

Harper College Graduate Equivalency Course (GEC) Syllabus

Carrying the (Cognitive) Load for Students

3 GEC Hours

Summer 2019

Blended Course: June 5 – July 15, 2019

Face-to-face Meetings: Wednesdays, June 5, June 12, June 26, July 10, 4 p.m. - 6 p.m., F315

Faculty Information

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Office Location/Hours: L332/Summer

Course Information

Course Description: Carrying the (Cognitive) Load for Students covers the way that Cognitive Load Theory informs the design of curriculum and instructional materials. It reviews research in the limits of individual ability to absorb, process, and internalize new material. It then builds on this understanding in order to explore the opportunities and limitations that cognitive load have for educators.

Course Goals: The course will provide participants with a theoretical background in cognitive load theory, general-factor intelligence, and scaffolding. Key concepts in CLT (including extraneous load, germane load, and intrinsic load) will be explored in the context of education materials and curriculum design. Participants will be asked to explore the ways educational content can be packaged and delivered to students in a manner likely to facilitate long-term retention of information and to encourage the development of higher-order application skills.

Learning Outcomes: As a result of this course, participants will

- Learn to recognize the likely limits of students' abilities to navigate and to internalize new information
- Better appreciate the opportunities that different teaching strategies offer for complex course material
- Explore the barriers to student learning that can and cannot be mitigated by instructor intervention
- Create curriculum that is informed by practical limits and opportunities for student learning

Course Outline: Because the course will have as its focus the way cognitive load theory informs education, ideal participants will have experience in teaching, so that they can draw on that experience in order to contextualize course content more readily. Class structure will be a mix of discussion, group-work, and participant-led presentation. The goal will be to address the craft of teaching from a neutral

perspective, and so query-response and whole-group participation will be heavily utilized. Each session will have reserved time to address concerns.

Required Text: All required reading will be provided through Library-based and Open Source links, as well as through instructor-provided PDFs. The reading will focus on journal articles instead of textbooks.

Student Expectations and Requirements

Because this course is being offered as a *Blended Course*, students will be expected to complete readings outside of sessions and to take the initiative to contact the facilitator for any clarification desired. Participants are required to complete all assignments and to engage with one another in a manner befitting colleagues and fellow educators. Participants should expect to have their existing teaching practices challenged, and should be prepared to explore the limits and scope of student ability.

Course Requirements and Assignments

- Read the assigned articles and participate in session discussions.
- Review existing lesson plans and teaching practices in order to evaluate the appropriateness of the content based on an understanding of student cognitive load. Submit a brief (less than 3-page) write-up of any practices that need changing or reconsideration in light of available research.
- Select, research, and present on a teaching practice based on CLT and cognitive science. The presentation should be no longer than 15 minutes and should invite active participation from fellow participants. A bibliography of available references should be provided to fellow participants.
- Evaluate a specific teaching practice and submit a review of available literature as well as a set of recommendations for the use of fellow teachers. The review/recommendations document should be prepared for distribution to fellow teachers, and is intended to fulfill the research expectation of GEC courses.

Methods of Evaluation

Grading will be based on quality of work with components weighted as follows:

20%	Session participation and discussion
20%	Lesson Plan Review
40%	Exploration of a Teaching Practice
20%	Presentation (Final Exam)

Course Calendar

JUNE 5 (Session 1): Discussion of basic CLT and the impact of cognitive science on education; this will include interaction with fellow participants and the facilitator based on prior teaching experience.

JUNE 12 (Session 2): Selected readings in curriculum and subject-specific instruction. Introduction of the Lesson Plan Review and discussion of how the readings relate to real-world teaching opportunities and challenges.

JUNE 19 (Session 3): **NOTE: Online Workshop Day.** Participants will engage in facilitator-aided examination of lesson plans in order to contextualize the reading. Detailed examination of lesson plans in context of the reading will be due by the end of the week. **DUE by June 21: Lesson Plan Review.**

JUNE 26 (Session 4): Critical examination of curriculum with course readings for contextualization; Interaction with fellow participants and with facilitator; discussion of potential Teaching Practice Explorations will begin.

JULY 3 (Session 5): **NOTE: Online Workshop Day.** Facilitated exploration of teaching practice. Participants will perform private research online and communicate with the facilitator regarding the CLT research.

JULY 10 (Session 6): Symposium. Final presentations and discussions, with participants presenting evidence for a teaching practice based on CLT. **DUE: Draft of Exploration of Teaching Practice Exploration Due.**

JULY 15 (No Session): Based on any feedback received on July 10, participants will have the opportunity to make modifications before submitting the final draft on July 15. **DUE: Final Exploration of Teaching Practice Exploration Due.**

Graduate Equivalency (GEC) Policies

Enrollment

The Academy for Teaching Excellence requires a minimum of six (6) faculty to be enrolled in any GEC to be offered. The maximum enrollment in any GEC is determined collaboratively with the instructor and the Academy. Enrollment is measured two (2) weeks before the first scheduled day of the course.

Faculty wishing to participate in a GEC will register for the course through the [Academy website](#). All GECs are pre-approved for credit.

Registration and Withdrawal Policy

The registration deadline is two (2) weeks before the first scheduled day of the course.

A faculty member will have seven (7) calendar days from the beginning of the course (first day of class) to un-enroll by notifying both the instructor and kmichela@harpercollege.edu. After seven (7) days, any faculty member who does not successfully complete the course will receive a "XV" (Incomplete) on their transcript and no credit will be awarded.

Receiving Credit for GECs

GEC credits will appear in a faculty member's professional development list (full-time faculty) and transcript within two weeks after the end of each semester. A faculty member may repeat a GEC at any

time; however, because GEC credit is used for promotion and tenure, credit for a course may only be awarded once.

Final Grades

GEC grades will be awarded as “PV” (Pass) for students who have successfully completed the course and “XV” (Incomplete) for students who have not. No other grade options will be assigned in any case.

Policies

Students with Disabilities and Academic Accommodations

Harper College strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let Access and Disability Services (ADS) know immediately at 847.925.6266. ADS will privately discuss the options you have, including the accommodations they offer. You are welcome to register with Access and Disability Service by going to www.harpercollege.edu/ads and fill out the application for ADS services. Once you have your accommodations approved by ADS, please make arrangements with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion.

ADS contact information: 847.925.6266, ads@harpercollege.edu, Building I, Room 103.

Equal Opportunity Statement

Harper College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or unfavorable discharge from military service