East Texas A & M University

OLT 554 - Principles of Adult Learning
COURSE SYLLABUS**:** Fall 2025

Instructor:	Dr. Shannon Pierce, DEd, MLS
Office Hours:	Virtual, daily (email for online appt.)
Preferred Form of Communication:	Email
Communication Response Time:	24 hours
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Course Description:

This course will explore the ways in which adults produce and use knowledge. This course provides an investigation of the theories related to adult learning. Critical analysis of selected theories and concepts of adult learning will be applied to the students' adult learning or workplace learning experiences.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Distinguish the differences between formal, nonformal, and informal learning.
2. Compare and contrast traditional learning theories.
3. Compare and contrast pedagogy and andragogy.
4. Identify the characteristics of adult learners.
5. Examine social interaction learning theories.
6. Describe some of the perspectives of participation as it relates to active learning.

Textbooks:

- Required: Merriam, S. B., & Bierema, L. L. (2014). Adult learning: Linking theory and practice. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Optional: Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th or 7th ed.). Washington, DC: APA.

Course Requirements

This is a fully online course. Assignments will be delivered via the D2L learning media platform. Knowledge of the substantive material covered in the course is of central importance. Grading will include consideration of content as well as grammar, spelling, organization, and explicit use of readings.

A serious commitment to mastery of the content and contribution to the learning is expected. An online course inherently requires students to be active, reflective, and contributive learners.

Assigned readings are noted within the module overview as well as extensive outside readings. Required module readings will serve as a basis for online discussion. Late submissions, one week past the due date WILL NOT be accepted, and each day late will incur 20% score deduction. I do understand that sometimes there are circumstances outside one's control that may impact timely submission of assignments, such as jury duty, hospitalization, or death of a family member. In these instances, a student is expected to notify the instructor BEFORE the assignment deadline.

Instructional Methods

This is a reading class in terms of adult learning theories, designed to stimulate the novel perspectives regarding training and development interventions for adult learners. You are required to read, think, and write in this course. It is expected that you read assigned chapters and articles carefully prior to class and that you actively participate in class discussion, complete reflection papers, and submit a final teaching philosophy paper.

All writing assignments in this course are based on your personal reflections. If you do not have any related experience, you may (a) imagine that you are in a similar hypothetical situation, (b) research how others behave by Googling or accessing other resources, or (c) ask others who would have similar experiences.

Work on your assignments according to the course schedule and submit suggested ways to the relevant assignment submission folder **(No PDF).**

Assignment Overview

- **Teaching Philosophy (120 points):** The teaching philosophy paper is a personal statement that introduces you as an educator while expressing your values and beliefs about teaching. The teaching philosophy paper is intended to be an opportunity for you to focus your thoughts to advance your perspective as a Master degree level training expert. Use it to develop your own understanding and meaning of the adult learning theories and perspectives addressed in this class. You need to submit ten pages (APA style) expressing your teaching philosophy based on your reflection in which you analyze and question new ideas in the context of your own experiences as an educator (or as a learner).

You choose one (or more) theories/perspectives (i.e. andragogy, self-directed learning, transformative learning, experiential learning, situated learning/community of practice, critical perspectives) that will be discussed in class. For an in-depth teaching philosophy, you could use literature that goes beyond the class readings.

- **Discussion Boards (6 at 20 points each = 120 points total):** Each student is required to post an original response to the discussion questions and reply to three original responses posted by classmates.
- **Reaction Papers (6 at 20 points each = 120 points total) :** Each student is to post a reaction paper for each module's reading assignment. Summarize the reading in your own words and note any insights you have gained (i.e.; note where you agree or disagree with the author and why). Reaction paper is learning by thinking about one's experiences. Reaction papers are not intended to be research papers, but you are expected to use course materials and additional readings to develop your thoughts. As a professional development tool, reaction paper involves questioning new ideas in the context of one's own experiences as an educator and as a learner.

American Psychological Association (APA) 6th or 7th edition formatting is required for all writing assignments.

