

SS5763: SPECIAL TOPICS IN PSYCHOLOGY OF EDUCATION

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Special Topics in Psychology of Education

Subject Code

SS - Social and Behavioural Sciences

Course Number

5763

Academic Unit

Social and Behavioural Sciences (SS)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

SS5758 Educational Psychology

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims at (i) sensitizing students to the impacts of personal and environmental factors on teaching and learning in the educational settings; and (ii) developing students' critical mind on some contemporary controversies in psychology of education that are pivotal to teaching and learning.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Describe and explain how individual characteristics and environmental factors affect student performance and teacher behaviours in schools;	50		x	x
2	Evaluate usefulness of selected models as well as hypotheses generated from the models in explaining student and teacher behaviour in classroom and school effectiveness; and	30	x	x	
3	Apply knowledge learnt from studying controversial issues in educational psychology to create productive learning environments for effective classroom teaching and learning.	20		x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures Students will learn contemporary issues in psychology of education that are controversial. Key concepts will be explained. Emphasis will be put on integration between theory and practice and applications of theories in a critical manner.	1, 2, 3	

2	Readings from books and journals	Students will engage in materials selected from books and journals on each topic as a supplement. It can provide a broader, a more comprehensive, and a more in-depth view on the selected issue.	1, 2, 3	
3	Group presentation	Students will conduct a thorough and critical review on some controversial topics in educational psychology. Each group will present their materials to all students in the form of classroom seminars for further class discussion.	1, 2, 3	
4	Team-based learning	Students will form teams to engage in scenario-based exercises that challenge them to apply their knowledge creatively and critically on specific cases and scenarios.	1, 2, 3	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Final Essay	1, 2, 3	40	This is an individual assessment that evaluates the student's understanding of a selected controversial issue in education. GenAI is allowed for idea generation, literature review, and proof editing.	Yes
2	Group Seminar	1, 2, 3	20	This is a group assessment that requires students to summarize and critically evaluate journal articles in the assigned topic.	No

3	Discussion and Participation	1, 2, 3	30	GenAI is allowed for idea generation.	Yes
4	Case Presentation	1, 2, 3	10	GenAI is allowed for idea generation and presentation design.	Yes

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

1. Final Essay (40%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Each student will be required to write an essay of 3000 words on a selected controversial issue in educational psychology

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Concepts related to the controversial issue are exceptionally clear and well-articulated. Key ideas are effectively summarized and thoroughly explained. Analysis demonstrates deep understanding, engaging thoroughly with opposing viewpoints. Conclusions are insightful and well-supported. Uses a wide range of credible and relevant sources. Evidence is effectively integrated to support arguments, with flawless citation. Essay is exceptionally well-organized, with a clear introduction, logical flow, and effective transitions. Paragraphs are coherent and well-structured. Writing is clear, precise, and engaging. Academic tone is consistently maintained, with no grammatical or spelling errors. Adheres perfectly to APA formatting style.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Concepts are mostly clear, with minor ambiguities. Key ideas are generally well-defined but may lack some depth. Analysis is mostly thorough and engages with counterarguments. Conclusions are relevant and generally well-supported. Uses credible sources, mostly relevant. Evidence supports arguments well, with minor citation errors. Essay is mostly well-organized, with minor issues in flow or transitions. Paragraphs are generally coherent. Writing is mostly clear and maintains an academic tone, with minor grammatical or spelling errors. Mostly adheres to APA formatting style with minor mistakes.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Concepts are somewhat clear, but several ideas lack definition or clarity. Key points are mentioned but not thoroughly explained. Analysis is surface-level, with some engagement with opposing viewpoints. Conclusions may lack depth or clarity. Uses some credible sources, but relevance is inconsistent. Evidence is present but may not strongly support arguments. Essay has some organizational issues, with unclear transitions. Paragraph structure may be inconsistent. Writing is somewhat clear but may lack precision or have several grammatical errors. Tone may be inconsistent. Some APA formatting issues are present.

Marginal

(D) Concepts are unclear or poorly articulated. Many key ideas are either missing or not explained effectively. Analysis is weak, with little engagement with counterarguments. Conclusions are vague or poorly supported. Uses few credible sources, with significant relevance issues. Evidence is poorly integrated or weakly supports arguments. Essay is poorly organized, making it difficult to follow. Many paragraphs lack coherence or clear structure. Writing is unclear and lacks coherence. Numerous grammatical and spelling errors detract from the overall quality. Significant APA formatting issues.

Failure

(F) Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited, or irrelevant use of literature.

