

University of  
Lethbridge



Faculty of Education

Counsellor Education Program: Master of Counselling

## **CAAP 6631: Cognitive and Affective Bases of Behavior**

**Spring Semester: January to April 2015**

**Instructor:** Robert Cey, Ph.D,  
Registered Provisional Psychologist  
**Office:** TH 306  
**Phone:** 403-329-2271  
**Email:** [robert.cey@uleth.ca](mailto:robert.cey@uleth.ca)

**Admin Support:** Margaret Beintema/  
Jean Mankee  
**Office:** TH 321  
**Phone:** 403-329-2732 / 403-329-2260  
**Email:** [margaret.beintema@uleth.ca](mailto:margaret.beintema@uleth.ca)  
[jean.mankee@uleth.ca](mailto:jean.mankee@uleth.ca)

I can best be contacted by email. I will strive to respond to emails within the regular work week (9-5, M-F), within 48 hours. If the issue is urgent, please write URGENT in the subject line and I will attempt to address the email more quickly. Meetings can be scheduled by appointment and may occur face-to-face, via telephone, or videoconference.

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### **CALENDAR DESCRIPTION**

*Credit Hours: 3.0*

*Contact hours per week: Online*

Focuses on theories of Cognition and Affect by examining how humans process information and organize their knowledge and emotional experiences. Contemporary issues will be addressed in several areas of application including regulation of affect and behavior in everyday life and in unusual circumstances.

The field of learning is dynamic and ever changing. We continue to witness significant advances in theory, research, and practice in the field of learning. There is considerable interest in exploring human potential for learning among professionals in fields such as education, counselling, health, medicine, and athletics. In all fields, practitioners look to learning theories and principles to assist in the development of meaningful learning experiences for an increasingly diverse population. This course will identify and discuss the essential features of the major theories of learning and present the most current research in each area of learning. Students will discover how the principles of learning relate to their own learning and behavior, and how the principles can be used to understand the behavior of others. In addition, there will be opportunities to apply the learning principles in case-study situations and to explore the practical implications of learning theory in educational and therapeutic settings. Students will explore the relationships that exist between theories of learning and counselling practice.

In this course we will devote several lessons to neuroscience and implications for learning and counselling practice. In particular, the principles of an interdisciplinary approach to psychotherapy called “interpersonal neurobiology” will be introduced with an emphasis on neuroscience findings regarding the mirror neuron system and neural plasticity. The central idea of interpersonal neurobiology is to offer a definition of the mind and of mental well-being that can be used by a wide range of professionals concerned with human development.

Some core concepts to be discussed include the following:

- Brains are built over time, starting before birth and continuing through childhood and adulthood
- Brain architecture and developing abilities are built from the bottom up: simple brain circuits must be successfully developed in order to provide a strong scaffold for the advanced circuits and skills that develop later on
- Toxic stress is associated with persistent effects on the nervous and stress hormone systems, leading to problems in learning, behavior, and health

**Equivalent** CAAP 6631; Education 5623; Education 5620 (*Learning Processes*) (prior to 2012/2013)

CAAP 6631: Focuses on theories of Cognition and Affect by examining how humans process information and organize their knowledge and emotional experiences. Contemporary issues will be addressed in several areas of application including regulation of affect and behavior in everyday life and in unusual circumstances.

CAAP 6631 is designed to provide a dynamic and interactive learning process in an online format. Resources include a list of readings and links to supplementary resources from journals and other texts.

There are thirteen lessons in this course. The first lesson introduces you to general information related to learning theories. In the second lesson, you will learn about neurophysiology, brain research, and learning and then spend two lessons on learning information to assist you in becoming a mindful practitioner who integrates neuroscience research into practice. The next two lessons are focused on becoming a brain-wise therapist who draws on neuroscience in his or her practice. This section of the course is followed by three lessons that focus on perspectives on learning: classical and operant conditioning, social cognitive approaches, and cognitive approaches. Lessons 8 to 11 examine a number of themes in learning, such as complex learning, memory, and motivation. The final two lessons engage you in applying learning theory to psychopathology and counselling practice.

