



EDSP 5370

Learning Theory as Applied to Individuals with Disabilities

University of Texas at Tyler – School of Education

Course: EDSP 5370

Semester & Year: Summer 2026

Time & Days: Online

Location: Online

Instructor: Derek Daskalakes, Ph.D.

Office: BEP 212D

Office Hours: Wednesdays 11am – 2pm and by appointment

Email: ddaskalakes@uttyler.edu

Zoom Link: [Dr. D.'s Zoom](#)

Course Catalog Description

This course investigates the major learning theories that structure the contemporary field of education. Emphasis will be placed on cognitive theories of learning and their connection with the concept of intelligence and its evaluation. Additional theories of learning that complicate and even critique cognitive learning theories will also be covered in the course.

Student Learning Outcomes

The following student learning outcomes are aligned with the standards as delineated by the specific learning outcomes of the Educational Diagnostician State Board for Educator

Certification (SBEC) and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Advanced Specialty Set – Educational Diagnostician Specialist Standards.

Objectives/Learning Outcomes	Standards – SBEC/CEC
<p>1. To demonstrate knowledge of the cognitive theories that influence student learning and the assessment process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Origin of intellectual assessment • Contemporary theoretical perspectives 	<p>Domain I – Standard I, IV, V</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEDS.4.K1 • SEDS.5.K4
<p>2. To demonstrate skills in applying the concepts of the major cognitive theories for the purpose of writing full individual evaluations and to design curriculum and instructional objectives/recommendations specifically for students with disabilities</p>	<p>Domain I, II – Standard I, IV, V</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEDS.3.K1 • SEDS.3.S2
<p>3. To demonstrate knowledge of the educational implications and complexities of teaching in a multicultural classroom of students with diverse cognitive and learning styles</p>	<p>Domain II – Standard VII</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEDS.3.K2 • SEDS.4.K1

Evaluation and Grading

1. Class Zoom Meetings: Students will be required to attend group Zoom meetings at least twice during the semester. The purpose of these meetings is to get some face-time with each other and provide an opportunity to build community within the course. (20 points each)

2. Discussion Board Activities: Students will be asked to complete discussion board activities by responding to a series of questions related to the relevant course material, and then engage productively with their class peers. Responses are expected to reflect thoughtful engagement with the relevant course concepts and readings. Further, peer engagement is expected to be both respectful and meaningfully productive (e.g., adding to the discussion rather than approving or repeating material). (20 points each)

3. Reflection Activities: Students will be asked to complete a variety of reflection activities that will require them to review a reading, video, or case example before responding to critical questions in writing. Responses are expected to reflect thoughtful engagement with the relevant course concepts and readings. Meaning, these assignments are not opinion-based, but will require students to critically think about the course material as it applies to a concrete example.

4. Module Quizzes: All materials contained in a given learning module are potential sources for questions on quizzes. For example -- chapter readings, outside reading assignments, articles, video clips, video lectures, assignments/activities, etc. (20 points)

5. Exams: Exams are intended to measure student comprehension of course material (lectures, handouts, class discussions, and assigned readings). There will be a midterm and final exam. (60 points each)

6. Research Project: You will complete a research project on an aspect of cognitive/intellectual theories. You will have your choice from the following list below (100 Points). The rubrics for each project type will be available in Canvas.

- (a) Research Paper
- (b) Narrated Presentation

Points by Assignment

Assignment	Available Points
Class Zoom Meetings (x2)	20 each
Discussion board activities (x3)	20 each
Reflection activities (x3)	20 each
Module quizzes (x7)	20 each
Exams (x2)	60 each
Research project (x1)	100

Your grade will be determined based on your performance on particular assignments and/or category of assignments, which are weighted according to the percentage specified.

A = 90 – 100%

B = 80 – 89%

C = 70 – 79%

D = 60 = 69%

F = 59% and below

Teaching Strategies

The following instructional strategies will be employed during this class:

- Critical thinking and analysis
- Multimodal slides and videos
- Group learning and discussion
- Select video lectures and/or assignment descriptions

Required Text and Related Readings

Flanagan, D. P., & McDonough, E. M. (Eds.). (2018) *Contemporary intellectual assessment: Theories, tests, and issues*. (4th ed.). Guilford Press.

Additional readings will be assigned by instructor throughout the course and will be accessible on Canvas.