Assessment Task

2. Group Seminar (20%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Students will work together in groups to study the recommended literature and lead ONE in-class discussion seminar. The discussion seminar should be based on the recommended journal articles, plus any supplementary journal articles necessary to carry out the discussion. Students should identify critical issues or points of controversies and explain the theoretical perspectives and concepts. Furthermore, students should prepare questions for in-class discussion and summarize the discussion at the end. Discussion questions should be based on the selected readings and focus on why and how the perspectives/findings of the articles could impact education settings. Discussion questions can be incorporated within the seminar to engage with the audience and/or conducted at the end of the seminar.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Concepts are exceptionally clear and well-articulated. Key ideas are effectively summarized and connected, demonstrating deep understanding. Delivery is engaging, confident, and well-paced. Presenter maintains eye contact and uses body language effectively to enhance communication. Teaching aids are used effectively and enhance understanding. They are well-integrated into the presentation and add significant value. Presentation is well-timed, covering all key points within the allotted time. There is effective management of questions and discussion.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Concepts are mostly clear, with minor areas of confusion. Key ideas are generally well articulated but could benefit from further elaboration. Delivery is mostly engaging and clear, with minor lapses in confidence or pacing. Presenter generally maintains eye contact and uses body language appropriately. Teaching aids are used appropriately and support understanding. They are mostly integrated but could be enhanced in some areas. Presentation is mostly well-timed, with minor issues in pacing. The Q&A session is generally well-managed, though some responses could be more thorough.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Concepts are somewhat clear, but there are several confusing points. Key ideas are mentioned but lack depth or clear connection. Delivery is somewhat engaging but lacks confidence or clarity in parts. Eye contact and body language are inconsistent. Teaching aids are used but are ineffective or poorly integrated into the presentation. Their contribution to understanding is limited. Presentation has noticeable timing issues, either rushing through key points or exceeding the time limit. The Q&A session is somewhat effective, but responses may lack depth.

Marginal

(D) Concepts are unclear and poorly articulated. Many key ideas are either missing or not explained effectively. Delivery is disengaging or unclear. Presenter struggles with pacing and has little to no eye contact, making it difficult for the audience to follow. Teaching aids are used minimally or ineffectively, providing little to no support for understanding. Presentation is poorly timed, significantly lacking coverage of key points or going well over the time limit. The Q&A session is poorly managed, with vague or incomplete responses.

Failure

(F) The presentation is poorly done

Assessment Task

3. Discussion & Participation (30%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Discussion Participation (20%)

Students are expected to review and critique the selected articles for the week, and actively participate in the discussion. A participation score will be given to each student based on his/her contribution in the class discussion.

Q&A Participation (10%)

Students are expected to attend all the class discussion sessions. Students who are not presenting are required to raise at least one question during the Q&A session of each seminar. The instructor will randomly pick questions from the audience.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Actively participating in class discussion; Questions raised demonstrates critical evaluation.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Often chimes in during class discussions; Questions raised are meaningful.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Participating in class discussions only when being called; Questions raised are rather superficial.

Marginal

(D) Minimal participation; Demonstrates lack of class preparation

Failure

(F) Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; Weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited, or irrelevant use of literature.

Assessment Task

4. Case Presentation (10%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Students will form groups to tackle a scenario, formulate a strategy, and present their solution.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Students critically evaluated the key issues presented in the scenario. A comprehensive and effective strategy that tackles the issue was formulated. Presentation of solution was clean and clear.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Students evaluated the the scenario appropriately. A good strategy that tackles the issue was proposed. Presentation of solution was somewhat clean and clear.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Students evaluated the scenario appropriately. A fair strategy that addresses the issue was proposed. Presentation of solution was somewhat clean and clear.

Marginal

(D) Students briefly summarised the scenario. The solution proposed does not necessarily address key issues of the case. Presentation was not clear.

Failure

(F) Students failed to evaluate the case. The strategy proposed does not address the issue. Presentation was done poorly.

Assessment Task

1. Final Essay (40%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Each student will be required to write an essay of 3000 words on a selected controversial issue in educational psychology

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Concepts related to the controversial issue are exceptionally clear and well-articulated. Key ideas are effectively summarized and thoroughly explained. Analysis demonstrates deep understanding, engaging thoroughly with opposing viewpoints. Conclusions are insightful and well-supported. Uses a wide range of credible and relevant sources. Evidence is effectively integrated to support arguments, with flawless citation. Essay is exceptionally well-organized, with a clear introduction, logical flow, and effective transitions. Paragraphs are coherent and well-structured. Writing is clear, precise, and engaging. Academic tone is consistently maintained, with no grammatical or spelling errors. Adheres perfectly to APA formatting style.

Good

(B+, B) Concepts are mostly clear, with minor ambiguities. Key ideas are generally well-defined but may lack some depth. Analysis is mostly thorough and engages with counterarguments. Conclusions are relevant and generally well-supported. Uses credible sources, mostly relevant. Evidence supports arguments well, with minor citation errors. Essay is mostly well-organized, with minor issues in flow or transitions. Paragraphs are generally coherent. Writing is mostly clear and maintains an academic tone, with minor grammatical or spelling errors. Mostly adheres to APA formatting style with minor mistakes.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Concepts are unclear or poorly articulated. Many key ideas are either missing or not explained effectively. Analysis is weak, with little engagement with counterarguments. Conclusions are vague or poorly supported. Uses few credible sources, with significant relevance issues. Evidence is poorly integrated or weakly supports arguments. Essay is poorly organized, making it difficult to follow. Many paragraphs lack coherence or clear structure. Writing is unclear and lacks coherence. Numerous grammatical and spelling errors detract from the overall quality. Significant APA formatting issues.