The structure and process of the weekly online lessons require that all students progress at a similar rate throughout this portion of the course. During each week students will be expected to respond to the thought-provoking questions that are posted in the weekly Discussion Forum, and to each other's posts. Once the questions have been posted, you may contribute your ideas at any time between Wednesday and Sunday (11:59 pm). Please see the information on the Discussion Forum under orientation to the course on the website.

The essential elements of the course as specified in this course outline shall not be altered after the add/drop deadline. However, recognizing that teaching excellence requires a degree of flexibility and responsiveness to both students' needs and emergent circumstances, adjustments to the course outline may sometimes be necessary, provided that no student is disadvantaged by such a change.

## Learning Objectives

**CAAP 6631 Cognitive and Affective Bases of Behavior** is designed to help students achieve the following learning objectives:

- (1) Understand and apply the essential features of the major theories of learning.
- (2) Critically analyze how learning theory relates to learning and behavior.
- (3) Demonstrate the ability to conceptualize client difficulties through the application of theories of learning.
- (4) Formulate short- and long-term interventions, based on the application of learning theory, that address the conceptualization of client difficulties.
- (5) Examine the relationship between learning theory and counselling practice and learning theory and psychopathology.
- (6) Become proficient in meeting APA editorial and referencing standards for written work.

## Required Text

Ormrod, J. E. (2012). *Human learning* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

- Course readings are also required and will be available on the Moodle site.
- There are supplementary readings for the course, which will be available online under *Course Resources*.
- An excellent website to visit: <http://www.learning-theories.com>

## Professional Responsibilities

As students in the Faculty of Education, the following professional standards of behavior are encouraged and expected. This includes adherence to the Standards of Professional Conduct articulated by the Faculty of Education. In addition to Professional Conduct, students are expected to meet expectations set out in other University and Faculty of Education policies, and to adhere to the current code of ethics of the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA).

Specific expectations for students include the following:

- Questions, experiences shared, and opinions expressed within this class are considered **confidential**, thus statements are not to be repeated outside of the classroom and identifying details such as clients or communities must not be made public.
- Diversity of opinions and background experiences are the cornerstones of classroom discussions. As such, discussions must be centered on the argument rather than on the personal, judgments must be avoided and all encounters must reflect **respect for the right of colleagues** to differ and hold various values and opinions.
- All dialogue, interactions, and inclusive pedagogy should reflect the **professional manner** in which one would conduct themselves in any educational setting; refer to Code of Conduct.

## **Intellectual Honesty**

Plagiarism is a form of intellectual dishonesty in which another person's work is presented as one's own. Be certain that whenever you use a secondary source in your course work and assignments you reference your source in a consistent and logical manner. All direct quotes (quotations of any number of words from the original) and indirect quotes (paraphrased ideas) must be acknowledged. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and as with any form of academic misconduct, it will be penalized.

Penalties may take the form of rejection of the submitted work; expulsion from the course or the program; or legal action, depending on the specific nature of the infraction.

However, dutiful citation of quotes and paraphrased materials does not mean that you can write an essay assignment by stringing together a series of quotes. You should always try to summarize or describe someone else's ideas in your own words. When you present your own ideas or opinions in a paper, provide evidence or arguments to substantiate your position.

The **APA website** offers information about the citation styles of the American Psychological Association.

All written assignments must be completed according to the format described in *the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). We strongly recommend that you purchase a copy of the APA Manual and refer to it when writing papers and compiling reference lists. Instructors may deduct **up to 25% of the total mark for assignments** for errors in presentation, style, and grammar. The specific number of marks allotted to APA format for each assignment is indicated under the grading criteria for that assignment.

## Evaluation

The assessment structure for CAAP 6631: Learning Processes is based on the following course activities, with the percentage weighting of each activity as indicated. Your final grade for the course will be a composite mark based on your performance in these course activities. There is a five (5%) percent deduction per day (including weekends) for late work. Late assignments will not be accepted if the assignment has been returned to the students marked and graded.

Course Activity	Weighting
Participation in Online Discussions	25%
Assignment 1: Group Presentations	25%
Assignment 2: Application of Learning Theory— Analysis of Two Case Studies	20%
Assignment 3: Research Paper	30%
Total	100%

## Course Activity

### **(A) Participation in Online Discussions ..... 25%**

Please see the document, *MC Discussion Forum Expectations* under *Orientation to Course* on the Moodle page for CAAP 6631.

