

PSYC 400 - Applied Research in Higher Education

Seminar instructor:

Jill Atkinson, PhD. Jill.atkinson@queensu.ca

TA:

Alex Prosserman, BScH. 15ap86@queensu.ca

Practicum instructor:

Meghan Norris, PhD. UGchair.psyc@queensu.ca

Thanks go to Dr. Joe Kim at McMaster University for his mentorship and generosity. This course was modeled after one of his.

Course description

The goal of this course is to introduce you to the scholarship and practice of teaching. In this course, we will explore what it means to be a scholarly teacher, how pedagogy research informs educational practice, and how people effectively learn complex information. The theoretical elements will be explored through journal readings and activities that take place in small groups (teams). The practical elements of the course will include delivering a mini online workshop and facilitating your PSYC 100 labs.

The online presentation and group facilitation skills you will gain in PSYC 400 and through the facilitation of your PSYC 100 students' learning, will not only benefit you in consolidating your own understanding of applied educational psychology and psychology in general, but will also provide you with practical skills and experience that will benefit you in future coursework as well as in volunteer and paid employment. A high level of active participation, reading, critical thinking and constructive peer feedback is critical to success in the theoretical and practical components of this course. Upon successful completion of PSYC 400, you will be eligible to apply for a position as a TA in PSYC 100B during the winter term.

Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of, this course, you will be able to:

Knowledge/Understanding

- critically evaluate applied educational research
- explain how people learn complex information
- identify and describe effective teaching strategies
- identify and describe the principles of effective course design

Teaching Skills

- demonstrate competency in online active teaching strategies
- evaluate and recommend strategies for improvement to learning sessions for undergraduate students by actively contributing to the instructional team

Learning/Reflective Skills

- identify your assumptions about teaching and learning and describe how and why they have changed over the semester
- cooperate with, and enhance the learning of, others through active involvement and by providing constructive feedback to peers in a nonjudgmental manner

Course format

This year, for the first time, the course will be offered online. You will be placed into a team of 5-6 of your peers and work together, with the other teams and your instructional team.

There will be no pre-planned lectures; instead, you will be responsible for learning the material by completing readings in advance with your teammates and working on assignments together.

Each week will consist of the following four components:

1. **Readings:** Each week you will have readings to complete asynchronously with your peers online. You will be interacting with the readings by annotating and highlighting sections that you find interesting or confusing, and posing and answering questions to and from your peers to further expand your, and their, understanding.
2. **Application Activities:** Once the interactive readings are complete, your team will be given 'application activities' to work through to apply and consolidate your understanding. You will need to find a time to meet online.
3. **Mini lecture:** Once all teams have completed and submitted their application activities, I will record a mini lecture to address any confusion or misunderstanding and expand upon what you have learned.
4. **Office Hours:** Each week, I will hold optional drop-in office hours at times conducive to as many of you as possible. I am also available to meet individually via Teams for those who cannot make office hours.

On Fridays you will have a synchronous training session along with the graduate students PSYC 100 TAs. This will be led by Dr. Norris and will prepare you for your duties as a PSYC 100 facilitator. During this session, you will be applying what you have learned in PSYC 400 as well as using that knowledge to evaluate the PSYC 100 leaning labs.

Recording synchronous sessions

Synchronous sessions maybe held in this course through either Teams or Zoom, video conferencing platforms that are supported by the University. Steps have been taken by the University to configure these platforms in a secure manner. Classes that are recorded with video and audio (and sometimes transcription) will be made available only to students in the course for the duration of the term. The recordings may capture your name, image or voice through the video and audio recordings. By attending these live sessions, you are consenting to the collection of this information for the purposes of administering the class and associated coursework. If you are concerned about the collection of your name and other personal information in the class, please contact the course instructor to identify possible alternatives.

To learn more about how your personal information is collected, used and disclosed by Queen's University, please see the general [Notice of Collection, Use and Disclosure of Personal Information](#).