Code of Conduct

Please see section 209 of the University of Texas at Tyler Handbook of Operating Procedures for specific information about expectations related to student conduct.

Course Policies

People First Language/Class Etiquette: Our language is a reflection of our attitudes. Always refer to persons with disabilities with respect. Degrading terminology will not be tolerated. In this class we will strive to use “people first” language at all times. “People First” language always refers to the person first and not as a label or a category. For example, refer to “a student with autism” not “an autistic child.

Safe Zone: I consider this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect as a human being - regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Additionally, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided you can agree to disagree. It is my expectation that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment.

Communication: You’ll need to log in to Canvas regularly to view that week’s assignments and check announcements and the **Coffee & Conversations discussion board** – this is a forum in Canvas that is for you to pose questions and general musings about the course. I encourage you to use Coffee and Conversations as an environment to interact with and support one another throughout the semester.

Students can also email me directly through Canvas or my UT Tyler email address included above. I will make every effort to respond in a timely manner, but understand that my response time will vary depending on the day of the week and time of your message.

Course Organization and Frequent Logins: This course is organized into learning modules. Because this is an online course, on-campus attendance is not applicable. However, you must demonstrate self-motivation and be disciplined to complete the course activities and assignments in a timely manner. Thus, frequent (not less than once a week) logins to the course are expected.

It is strongly recommended that you enable alerts in Canvas to your email and/or phone. You can turn them on through the following steps:

- Open Canvas
- Click on the account tab in the upper left corner
- Click on 'notifications' link in the drop-down menu
- Choose the types of notifications that you want to receive – I recommend, at a minimum, turning on notifications for announcements and submission comments

Late assignments: Because this is an online class, you have a lot of flexibility in where and when you complete many of your assignments. You have many opportunities to submit the assignment on time throughout the week. You will need to be proactive and plan ahead to submit assignments on time even if you are temporarily unavailable (i.e. illness, vacations, family emergency, weddings, funerals, etc.). ***As a result, late assignments will not be accepted unless you have made prior arrangements with me 48 hours in advance of the due date/time.*** Assignments and due dates are noted on the course schedule located in the syllabus, and any changes will be communicated to you through Canvas.

There will be NO make-up activities or exams for this course unless there is an extended emergency that encompasses more than the time allowed in the module. Relevant documentation must be submitted (i.e. doctor's note) in the event of a make-up activity to receive full credit.

Assignment Submissions: Assignments will only be accepted via the designated submission links/sites that are specifically noted in each module. I do not accept assignments via email unless you receive prior approval from me.

Academic Dishonesty: To be successful in this class, you must invest time for study. Honesty is expected. Academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, collusion) will NOT be tolerated and will result in a grade of zero (0) for the assignment. A second infraction will result in automatic failure of the class. Dishonesty is defined as (a) the use of unauthorized

materials, (b) any communication with peers during quizzes, (c) representing another's work as one's own (i.e. plagiarism), or (d) fabricating information. The professor reserves the right to determine occurrences of cheating. Additional information on Academic Dishonesty is found in the Selected University Policies section of this syllabus.

Plagiarism: Your work needs to be in your own words!! Plagiarism will be an automatic zero for an assignment and grounds for a disposition. Assignments will be required to be submitted within the plagiarism software (TurnItIn) within Canvas. A similarity score of 25% or greater indicates that you may have engaged in unethical behavior. Any written assignments with a 25% or greater score may receive a grade of zero at the discretion of the instructor.

Artificial Intelligence Statement: 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 is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy.

Written assignments: Possessing the ability to clearly communicate in writing is an essential skill in our jobs as educational diagnosticians for the children and families we serve. Therefore, written assignments must be typed using double spacing lines and have page numbers. In addition, work submitted must reflect a professional quality in terms of scope, depth, writing mechanics, and appearance. Proofread all assignments as only materials with minimal or no errors will receive high scores. All written assignments must be submitted via Word.

Technology: Because this is an online course, you are expected to possess basic technology skills. However, if you are struggling with technology, please post your questions on coffee and conversations, or in many cases you can find answers to your question on Google or other search engines. For issues related to Canvas, please contact IT Support.

Tentative Course Schedule: A full schedule describing the sequence of course readings and assignments will be made available to students on the first day of the course – May 11.