### **(B) Assignment #1: Group Presentation ..... 25%** **Grading Criteria: 25 marks**

#### **Part A:**

- APA Style (Part A only): See APA Format Grading Criteria: **2 marks**
- Synthesis of the literature: **5 marks**
  - Clear and accurate synthesis of 8-10 articles in the literature on the selected learning issue.
- Discussion of issues and application of the topic to counselling practice: **5 marks**
  - Discussion of the issues related to the particular area of learning theory chosen.
  - Discussion of how the selected learning issue relates to counseling practice generally.

#### **Part B:**

- Conceptual and theoretical foundation: **5 marks**
  - Clearly defined links between the learning object and the principles of learning related to the selected theory.
  - Clearly articulated objective or propose for the learning object.
- Effectiveness of the learning object: **6 marks**
  - Evidence that the learning object functions as a stand alone product, with clear application to counselling, and that it effectively meets the learning objective (as outlined above).

#### **Part C:**

- Discussion questions: **2 marks**
  - Generation of two relevant and effective forum questions and appropriate moderation of the discussion.

The Group Presentation requires you to work in a group of students to develop a presentation that is related to one of the lessons in the course. You will share your group presentation with all of the students in the course. Groups must have a minimum of two (2) students and a maximum of three (3). You may self-select into your groups by using the Group Sign-up link under the Course Announcements DF.

### **PLEASE SIGN UP FOR A GROUP BY THE END OF THE FIRST WEEK.**

Each group member will complete a "Group and Self-Assessment Tool" to assess your peers and yourself for the work completed in the group presentation.

Group presentations will not begin until Lesson 5 of the course to allow you a little time to work together. The group will choose a topic related to one of the following areas:

- Behaviorism
- Social Learning
- Cognitive Approaches
- Memory (long-term)
- Complex Learning Processes
- Motivation and Affect

Once a topic is selected, the group will work together to develop a presentation for the class. **Members of the group are responsible for posting the presentation to the Student Presentations Forum by Wednesday morning of the week in which the presentation will be discussed.** There will be three parts to the presentation:

- **Part A** will provide a synthesis of the literature related to the topic chosen, discuss the issues related to the topic, and discuss how the topic is related to professional counselling practice.
- **Part B:** The group will then elaborate upon one practical illustration of the application of learning to counselling. This might involve a case analysis, some aspect of program development or evaluation, a scenario drawn from one of the expanded roles that counsellors engage in like consultation or social action, or application to a specific presenting concern or cutting edge issue in the field. Draw on your creativity as a group in presenting this conceptual application.
- **Part C:** The group presentation will also include the development of two questions related to the topic for other students to respond to in the discussion forum. Members of the group will be responsible for posting the questions and responding to the discussion in the forum.

Prompts for selecting your applied practice example in **Part B**:

- How can we apply this learning theory to enhance a counselling, consulting, or psychoeducational setting?
- What guidelines might emerge through the application of this theory to models of counselling, psychoeducational programs?
- How might this theory be translated into a particular intervention strategy for individuals, groups, or systems?
- How might this theory impact our models for assessment or program evaluation?

Consider **Part B** as the creation of a resource for another counsellor to be able to benefit from your understanding of these learning principles. Part B should function as a stand alone learning object, such as a PowerPoint presentation, WIKI, or something else that you develop.

In the development of the presentation, the group may consider and incorporate aspects of various learning theories (can choose from any of the theories) presented in course, to enhance the learning experience of students participating in the presentation. However, the focus should be on one particular theoretical approach (as identified in the topics above). For example, a group developing a presentation on false memory syndrome might choose to develop an advance organizer (constructivist approach to learning) that depicts a model of memory to enhance the presentation. Another group might develop an outline of a program for peer counselling in a school setting involving specific applications of social learning theory.

Note: You might want to experiment with *VoiceThread*, a collaborative, multimedia slide show that holds images, documents, and videos and allows people to navigate slides and leave comments in 5 ways - using voice (with a mic or telephone), text, audio file, or video (via a webcam). You can share a *VoiceThread* with friends, students, and colleagues for them to record comments too. This application is free online.

