SCHOOL FOR NEW LEARNING  
Master of Arts in Educating Adults (MAEA)  
*Enhancing Practice with Theory*  
Syllabus

Course # EA 518; 4 Credits; Spring 2020  
Saturdays: April 18, May 2, May 16, May 30  
Zoom Sessions: TBD, May 22  
Loop Campus, 9:00 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.

Instructor: Donna Younger, Ed.D.  
dyounger@depaul.edu  
224-305-6272  
Available during normal business hours and by appointment  
Messages returned within 24 hours

**Course Description**

In this course, participants will examine, reflect on, and reconsider their practical experience as learners and facilitators of learning through diverse theories and models of adult learning. We will consider learning within context and recognize the complex cultural, social, and socioemotional factors that affect its process. This course builds upon EA 526, where the focus is on the outcomes and assessment of learning and EA 517 where concepts and methods for facilitating learning are addressed. Throughout the course, participants will explore how and why different instructional approaches and teaching perspectives align with distinct educational theories and philosophies. In the process, they will develop their ability to draw on different theories and models to articulate key principles of good practice, to enhance their own practice, and to situate their theoretical and practical knowledge within the broader field of adult learning.

**Course Learning Outcomes**

1. Can demonstrate an understanding of different adult learning theories, models, perspectives, and paradigms.

2. Can explain how social, cultural, institutional, and other contextual factors affect adult learning.

3. Can demonstrate how a set of adult learning theories can guide instructional decisions and can describe the strength and limitations of those theories.

4. Can use adult learning theories to reflect and analyze their applicability to different educational settings and specific teaching/learning situations.

5. Can engage in a community of learners as a critically reflective learner.
Learning Resources

Required Text:  

Additional Course Materials: Other required readings will be made available through D2L (and e-reserve) and class handouts.

MAAPS Competencies

AP-510 Main Theories. (“Can identify and analyze relevant theories, models, concepts, and principles of adult learning and development to support, challenge, and enhance one’s area(s) of practice.”)

AP-574 Reflection In/On Practice. (“Can apply theories and models of learning from experience and reflective practice one’s own practice as an educator of adults.”)

AP-585, 586, 587, 588, 589 Supplemental Competence. (“Can describe and analyze how choices of theories or significant ideas influence practices in the delivery of educational offerings for adult learners.”)

- Or some other version of the above competencies, subject to advance approval by Faculty Mentor and Instructor.

Assessment Evidence, Criteria, and Scoring

Specific guidelines for each assignment will be provided via D2L

1. Class Participation (20 Points) Assessment will be based on regular and timely attendance, evidence of preparation for class sessions, quality of student’s engagement in full-class discussions and group work.

2. Reaction Papers (25 Points, 5 points per paper). Following each class or Zoom session, students will prepare an essay that responds to one of two prompts (to be provided within 24 hours following class) that will be due on the Friday following the class session. Essays will encourage students to make personal meaning of class session readings, discussions, and activities and are not to be treated as research papers. Drawing on course resources as part of reflection will strengthen the reflection and response process.

3. Theory Into Practice Essay (20 points) A well-organized and documented essay in which the student considers two learning theories we have studied in terms of how those theories apply to their particular practice.

4. Using Theory to Critique Practice (observation and theoretical critique – 20 points) Students will work with the instructor to identify a learning context relevant to their practice area in which they are able to observe the facilitation of an offering (class, training workshop, e.g.). Students will observe the offering, take observational notes, interview the facilitator, and gather curricular materials as they are able. Students will draw on at least two learning
theories to prepare a critical analysis of the offering. (Students may work in pairs for this activity, as approved by the Instructor).

5. Final Facilitated Dialogue (15 points). Within the final class session, students will provide a 10-minute presentation followed by 10-15 minute dialogue with class members regarding their journey in discovering how theories relate to their practice as facilitators of adult learning.

Overview of Class Sessions
One additional reading per class session will be added and available via D2L

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session Date</th>
<th>Topics and Activities</th>
<th>Assignments Due Before Following Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Session 1</td>
<td>The D2L site will be open by April 4. During the time before our first session on 4/18, the readings, reflection, and discussion post will lay the foundation for Session 1.</td>
<td>Read Chapters 2 and 3 of text. See Reflection Questions and Prompt for Discussion Post on D2L</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 18</td>
<td>What is theory and what it matters</td>
<td>Read Chapters 4 and 6 of text. Submit Reaction Essay On D2L by 4/24 Identify 2 possible observation sites</td>
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<td>Relationship of theory and practice</td>
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<td>Theories of learning</td>
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<td>Course overview</td>
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<td>Adult Learning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Theory 1: Andragogy</td>
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<td>Group Work: Andragogy’s Greatest Hits</td>
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<td>May 2</td>
<td>Theory 2: Self-Direction</td>
<td>Read Chapters 5 and 11 of Text Submit Reaction Essay on D2L by May 8</td>
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<td>Theory 3: Experiential Learning</td>
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<td>Group Work: Today’s Greatest Hits</td>
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<td>May 16</td>
<td>Theory 4: Transformational Learning</td>
<td>Read Chapters 7, 8, 9 of Text Submit Reaction Essay on D2L by May 22</td>
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<td>Theory 5: Critical Theory</td>
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<td>Theory enhancers: Motivation and Mindfulness</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Group Work: Today’s Greatest Hits</td>
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<td>May 30</td>
<td>Relating Theory to Practice to Theory</td>
<td>Submit Reaction Essay by</td>
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<td>Social Context for Adult Learning</td>
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EXPECTATIONS, POLICIES & OTHER RESOURCES