Grading: Total 360 points (A > 90%, B > 80%, C > 70%)

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Browser support

D2L is committed to performing key application testing when new browser versions are released. New and updated functionality is also tested against the latest version of supported browsers. However, due to the frequency of some browser releases, D2L cannot guarantee that each browser version will perform as expected. If you encounter any issues with any of the browser versions listed in the tables below, contact D2L Support, who will determine the best course of action for resolution. Reported issues are prioritized by supported browsers and then maintenance browsers.

Supported browsers are the latest or most recent browser versions that are tested against new versions of D2L products. Customers can report problems and receive support for issues. For an optimal experience, D2L recommends using supported browsers with D2L products.

Maintenance browsers are older browser versions that are not tested extensively against new versions of D2L products. Customers can still report problems and receive support for critical issues; however, D2L does not guarantee all issues will be addressed. A maintenance browser becomes officially unsupported after one year.

Note the following:

- Ensure that your browser has JavaScript and Cookies enabled.

- For desktop systems, you must have Adobe Flash Player 10.1 or greater.

- The Brightspace Support features are now optimized for production environments when using the Google Chrome browser, Apple Safari browser, Microsoft Edge browser, Microsoft Internet Explorer browser, and Mozilla Firefox browsers.

Desktop Support

Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)	Maintenance Browser Version(s)
Microsoft® Edge	Latest	N/A
Microsoft® Internet Explorer®	N/A	11
Mozilla® Firefox®	Latest, ESR	N/A
Google® Chrome™	Latest	N/A
Apple® Safari®	Latest	N/A

Tablet and Mobile Support

Device	Operating System	Browser	Supported BrowserVersion(s)
Android™	Android 4.4+	Chrome	Latest
Apple	iOS®	Safari, Chrome	The current major version of iOS (the latest minor or **point**release of that major version) and the previous major version of iOS (the latest minor or **point** release of that major version). For example, as of June 7, 2017, D2Lsupports iOS 10.3.2 and iOS 9.3.5, but not iOS 10.2.1, 9.0.2, or any other version.

Device	Operating System	Browser	Supported BrowserVersion(s)
			Chrome: Latest version for the iOS browser.
Windows	Windows 10	Edge, Chrome, Firefox	Latest of all browsers, and Firefox ESR.

- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:

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    - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
    - Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
    - Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution

- You must have a:
  - Sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer
  - Speakers or headphones.
  - *For courses utilizing video-conferencing tools and/or an online proctoring solution, a webcam and microphone are required.

- Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. At a minimum Java 7, update 51, is required to support the learning management system. The most current version of Java can be downloaded at: JAVA web site http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp

- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.

Running the browser check will ensure your internet browser is supported.

Pop-ups are allowed.

JavaScript is enabled.

Cookies are enabled.

- You will need some additional free software (plug-ins) for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
  - Adobe Reader https://get.adobe.com/reader/
  - Adobe Flash Player *(version 17 or later)* https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/
  - Adobe Shockwave Player   https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/
  - Apple Quick Time   http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

- At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note**:** Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Brightspace Support

Need Help?

Student Support

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778 or click on the **Live Chat** or click on the words "click here**"** to submit an issue via email.

System Maintenance

Please note that on the 4th Sunday of each month there will be System Maintenance which means the system will not be available 12 pm-6 am CST.

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Email in the best way to contact the instructor. Course shell also provides a way to share content related questions and help needs through multiple discussion forums. If the instructor cannot be reached during office hours and talking over the phone is helpful, leaving a voice mail or emailing the instructor leaving the best date, time, and phone number to reach will be most effective.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

The instructor will make every effort to grade an exam and the final project in time. If an unusual delay should occur, such as illness or a conference travel, instructor availability and expected timeline/response will be shared as course announcement in the course shell. The course has no extra-credit assignment.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Student Guidebook.

http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:Netiquette http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the Attendance webpage and Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01.

http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx

http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf)

http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10.pdf)

http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10.pdf

ADA Statement

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University

Gee Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/)

http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M University Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#)

document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M University campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health: The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.