

CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT UNIVERSITY
College of Natural and Behavior Sciences
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

COURSE SYLLABUS

PSYC 312
May Term 2025
Educational Psychology in an International Context

Professor:

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Course Description of PSYC 312

The overall goal of this course is to expose students to the major concepts of educational psychology and to explore how other countries approach education. Specifically, we will explore the Austrian and Slovenian approaches to education, two countries that have sustained success on the PISA (International Assessment of academic skills in reading, math, & science). Through visits to schools, classroom observations, and presentations from professors and school leaders, students will think critically about the best approaches to teaching and learning.

Course Objectives

Academic: Students will be able to discuss the main components of educational psychology, which will include:

- Understanding the characteristics of a highly effective teacher and classroom
- Characteristics of and approaches to teaching exceptional students
- Understanding and classroom application of the four major learning theories (Behaviorism, Information Processing System, Social Cognitive Theory, and Constructivism).
- Understanding and classroom application of motivational theories such as goal theory, self-determination theory, control-value theory, attribution theory, and expectation-value theory.

Cultural: Students will be able to compare and contrast Austrian and Slovenian approaches to education in the United States.

Students will be able to experience culturally relevant sites to expand their knowledge and views of the world.

General Course Requirements

Physical Demands: This study abroad course is conducted outside of the U.S., which means this course will be in a location where the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not apply. Faculty will make every effort to accommodate students with physical requirements. However, all students should be aware this program includes excursions requiring significant amounts of walking. None of the walking is strenuous per se. However, walking is a much larger component of European culture than in the U.S. For example, participants will be required to walk to and from the university and schools (about a mile) daily in Maribor, Slovenia and Graz, Austria. Overall, students should be able to walk up to seven miles daily.

Students desiring accommodations for these physical components should discuss the program with faculty prior to departure to ensure accommodations are possible. Also, note some buildings/locations may not be handicap accessible. Therefore, you will be expected to get in and out of public transportation (which usually involves navigating stairs) and carrying your luggage.

Academic Expectations: Written assignments and class discussions will demonstrate original critical thought, relate to the subject of discussion, and focus on understanding relationships and concepts. It is important to respect each other's opinions and to display civility to others. All students will be made to feel comfortable in the academic environment of intellectual inquiry, and able to fully participate in all discussions. Especially within the environment of an international experience, students will accept that each of us may offer a unique and diverse opinion, and all within the learning community are expected to offer their thoughts and issues for meaningful discussion that will positively contribute to this study abroad learning experience.

The assignments will be prepared or turned in on or before the assigned due dates. Assignments that are late will be penalized one full grade (10%) for each day late.

Written assignments and quizzes will reflect the student's best effort in terms of content development, and comprehension of the material, and be offered in a quality manner. Written assignments will be typed and be accurate in terms of spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Please proofread all work.

All formal written assignments will be properly cited and reference all material utilized in student research. ***Students are expected to research and cite texts and journal articles for the written assignments.*** This demonstrates that you have reviewed the pertinent literature related to the subject.

Course Materials

All course material, including PowerPoint slides, in-class activities, and handouts will be shared via the course scholar page.

Recommended textbook: Durwin, C. C. & Reese-Weber, M. (2018). *EdPsych Modules* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Specific Assignments/Grading

Content Quizzes: After each pre-departure lecture, students will be responsible for completing a quiz on their own time (approximately 30 minutes). Quizzes will be taken online and students are expected to complete them outside of class time, individually. Students can use open notes to complete quizzes. Quizzes must be completed prior to the next pre-departure meeting otherwise the student will receive a zero.

Seminar Paper: Students will focus on an educational topic of their choice (approved by Dr. Pressley). This document will focus on the approaches and views of the selected topic in the United States and in Austria/Slovenia. Students will use research articles and their experiences abroad to form their papers. The seminar paper must be 8-10 pages including the title and reference pages. Each paper must be double-spaced with margins not exceeding 1 inches and utilizing a standard Times Roman 12-point font. All direct quotations of other's words must be enclosed in quotation marks and the source immediately cited. All indirect quotations (paraphrasing or summarizing the ideas of others) are also to be cited. Willful violation of this integrity issue may result in course failure and/or other disciplinary action. Grading will relate directly to the quality of the paper in terms of critical thinking, analysis, research documentation, spelling and grammar.

Short Paper/Journal: Students will record their observations from educational visits. Specifically, students will note connections from educational visits in Austria and Slovenia to the learning and motivational theories in class. Students will have flexibility in the format of journal entries and can include evidence such as pictures to support their writing. Students must have a journal entry from each educational visit. More information will be provided on this assignment.

