammar evidenced in several posts	Few grammatical or spelling errors are noted in posts	Consistently uses grammatically correct posts with rare misspellings
Delivery of Post Relevance of Post	Posts topics which do not relate to the discussion content; makes short or irrelevant remarks	Occasionally posts off topic; most posts are short in length and offer no further insight into the topic	Frequently posts topics that are related to discussion content; prompts further discussion of topic	Consistently posts topics related to discussion topic; cites additional references related to topic
Expression Within the Post	Does not express opinions or ideas clearly; no connection to topic	Unclear connection to topic evidenced in minimal expression of opinions or ideas	Opinions and ideas are stated clearly with occasional lack of connection to topic	Expresses opinions and ideas in a clear and concise manner with obvious connection to topic
Contribution to the Learning Community	Does not make effort to participate in learning community as it develops; seems indifferent	Occasionally makes meaningful reflection on group's efforts; marginal effort to become involved with group	Frequently attempts to direct the discussion and to present relevant viewpoints for consideration by group; interacts freely	Aware of needs of community; frequently attempts to motivate the group discussion; presents creative approaches to topic

Soules College of Business Statement of Ethics

The ethical problems facing local, national and global business communities are an ever-increasing challenge. It is essential the Soules College of Business help students prepare for lives of personal integrity, responsible citizenship, and public service. In order to accomplish these goals, both students and faculty of the Soules College of Business at The University of Texas at Tyler will:

- Ensure honesty in all behavior, never cheating or knowingly giving false information.

- ▶ Create an atmosphere of mutual respect for all students and faculty regardless of race, creed, gender, age or religion.
- ▶ Develop an environment conducive to learning.
- ▶ Encourage and support student organizations and activities.
- ▶ Protect property and personal information from theft, damage and misuse.
- ▶ Conduct oneself in a professional manner both on and off campus.

UT Tyler Honor Code:

Every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do.

Academic Dishonesty:

Cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty in this course will not be tolerated. The first incident of suspected academic dishonesty will result in an immediate referral to the Director of Judicial Affairs; there will be no warnings issued. If cheating or academic dishonesty is confirmed by Judicial Affairs, a punitive grade of “F” will be assigned for the course.

- Judicial Affairs website:
<http://www.uttyler.edu/judicialaffairs/scholasticdishonesty.php>

Students should be aware that all major papers will be checked for plagiarism using software designed for that purpose.

Using AI Tools

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools’ ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler’s Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course (see below) is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler’s Academic Integrity Policy.

For this course, AI is not permitted for any assignment

This course has specific assignments where artificial intelligence (AI) tools (such as ChatGPT or Copilot) are permitted and encouraged. When AI use is permissible, it will be clearly stated in the assignment directions, and all use of AI must be appropriately acknowledged and cited. Otherwise, the default is that AI is not allowed during any stage of an assignment.

***You can find the details of university policies in the following areas in the “University Policies and Information” page on the class Canvas site.**

- Withdrawing from Class
- Incomplete Grade Policy
- Grade Appeal Policy:
- Disability/Accessibility Services
- Military Affiliated Students
- FERPA
- Absence for Official University Events or Activities
- Absence for Religious Holidays
- Campus Carry

Weekly Course Schedule

Week	Dates	Weekly Objectives	Readings	Discussion	Assignments
1	May 12-18	1. Introduction of course and course participants. 2. Overview of Syllabus, Course Expectations, Schedule; Getting Started.	1. Syllabus 2. Schedule 3. Intro	Due May 18	Journal Entry #1 - Current View of Adult Learning Due May 18, 2025
2	May 19-25	1. Review the present context of adult learning 2. Review how technology influences adult learning.	M & B Chapters 1 & 10	Due May 25	Journal Entry #2- Ch. 1 Journal Entry #3- Ch. 10

3	May 26- June 1st	Review and evaluate the theory of andragogy Review the research in self-directed learning.	M & B Chapters 3 & 4	Due June 1st	Journal Entry #4- Ch. 3; #5- Ch. 4 Adult Learning Project Proposal Due June 1st, 2025
4	June 2- June 8	Examine the role of experience in the learning process. Review the physical aspects of the brain and cognitive functions of the mind.	M & B Chapter 6 & 9	Due June 8	Journal Entry #6- Ch. 6; #7-Ch. 9 Unit 1 Journal Entries (Chs. 1, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10) Due June 8, 2025
5	June 10- 15	Review aspects of motivation to learn components.	M & B Chapter 8	Due June 15	Journal Entry #8- Ch. 8
6	June 16- 22	Review specific theories of learning.	M & B Chapter 2	Due June 22	Journal Entry #9- Ch. 2
7	June 23- 29	Review the concept of holistic learning	None		Journal Entry #10--Ch. 7
8	June 30- July 6	Review the development of transformative learning theory, its theoretical foundations, and components	M & B Chapter 5	Due July 6	Journal Entry #11- Ch. 5
9	July 7- 13	Complete Learning Analysis Paper	3 Required peer-reviewed articles		Adult Learning Analysis Paper Due July 13, 2025
10	July 14-20	Review how culture and context impact adult learning.	M & B Chapter 12	Due July 20	Journal Entry #12- Ch. 12

11	July 21-27	Work on personal reflections paper	<u>None</u>	None	Unit 2 Journal Entries (Chs 2,5,7,8,12) Due July 27, 2025
12	July 28-August 3	Complete Personal Reflections Paper	None	August 3	Personal Reflections Paper Due August 3

[NOTE: The facilitator reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, course schedule and assignments as necessary, but will announce all changes in advance.]