Adult Learning and Training
18:829:559:02
Adulthood and Learning
15:233:543
Spring 2009

Syllabus

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Office hours: Wednesdays, 9:30 am-4:30 pm, and by appointment

The purpose of this course is to gain an understanding of the principles of adult learning and development and general models of learning and instructional design, and how to apply them in a variety of training contexts for a variety of purposes and audiences. A range of training models and strategies will be explored. In other words, some of the “essential questions” we’ll explore are:

- What do we know about adult learners and learning?
- In what ways do the distinctions of adult learners suggest specific teaching/training and learning strategies?
- What are general models and best practices for training adults?
- How can training models, practices and specific instructional strategies be employed to be maximally responsive both to the needs of adult learners and the demands for training?

Because we are all adults and are all engaged in learning new things, we have a unique opportunity in this course to integrate our own personal experiences with those who have written about adult learning and training as researchers and practitioners. The course will traverse the realms of formal research and theory and personal experience (yours and others’), and will encourage you to consider your own adult learning and training experiences in light of our work together. In this way, I hope that you will be able to use this course to reflect on, critique, and/or affirm the theoretical and practical literature on adult learning and training as a way to develop purposeful implications for your own practice.

This is a hands-on course and your participation in classroom and web-based activities is as important as completion of the readings and formal assignments. The online portion of the course will be devoted to “discussions” of the readings on adult learning theory and “how-to” information on training design and implementation. We will work in small and whole group formats. There generally are multiple steps to responding to the readings each week, so you will need to stay on schedule. Our face to face meetings will be experiential opportunities to participate as trainers and trainees. These sessions will provide us with opportunities to practice and reflect on the development of training skills. Each training will be followed by a debriefing session aimed at providing feedback to the
trainer and giving everyone an opportunity to think about what it is like to be an adult learner in a range of training contexts.

Because we are all experimenting with a new instructional format for this class, I ask that everyone be patient with me and each other, do their best to make the technology work, and provide feedback and ask questions when there are problems so that we can engage in problem solving quickly and (hopefully) efficiently.

Required Text

Most weeks, you will be assigned chapters from this text as well as articles and book chapters. These non-text book readings will be available on the Sakai course site. Please print out these readings and place them in a 3 ring binder in alphabetical order so that you can access them at a later date.

Suggested Text

Every training handbook and how-to guide has a slightly different way of explaining things and includes slightly different topics. If you anticipate actually needing to plan and implement trainings in the future I recommend that you purchase at least one other guide to training design. See resources for a list of possibilities.

Assignments

1. Complete all reading assignments. Participate, according to the week by week schedule, in on-line discussions.

2. Training analysis and reflection

Describe a training you have given or in which you have participated. Include purpose, context, audience, objectives, and a brief description of the format. Then analyze this experience in terms of at least 3 adult learning, adult development, or general learning theories covered in the readings and discussed in class. 5-7 pages. **Due date: March 16th**

3. In-class presentation of training segment

You will have 40 minutes of class time to conduct a training session with the rest of the class acting as your trainees. The training can be a segment of the training you will design for your final project, or can be “stand alone.” You should draw on the texts for this course to guide your planning and implementation. You may train us on any topic, using any materials, you choose. You must provide any needed materials.
Immediately following your training segment, the class will reflect on and debrief their experience as participants. They will submit “headlines” feedback to you.

After you have presented your lesson, you will have two weeks to prepare a 3-5 page reflection/critique on the experience. This reflection should include information about your process of preparing for the lesson (e.g., choices and decisions you made), and should incorporate classmate feedback, your perceptions of how the lesson went (strengths and challenges), what you learned from the experience (and might do differently next time), and your thoughts on the experience in retrospect. **Due 2 Weeks after your presentation.**

4. Training Design

Design and write a 2-3 hour training module on a topic of your choice. Your training module should include the following components:

1. Title page with title, name of agency/organization or type of audience, length of module (in hours), name of trainer (you!), trainer qualifications (experience/background, degree, etc.), suggested number of participants
2. Background information which should include an assessment plan, description of training setting (type of organization, location of training and other pertinent information, and details on trainees
3. Instructional goals and objectives
4. Materials needed (list of handouts and other media and supplies)
5. Instructional outline including content/sub topics addressed in each component, training methodology used, instructions for trainer, objectives addressed by each component, materials need for each component, time allotted for each component
6. Evaluation Plan that describes the purpose of the evaluation, how the results of the evaluation will be used, which evaluation levels will be used and a rationale for that choice, methods and instruments of evaluation

**Due May 8**

**Class Calendar of topics and Assignments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings/Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>January 22, 2009</td>
<td>Training vs Education</td>
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<td>Trainings you can Give</td>
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<td>Contexts &amp; Models</td>
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| Week 2  | January 26- February 1, 2009 | General Learning Theories key to adult learning and training | Merriam et al., Chapter 11, Key theories of Learning  
Taylor et al., Chapter 2Key Theories that Inform Practice  
Silberman, pp. 1-3 |
|--------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Week 3  | February 2-8, 2009 | Adult Learning Theories, Part 1 | Merriam, et al., Ch 4  
Knowles’s Andragogy, and models of adult learning  
Brookfield, Ch 5  
Andragogy  
Silberman, Ch 1-2 |
| Week 4  | February 9-15, 2009 | Adult Learning Theories, Part 2  
Training, The design process | Merriam, Ch 5, Self-directed learning  
Merriam, Ch 6, Transformational learning  
Silberman, Ch 9 & 7 |
| Week 5  | February 16-22, 2009 | Adult Learning Theories, Part 3  
Training, Instructional Strategies, Part 1 | Merriam, et al., Ch 7, Experience and Learning  
Silberman, Ch 8, 3-4 |
| Week 6  | February 23-March 1, 2009 | Adult Development Theories  
Instructional Strategies, Part 2 | Merriam, Ch 12, Adult Development  
Taylor, appendices  
Silberman, Ch 5-6 |
| Week 7  | March 2-8, 2009 | Training diverse participants | McIntosh, White Privilege  
Amstutz, Adult learning: moving toward more  
Flannery, Changing dominant understanding  
Guy, Culture as context |
| Week 8  | March 9-15, 2009 | Models of teaching/facilitating, Part 1 | Pratt, Good teaching  
Brookfield, Facilitator’s Role  
Silberman, Ch 12 |
<p>| March 16-22, 2009 | <strong>SPRING BREAK</strong> | <strong>SPRING BREAK</strong> |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 9</th>
<th>Models of teaching/facilitating, Part 2 Managing groups</th>
<th>Silberman, Ch 13-14 Seifert &amp; Stacey, Ch 9-12</th>
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<td>March 23-29, 2009</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Concluding training Evaluation</td>
<td>Silberman, Ch 15</td>
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<td>March 30-April 5, 2009</td>
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Saturday Sessions (10:00 am – 3:00 pm, Room Psy A317):
February 21
March 7
March 21
April 18
April 25