Seminar Engagement/Participation: It is expected that all students will participate fully in seminar discussions and small groups. In any learning community, the group can only benefit to the extent that each student joins in and engages others. Students are expected to actively participate and interact with the faculty, guest speakers, and each other in discussion of all material.

Attendance: Students are expected to attend daily seminars as scheduled. Seminar discussion and information sharing are key to understanding this material and deficiencies will reduce a student's final grade. More than one unexcused absence, late arrival, or early departure can disrupt the continuity and learning activities in the seminar. Students must be aware that these factors are significant as one earns a grade throughout this study abroad program.

Grading Percentages:

Quizzes of material (After pre-departure meetings)	40%
• Each Quiz is 8% of the final grade	
Short Paper/Reflective Journal	15%
Seminar Paper (due June 7 th)	25%
Attendance/Participation	20%

Grading Scale:

<u>Letter</u>	<u>Grade Meaning</u>	<u>Numerical Value</u>
A	100-93%	4.00
A-	92.9-90%	3.70
B+	89.9-87%	3.30
B	86.9-84%	3.00
B-	83.9-80%	2.70
C+	79.9-77%	2.30
C	76.9-74%	2.00
C-	73.9-70%	1.70
D+	69.9-67%	1.30
D	66.9-64%	1.00
D-	63.9-60%	0.70
F	59.9% and below	0.00
I	Incomplete	

Submission of Work: Student presentations, assignments, and seminar papers are to be submitted on time. Late material will be penalized as noted in the General Course Requirements.

Administrative Information

Withdrawal: Once the enrollment deadline has passed, the university will commit funds for airfare, lodging, miscellaneous course activities, and support services. Please note that a withdrawal will not change the travel costs incurred and a student will still be responsible for the full cost of this international trip.

University Statement on Diversity and Inclusion:

The Christopher Newport University community engages and respects different viewpoints, understands the cultural and structural context in which those viewpoints emerge, and questions the development of our own perspectives and values, as these are among the fundamental tenets of a liberal arts education.

Accordingly, we affirm our commitment to a campus culture that embraces the full spectrum of human attributes, perspectives, and disciplines, and offers every member of the University the opportunity to become their best self.

Understanding and respecting differences can best develop in a community where members learn, live, work, and serve among individuals with diverse worldviews, identities, and values. We are dedicated to upholding the dignity and worth of all members of this academic community such that all may engage effectively and compassionately in a pluralistic society.

If you have specific questions, suggestions or concerns regarding diversity on campus please contact Diversity.Inclusion@CNU.edu

Disabilities/Accessibility:

In order for a student to receive an accommodation due to a disability, that disability must be on record in the Office of Student Affairs, 3rd Floor, David Student Union (DSU). If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact Jacquelyn Barnes, Student Disability Support Specialist in Student Affairs (594-7160) to discuss your needs.

Students with documented disabilities are to notify the instructor at least seven days prior to the point at which they require an accommodation (the first day of class is recommended), in private, if accommodation is needed. The instructor will provide students with disabilities with the reasonable accommodations approved and directed by the Office of Student Affairs. Work

completed before the student notifies the instructor of his/her disability may be counted toward the final grade at the sole discretion of the instructor.

The Honor Code

"On my honor, I will maintain the highest possible standards of honesty, integrity and personal responsibility. That means I will not lie, cheat, or steal and as a member of this academic community, I am committed to creating an environment of respect and mutual trust."

Under the Honor Code of Christopher Newport University, it is expected that all members of the University community will demonstrate honesty and integrity in their conduct. Intentional acts of lying, stealing or cheating are violations of the Code that can result in sanctioning.

Good sense and interpersonal civility are extremely important characteristics when a group of individuals are traveling together. All seminar participants are expected to conduct themselves with dignity and respect the wishes of others.

Each member of the University community is responsible for upholding and enforcing the Honor Code. The system cannot function unless each member of the University community takes actions when he or she believes that any person may have violated the Honor System.

Learning takes place through individual effort; achievement can be evaluated only on the basis of the work a student produces independently. A student who seeks credit for work, words and ideas that are not the product of the student's own effort is dishonest. Such behavior infringes on the Honor System and can result in severe penalties ranging from failure on the assignment or the course to dismissal from the University.