**Part A** of the presentation should follow APA format and be no more than 10 pages in length, (excluding title page, abstract, and references). **PLEASE SUBMIT AS A WORD DOC NOT AS A PDF.** **Part B** can be presented in any format the group chooses from traditional paper to web page to an online demonstration of a particular model or strategy (e.g., video) that the group

has developed together. There is no page limit on Part B to accommodate flexibility and creativity in presentation style (but please avoid overdoing things and aim for conciseness! ☺).

The overall purpose of this assignment is to have you explore a particular topic and develop skills and knowledge in a given area, as well as promote your understanding of how learning theory and processes can be applied in practice to construct learning activities for others.

**(C) Assignment #2: Application of Learning Theory—Case Study Analysis ..... 20%**

This is an individual project where you are given three case studies and you will choose **two out of the three** to analyze through critical reflection using different learning theories. Please review the Case Studies provided. Each case will represent typical situations in counselling practice imitating the complexities of real life. The cases will require the thoughtful process of critical reflection and application of learning theory learned in the course. You will analyze each case situation from various learning perspectives and through a number of different theoretical lenses.

For each case:

- Conceptualize the problem in each case study using the learning theory or theories you believe best address the presenting problem.
- Develop treatment objectives based on how you have conceptualized the problem.
- Develop an immediate and long-term treatment plan developed out of the learning theory or theories you have chosen.
- Discuss the limitations of the short and long term interventions developed.

When deciding which learning principles to apply to each case study, choose the theory or theories that you believe best address the presenting problem.

**Due date:** to be announced—roughly at the mid-point of the term.

**(D) Assignment 3: Research Paper ..... 30%**

- **Purpose:** Demonstration of comprehensive and current understanding of a topic, or related topics, in the field of learning theory and its relation to counselling.
- **Focus:** You might choose a specific focus within a topic, such as substance use or anxiety disorders, or the use of learning theories with a certain population, or you might elect to cover a broader topic. Very specific topic areas may present a problem because it is difficult to obtain a variety of current literature sources. A combination of theoretical explanation and practical application is expected. In other words, given the “knowledge” you have presented, what does this **mean** when counselling. What kinds of things will you do or not do, and when, and how?
- **Sources:** A minimum of eight different references should be used. A couple of sources will not give you enough depth. Using only books rarely gives you current applications by practitioners in the field. Journal articles are generally more useful for specific application examples and ideas.
- **Presentation:** The paper must be written using APA reference format and non-biased language (see APA Publication Manual). There will be places where use of the first person is appropriate and desirable (such as in applications or examples from your experience), however, this is **not** intended to be a narrative paper.

- **Length:** 10 to 12 pages (excluding title page, abstract, and references). **PLEASE SUBMIT AS A WORD DOC NOT A PDF.**
- **Submission:** You must submit a very brief (~1/2 page) outline of the topic of your paper to me by **April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015**. I will provide some feedback on your outline, and may be able to suggest some resources.
- **Evaluation:** Clarity, organization, language, structure, originality, theoretical understanding, practical application, sources, and style will be assessed.
  - **Insightful/Originality:** novel, creative, takes risks, relationships drawn (6 points)
  - **Completeness/Relevance:** thorough research, detailed, appropriate, effort, depth, related to class discussions and focus (6 points)
  - **Critical thinking displayed:** sound analysis and evaluation, logical, backs up claims (6 points)
  - **Logical Flow and Well Written:** easily read, transitions, conclusions, unity, well organized, APA format (6 points)
  - **Learning displayed:** breadth/depth of thought, knowledge growth, understands theory/ies. (6 points)

## GRADING

Numeric Value	Letter Grade	Grade Point
97 – 100	A+	4.00
93 – 96	A	4.00
90 – 92	A-	3.70
87 – 89	B+	3.30
83 – 86	B	3.00
80 – 82	B-	2.70
<i>Note: Any course with a grade of less than B- cannot be considered for credit in a Graduate Studies &amp; Research in Education graduate program.</i>		
77 – 79	C+	2.30
73 – 76	C	2.00
70 – 72	C-	1.70
67 – 69	D+	1.30
63 – 66	D	1.00
<63	F	0.00

## THANKS and ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to extend my thanks to Drs. Blythe Shepard and Jody Sherman LeVos for generously allowing me to make use of the materials they compiled for earlier presentations of this course.

**See you online!**