Failure

(F) Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited, or irrelevant use of literature.

Assessment Task

2. Group Seminar (20%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Students will work together in groups to study the recommended literature and lead ONE in-class discussion seminar. The discussion seminar should be based on the recommended journal articles, plus any supplementary journal articles necessary to carry out the discussion. Students should identify critical issues or points of controversies and explain the theoretical perspectives and concepts. Furthermore, students should prepare questions for in-class discussion and summarize the discussion at the end. Discussion questions should be based on the selected readings and focus on why and how the perspectives/findings of the articles could impact education settings. Discussion questions can be incorporated within the seminar to engage with the audience and/or conducted at the end of the seminar.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Concepts are exceptionally clear and well-articulated. Key ideas are effectively summarized and connected, demonstrating deep understanding. Delivery is engaging, confident, and well-paced. Presenter maintains eye contact and uses body language effectively to enhance communication. Teaching aids are used effectively and enhance understanding. They are well-integrated into the presentation and add significant value. Presentation is well-timed, covering all key points within the allotted time. There is effective management of questions and discussion.

Good

(B+, B) Concepts are mostly clear, with minor areas of confusion. Key ideas are generally well articulated but could benefit from further elaboration. Delivery is mostly engaging and clear, with minor lapses in confidence or pacing. Presenter generally maintains eye contact and uses body language appropriately. Teaching aids are used appropriately and support understanding. They are mostly integrated but could be enhanced in some areas. Presentation is mostly well-timed, with minor issues in pacing. The Q&A session is generally well-managed, though some responses could be more thorough.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Concepts are unclear and poorly articulated. Many key ideas are either missing or not explained effectively. Delivery is disengaging or unclear. Presenter struggles with pacing and has little to no eye contact, making it difficult for the audience to follow. Teaching aids are used minimally or ineffectively, providing little to no support for understanding. Presentation is poorly timed, significantly lacking coverage of key points or going well over the time limit. The Q&A session is poorly managed, with vague or incomplete responses.

Failure

(F) The presentation is poorly done

Assessment Task

3. Discussion & Participation (30%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Discussion Participation (20%)

Students are expected to review and critique the selected articles for the week, and actively participate in the discussion. A participation score will be given to each student based on his/her contribution in the class discussion.

Q&A Participation (10%)

Students are expected to attend all the class discussion sessions. Students who are not presenting are required to raise at least one question during the Q&A session of each seminar. The instructor will randomly pick questions from the audience.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Actively participating in class discussion; Questions raised demonstrates critical evaluation.

Good

(B+, B) Often chimes in during class discussions; Questions raised are meaningful.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Minimal participation; Demonstrates lack of class preparation

Failure

(F) Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; Weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited, or irrelevant use of literature.

Assessment Task

4. Case Presentation (10%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Students will form groups to tackle a scenario, formulate a strategy, and present their solution.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Students critically evaluated the key issues presented in the scenario. A comprehensive and effective strategy that tackles the issue was formulated. Presentation of solution was clean and clear.

Good

(B+, B) Students evaluated the the scenario appropriately. A good strategy that tackles the issue was proposed. Presentation of solution was somewhat clean and clear.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Students briefly summarised the scenario. The solution proposed does not necessarily address key issues of the case. Presentation was not clear.

Failure

(F) Students failed to evaluate the case. The strategy proposed does not address the issue. Presentation was done poorly.

Part III Other Information**Keyword Syllabus**

The content areas may vary from year to year, depending on students' need and staff expertise in a particular year. They will be selected according to the major themes/debates currently existing in the field of educational psychology.

Topics to be covered may include: academic dishonesty; academic help seeking; academic procrastination; parental academic involvement; parental academic socialization; family educational environment; teacher expectations; teachers' emotion; peer acceptance and rejection; schooling and cognitive development; learning environments; school effectiveness

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

Title	
1	There is no textbook for this course. Readings will be selected from journals, text books and the following edited books:
2	Hoy, A. W. (2024). Educational psychology: active learning edition (Fifteenth edition.). Pearson.
3	Mertler, C. A. (2021). Action Research as Teacher Inquiry: A Viable Strategy for Resolving Problems of Practice. Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation, 26, 19.
4	Chang, E. (Ed.). (2016). Taking sides: Clashing views in educational psychology (8th ed.). OH, US: McGraw Hill.
5	Buskirk-Cohen. (Ed.). (2020). Taking sides: Clashing views in lifespan development (7th ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw Hill.
6	Slife, G. (Ed.). (2015). Taking sides: Clashing views on psychological issues (19th ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw Hill.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Articles related to the selected topics from the following journals:
2	Educational Psychology Review. ISSN: 1040-726X
3	Review of Educational Research. ISSN: 0034-6543
4	Educational Psychology Review. ISSN: 1747-938X
5	School Psychology Review. ISSN: 0279-6015
6	Personality & Social Psychology Review. ISSN: 1088-8683
7	Oxford Review of Education. ISSN: 0305-4985
8	Review of General Psychology. ISSN 1089-2680
9	Developmental Review. ISSN: 0273-2297
10	Educational Research Review ISSN:1747-938X