Misunderstanding of the system will not be accepted as an excuse for dishonest work. If a student is in doubt on some point with respect to the student's work in a course, the student should consult the instructor before handing in the work in question.

Student Success

This seminar capacity is limited and the instructors believe that a professional interpersonal relationship with each student is important, and your learning is paramount. Drs. Pressley and Kelly will carefully track each student's work, effort and classroom participation. In the event a student is not doing well or presents behavioral problems, faculty reserve the right to send the student home early.

Meeting with the Professors

Students will engage with Dr. Pressley and Dr. Kelly throughout the seminar and they will be available for students at all times. Please do not hesitate to contact them at any time with concerns or issues.

Pre-Departure

Pre-Departure Meeting #1: Discuss the syllabus/trip, highly effective teaching, and classroom management: 120 minutes; See Unit 6 in book (modules 17-19)

Pre-Departure Meeting #2 (asynchronous): Discuss diversity within the classroom, developmental theories, and learning: 120 minutes; See Unit 7 (modules 20-22)

Pre-Departure Meeting #3: Discuss Learning Theories part 1 (asynchronous): 120 minutes; See modules 8, 10, 11

Pre-Departure Meeting #4: Discuss Learning Theories part 2: 120 minutes; See modules 9, 12, 13

Pre-Departure Meeting #5 (asynchronous): Discuss Motivational theories: 120 minutes; see unit 5 (modules 14-16)

Pre-Departure Meeting #6: Discuss final details for the trip: 90 minutes

Asynchronous instruction will include students watching pre-recorded lectures on educational psychology content, which will provide important background information.

*Schedule is subject to change

Day 0	Flight from Dulles (IAD) to Ljubljana (LJU); take bus from Ljubljana to Maribor (1.5 hours)	
Day 1 (Ljubljana)	Day trip to Lake Bled	
Day 2 (Maribor)	Morning: travel to Maribor	
	Afternoon: walk together to university, meet together for an hour, boat trip on the Drava and free time	Goal: Students will experience the culture of Slovenia and learn more about the history of Slovenia.
Day 3 (Maribor)	Morning: meet with University of Maribor faculty, followed by group	Goal: Students will hear first hand from professors of

	meeting	education about the Slovenian education system and the process of becoming a teacher in Slovenia.
	Afternoon: group hike to Calvary or Pyramid Hill	Goal: Students will experience the city of Maribor
Day 4 (Maribor)	Morning: visit school	Goal: Students will get first-hand experience, going into classrooms, interacting with teachers and students in Slovenia.
	Afternoon: group meeting at the university and free time	Goal: Debrief and discuss what students observed and how it compares to USA schools.
Day 5 (Graz)	Morning: travel to Graz	
	Afternoon: meet with Ministry of Education contact and group discussion	Goal: Students will hear first hand from educational leaders in Austria to learn about the education system.
Day 6 (Graz)	Morning: visit school	Goal: Students will get first-hand experience, going into classrooms, interacting with teachers and students in Austria.
	Afternoon: group meeting, followed by trip to Clock Tower, Schlossberg Slide, and Stairs of Reconciliation	Goal: Debrief and discuss what students observed and how it compares to USA schools. Also experience Austrian culture.
Day 7 (Graz)	Morning: visit school	Goal: Students will get first-hand experience, going into classrooms, interacting with teachers and students in Austria.
	Afternoon: group meeting and free time	Goal: Debrief and discuss what students observed and how it compares to USA

		schools.
Day 8 (Vienna)	Morning: Eggenberg palace tour	Goal: Learn more about the history and culture of Austria.
	Afternoon: travel to Vienna	
Day 9 (Vienna)	Morning: free time	
	Afternoon: visit Schonbrunn Palace (with option for dinner and concert)	Goal: Learn more about the history and culture of Austria.
Day 10 (Vienna)	Morning: Discussion of educational experiences	Goal: Debrief and discuss what students observed and how it compares to USA schools.
	Afternoon: free time	
Day 11 (Vienna)	Morning: free time	
	Afternoon: attend a show at the Vienna State Opera	Goal: Learn more about the history and culture of Austria.
Day 12 (Munich)	Morning: train to Munich	
	Afternoon: free time	
Day 13 (Munich)	Morning: visit Dachau concentration camp	Goal: Give students the unique experience of visiting a major historical site in Germany. We feel that Dachau is meaningful for students to experience as the atrocities of WWII are an important part of history and WWII as a whole has greatly impacted the world and society.
	Afternoon: free time	
Day 14	Flight from Munich to Dulles (IAD)	