a. **Adult/Professional Engagement:** All course participants (students & instructors alike) are responsible for co-creating the learning space of this course—contributing individual uniquenesses while also modulating them for the sake of group learning. In this regard, *professional engagement* is expected from all—and particularly in areas of difference. Such engagement manifests itself through punctual attendance, thorough preparation, focused and respectful interactions (turning off electronic devices; curtailing side-conversations; active listening; informed contributions; probing questions; involved discussion; open-mindedness; etc.) as well as a high degree of both self-motivation and self-accountability. In addition, as adults, we are all responsible for **requesting what we need** to improve/sustain learning. The answer may be ‘yes’ or ‘no’---but, *not to request* is to leave the matter to chance. For additional information pertaining to DePaul’s Code of Student Responsibility, see: [http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/handbook/index.html](http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/handbook/index.html)

b. Students are expected to adhere to the University’s policy regarding academic integrity (involving plagiarism, cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty). Violations of academic integrity will be adjudicated in accordance with this policy. For additional information pertaining to Academic Integrity, see following link: [http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/AcademicIntegrityPolicy.pdf](http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/AcademicIntegrityPolicy.pdf).

c. **Attendance:** Attendance is of vital importance. The MAEA encourages participation in all sessions; if a session must be missed, the student takes responsibility for “catching up” and “making up” missed work. **If a student misses more than one full day session s/he needs to retake the course.** All class session start on time and end on time. You are expected to be present at the start of class to support the collaborative learning experience. Two late arrivals of more than 15 minutes will count as a half-day absence and could jeopardize your ability to pass the course. In accordance with adult/professional engagement (above) and, in particular, the importance of co-creating the learning space of this course, students are expected to participate and contribute within all class sessions.

d. **Citation Format:** SNL Graduate Programs has adopted the APA reference style for all papers, presentations, etc. See most recent edition of *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.*

e. **Classroom-based Research involving Human Subjects:** Students are expected, when conducting research through the auspices of this course, to exhibit concern for the confidentiality and protection of their research subjects—guaranteeing anonymity wherever possible. Should there be any possibility or intent to publish or otherwise disseminate data and findings of research associated with this course, students are required to file an application for review of their methods protocol with the IRB (Institutional Review Board) prior to beginning any data collection. For
f. **Incomplete Grade**: Students seeking an “incomplete” (due to unusual or unforeseeable circumstances not encountered by other students and as acceptable to the instructor) are to request such in accordance with the University’s policy regarding incompletes. To request an incomplete, students are to complete and submit the required form in advance of grading deadlines listed in the syllabus. Instructors are not obligated to accept all requests for incompletes. For additional information pertaining to “incompletes” (including required form), see following link: See [http://snl/StudentResources/Graduate_Resources/Grades.asp](http://snl/StudentResources/Graduate_Resources/Grades.asp).

g. **Learning Disabilities**: Students who have need of an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor as early in the course as possible for a private/confidential conversation. In addition, students should contact Plus Program (for LD, AD/HD) at 773-325-4239 or The Office for Students with Disabilities at 773-325-7290. See [http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/plus/index.asp](http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/plus/index.asp).

h. **Writing Assistance**: Students who wish assistance with their writing may seek such through the DePaul Writing Centers. These centers offer resources for student writers through both on-site and online services. Students are advised to consult the following links for information pertaining to writing assistance: [http://condor.depaul.edu/writing/index.html](http://condor.depaul.edu/writing/index.html) and/or [http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html](http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html).

**INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY – Donna Younger, Ed.D.**
Donna has served as an adult learning facilitator in a wide variety of roles and settings for more than thirty years. In higher education, she was a member of the resident faculty of SNL for 12 years and has taught in both the undergraduate and graduate programs as an adjunct faculty member for 14 years. Donna served as Dean of Academic Services at Oakton Community College from 2002-2012 where she led the effort to improve services to adult students and to implement a First Year Experience Program. More recently, Donna was Associate Vice-President for Higher Education at CAEL (Council for Adult and Experiential Learning) from 2014-2016 and continues to serve as a consultant for CAEL, working with academic institutions across sectors as well as with business and not-for-profit organizations. Donna’s particular areas for continuous inquiry for emotional and social competence and organizational development.