

ITL-804: Learning and Pedagogical Foundations for Education

Credit Hours:

3+0

Prerequisites:

None

Course Objectives:

This course provides an in-depth exploration of the principles of learning and pedagogy as applied to contemporary educational contexts. It introduces foundational theories of learning, cognitive processes, and pedagogical paradigms while emphasizing evidence-based strategies to improve teaching and learning outcomes. Students will engage with cognitive, constructivist, sociocultural, and critical perspectives to analyze and design effective learning experiences. The course fosters the development of reflective practitioners capable of making informed pedagogical decisions grounded in theory, research, and ethical practice.

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Understand and critically analyze major theories of learning and their pedagogical implications.
2. Explore and apply diverse pedagogical approaches for different learning environments.
3. Evaluate the relationship between teaching strategies, learner characteristics, and learning outcomes.
4. Develop skills for designing inclusive, equitable, and engaging learning experiences.
5. Reflect on the role of pedagogy in fostering deep learning and lifelong learning skills.

Course Contents:

- Foundations of Learning and Pedagogy: Definitions, scope, relevance; distinction between learning, teaching, and pedagogy
- Historical and Philosophical Foundations: Key thinkers (Dewey, Vygotsky, Piaget, Bruner), traditional vs. progressive approaches to education
- Origins and Evolution of the Learning Sciences: Development of the field and its connection to pedagogy
- Key Theoretical Perspectives in Learning Sciences: Cognitive, situative, sociocultural, developmental, and critical viewpoints
- Understanding Why and How People Learn: Authentic learning contexts and implications for pedagogy

- Learning Theories and Applications: Comparative analysis of behaviorism, constructivism, and sociocultural approaches for instructional design
- Cognitive and Metacognitive Processes in Learning: How people think, learn, remember; self-regulation and metacognitive strategies
- Pedagogical Paradigms and Classroom Practices: Teacher-centered vs. learner-centered approaches; inquiry-based, experiential, and problem-based learning
- Core Mechanics of Learning: Principles that drive engagement and deep learning, including application in learning design
- Learning Design Frameworks and Principles: Strategies for creating effective learning environments that integrate theory and practice
- Motivation and Engagement in Learning: Key motivational theories and techniques for fostering student engagement in diverse contexts
- Learning Diversity and Inclusive Pedagogy: Addressing cultural, linguistic, and cognitive diversity; Universal Design for Learning principles
- Assessment, Feedback, and Reflective Practice: Formative and summative assessment, feedback for growth, teacher as reflective practitioner
- Contemporary Challenges and Research Directions: Critical pedagogy, ethics, equity, 21st-century skills, and research in learning sciences and pedagogy

Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion, students will be able to:

1. Articulate foundational learning theories and their relevance to pedagogy.
2. Apply cognitive and constructivist principles to instructional design.
3. Design lesson plans and learning activities that align with pedagogical best practices.
4. Critically evaluate classroom strategies through the lens of learner diversity and equity.
5. Demonstrate reflective practice in pedagogical decision-making.

Reference Materials/ Books:

Bransford, J. D., Brown, A. L., & Cocking, R. R. (Eds.). (2000). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school* (Expanded ed.). Washington, DC: National

Sawyer, R. K. (Ed.). (2014). *The Cambridge handbook of the learning sciences* (2nd

ed.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139519526>

Freire, P. (2018). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (50th Anniversary ed.). New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic. (Original work published 1970) **ISBN:** 9781501314131

Mayer, R. E. (2011). *Learning and instruction* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Higher Education. **ISBN:** 9780135113351

Hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. New York, NY: Routledge. **ISBN:** 9780415908087

Slothuus, L., Ashby, D., & Duxbury, C. (Eds.) (2025). *Interdisciplinary Pedagogy in Theory and Practice*. Routledge.

Zakrajsek, T. D. (2022). *The New Science of Learning: How to Learn in Harmony with Your Brain* (3rd ed.). Stylus.

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and Education*. New York: Macmillan.
(*Classic work on progressive education and experiential learning.*)

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.