Workload

This is a six unit course and thus you can expect to devote approximately 18 hours per week to it during the fall term, with several hours devoted to reading and thinking about the research literature and then completing your team activities, a few hours preparing for and facilitating your two lab sections and finally, pockets of time to work on the bigger assignments. I strongly encourage you not to take more than three other courses.

Readings

A list of readings and resources is posted on OnQ. You must complete the assigned readings by the deadline each week.

Evaluation

Knowledge		50%
Weekly Perusall contribution	20%	
Final exam	30%	
Application/Teaching Skills		35%
Learning Lab Evaluation	15%	
Instructional Strategy ‘mini workshop’	20%	
Participation/Reflective Skills		15%
Peer and Instructor Evaluation	10%	
Reflection	5%	

If you miss any component of the assessment, please provide an appropriate reason IN ADVANCE if possible and we will discuss how best to accommodate.

Academic Integrity It is important for all of us to promote academic integrity at Queen’s. This is achieved by coming prepared to class, contributing your ideas, treating your classmates, fellow TAs, instructors and staff with respect, and submitting only your own work, while acknowledging where you have relied on others’ ideas and/or words. In return, Meghan and I will do our best to provide an interesting and challenging course and to provide the support necessary for you to fully understand the material and prepare for your learning labs. Any lapse of academic integrity is taken very seriously. These may include any act or failure to act in a way that may result in unearned academic credit or advantage, such as plagiarism and improper collaboration. In your role as a lab facilitator, *nonacademic* integrity includes behaving professionally with your students and performing your duties as assigned (or making alternate arrangements when needing to be absent). Departures from academic integrity can result in penalties such as a grade of 0 on the assignment or in the course and may become part of your permanent record. Please take time to read Regulation 1 regarding Academic Integrity in the Arts & Science calendar. You are responsible for abiding by this, and the remaining regulations, in the calendar. <http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/academic-calendars/regulations/academic-regulations/regulation-1>

Topics	The reading list is posted on OnQ with links to the articles.
Week 1	Getting to know one another and the course expectations/Starting to reflect.
Week 2	Situating the scholarship of teaching and learning (Design a research study)
Week 3	Cognitive models of Learning
Week 4	Cognitive models of Learning
Week 5	Can we improve lectures? (Workshop on Peer Instruction)
Week 6	Small group learning (Workshop on Team Based Learning)
Week 7	Learning Styles (Universal Design for Learning)
Week 8	Online learning/Instructional Design - best practices (Community Service Learning)
Week 9	Assessment (Workshop on CBL/PBL Learning – guided inquiry)
Week 10	Course and curriculum design (Workshop TBD)
Week 11	The Open Classroom Debate (Workshop TBD)
Week 12	Review and reflection

Evaluation Details

Peer and Instructor Evaluation (10%)

Active participation is essential to your success in this course. At Week 7 and 13, you will be asked to submit an evaluation of the participation of the other members of your team using an online form. You will receive formative feedback from your peers at Week 7 and a final summative grade based on the average of their evaluations - the final grade will contribute 5% to your overall mark. Your participation will also be evaluated by the instructor based on the same indicators.

Reflection (5%)

Reflection provides an opportunity to identify what you have learned, apply this knowledge or skill where possible and draw conclusions, and then apply this learning in future situations. Throughout the course, you will be expected to make 5 entries of approx. 150-200 words each to your journal. These will be due at approximately 2-week intervals. Your final reflection is due 48 hours after the final exam.

Weekly Perusall contribution (20%)

To create a learning community online, you will do your readings together, essentially discussing them asynchronously. We will use Perusall, an interactive e-reader platform where students and instructors can annotate texts and respond to each other's comments and questions about the readings. This software allows you to engage with one other in the reading process and annotate collectively and asynchronously outside of class in a manner similar to social media posting.

You can write full comments, use hashtags, "like" comments and link URLs to your comments. We are using this approach for two reasons: i) to provide a forum for you to discuss the readings and videos and thus gain more from them than you would by reading them alone and, ii) to provide us with information on how well you understood the concepts and what you found confusing. That way we can address any misconceptions or confusion in a follow up video or synchronous session.

Perusall is easy to access and you do not need to create a new account. Each week, your prep work will be to read and annotate the texts actively and critically, not taking anything at face value. Your annotations could include asking questions, identifying strengths and weaknesses (e.g., "methodology was strong because..."), responding to other student's comments, connecting to other readings, other psychology content, and/or personal experiences and making extensions by identifying the implications of the conclusions or future research questions. Your annotations should demonstrate that you have carefully and critically read the whole article. This does not mean that you need to demonstrate complete mastery - we welcome and encourage questions! We also expect you to respond to each other's questions and comments; Perusall will allow you to help your peers learn by providing support and clarification. After doing the week's readings, you will then work in teams to apply what you learned to solve problems and respond to scenarios or questions.

You will be assigned a grade each week out of 3 based on:

1. Quality of annotations: do the annotations show thorough and thoughtful reading and insightful interpretation? Annotations should demonstrate critical evaluation of the readings.
2. Quantity of annotations: there will be a minimum number of annotations set each week.
3. Timeliness: is the assignment completed by the deadline?
4. Distribution: are the annotations made throughout the document? For example, if all comments are made in one area of the paper, there is no evidence of having read the entire paper.
5. Peer engagement: did you respond to other student's comments, questions, and concerns?

Learning Lab Evaluation (15%)

Once during the term, you will complete a Learning Lab Evaluation, which requires you to critically review different aspects of one of the PSYC 100 Learning Labs. The goals of this project are to increase the teaching effectiveness of you and your classmates, and to encourage you to apply the content of the PSYC 400 course to your Learning Labs.

During the week following one of the Learning Labs, you must submit an individual written report reflecting on the learning lab. This report will have two components:

- i) Report upon how the lab was received by your students (student evaluation results) and reflect on the learning lab you facilitated. Include a reflection on both your personal performance during the lab (things you did well, things you will strive to improve), *and* on the content of, and preparation for, the learning lab given to you (things we did well, things we should strive to improve). This section should be approximately 2 pages.

- ii) Apply the concepts we are discussing in PSYC 400 to the Learning Lab you are evaluating. For example, you might analyze the cognitive load aspect of the lab, whether the online environment was exploited effectively, or the degree of active learning taking place, etc. Note that you are meant to analyze the lab *content* itself (the lesson plan, the activities, etc.) and not your facilitation. The journal articles on our reading list should provide enough context for your analysis, but you may choose to perform a small amount of additional research if necessary. This section should be approx. 2 pages.

Instructional Strategy workshop (20%)

In groups of 3 or 4, you will investigate one of the following instructional strategies

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|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Peer Instruction | Team Based Learning |
| • Universal Design for Learning | Community Service Learning |
| • Case/Problem Based Learning | TBD |
| • TBD | |

Your group will design and facilitate a 45-minute online workshop for the class. Your workshop should help the class understand the principles upon which the instructional approach is based, how it works (demo or videotape), and whether, and in which situations, it is effective.

You are encouraged to interview someone who could help you better understand this topic at Queen's. Prepare a 2-page pamphlet/brochure for the class summarizing the main points along with 2 or 3 references. Send your references to Jill two weeks before your workshop and then book a Teams meeting with her the week before your workshop to review your teaching plan. These preparations contribute to your grade!

If we can schedule the workshops synchronously, we will do so, otherwise they will be asynchronous.

Final Exam (30%)

The goal of the final exam is to provide you with an opportunity to further consolidate what you have learned and communicate it clearly in writing. There will be several short answer questions requiring approximately two hours, but the exam will be open for three hours.