This course supports the assessments for Learning Theories. The course covers 5 competencies and represents 2 competency units.

Introduction

Overview

This course focuses on the complexity of the current learning environment and how behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism, and personal learning philosophy can assist in the development of appropriate curriculum and instruction.

Getting Started

Welcome to Learning Theories! In this course, you will learn why educators must have a firm grasp on how students learn and why it is critical to apply these theories in instruction in order to meet the needs of all students in various instructional settings. The primary learning environment is Soomo, which includes text, videos, practices exercises and other tools to support your learning. Competency will be demonstrated by the successful completion of the three tasks in Taskstream.

Competencies

This course provides guidance to help you demonstrate the following 5 competencies:

- **Competency 509.3.1: Behaviorism**
  The graduate evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of Behaviorism as a learning theory, including its contribution to the profession of education.

- **Competency 509.3.2: Cognitivism**
  The graduate evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of Cognitivism as a learning theory, including its contribution to the profession of education.

- **Competency 509.3.3: Constructivism**
  The graduate evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of Constructivism as a learning theory, including its contribution to the profession of education.

- **Competency 509.3.4: Learning Theory and Instruction**
  The graduate evaluates specific instruction in terms of the appropriateness and effectiveness of the learning theory underlying its design.

- **Competency 509.3.5: Personal Learning Theory**
  The graduate performs a self-assessment of his or her own beliefs regarding how learning occurs, evaluating the impact on the effective design and delivery of instruction.

Teaching Dispositions Statement

Please review the [WGU Statement of Teaching Dispositions](#).

Course Instructor Assistance

You should expect to work with course instructors for the duration of your coursework, and you are encouraged to contact them as soon as you begin. Course instructors are fully committed to your success!
Preparing for Success

The information in this section is provided to detail the resources available for you to use as you complete this course.

Learning Resources

The learning resources listed in this section are required to complete the activities in this course.

In some of the following resources, you may read about No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Please be aware that as of December 2015, President Barack Obama replaced NCLB with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). For additional information, please visit the following links from the U.S. Department of Education:

- Webinar recording
- Read about ESSA
- Fact sheet on ESSA
- Transition Letter

Automatically Enrolled Resources

You can access the learning resources listed in this section by clicking on the links provided throughout the course. You may be prompted to log in to the WGU student portal to access some resources.

Soomo Learning Environment

- Learning Theories

This learning environment will contain links at the activity level to the following additional learning resources:

VitalSource E-Texts located within the Soomo Learning Environment


Note: These e-texts are available to you as part of your program tuition and fees, but you may purchase a hard copy at your own expense through VitalSource or a retailer of your choice. If you choose to do so, please use the ISBN listed to ensure that you receive the correct edition. The following sites provide instruction on how to create a VitalSource account, use features such as downloading your e-texts for offline use, and purchase a print-on-demand option, if available.

VitalSource Navigational Video
Supplemental Resources

Below you will find the link to Planning Effective Instruction. This text, while not a required textbook for Learning Theories, provides very helpful discussion related to writing objectives, a critical component of the WGU Lesson Plan format that you will use for this and future courses. Please consider reading chapters 1–5 to gain additional lesson plan context.


Pacing Guide

Following the pacing guide will help you complete the course in the suggested timeframe.

Week 1

- Preparing for Success
- Reflective Teaching
- Reflecting on the Current Educational Environment
- Integrating key principles of behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism
- Behaviorism Learning Theory

Week 2

- Personal Learning Philosophy Practical Application
- Complete Task One in TaskStream – include both WGU formatted lesson plan and essay components.

Week 3

- Cognitivism Learning Theory
- Constructivism Learning Theory
- Comparing Behaviorism, Cognitivism, and Constructivism

Week 4

- Complete Task Two in TaskStream – include both WGU formatted lesson plan and essay components.

Week 5

- Complete Task Three in TaskStream – include WGU formatted lesson plans and essay components.

Note: This pacing guide does not replace the course. Please continue to refer to the course for a comprehensive list of the resources and activities.
The Current Educational Climate

Educators and educational systems must meet the learning needs of every student in today's learning environment. This requires that educators learn more about the students both inside and outside of their instructional setting. Some of the questions educators may want to ask include:

- Who are the students of today?
- How does understanding demographics inform the development of curriculum and instruction in your instructional setting?
- What are your personal views of how students learn?
- How do student characteristics impact student learning?

This section will provide educators with an opportunity to learn more about reflective teaching in order to develop appropriate curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of the students in today's educational climate.

Reflective Teaching

Every educator has a certain understanding of how students learn based on an individual, biased perspective. If educators do not understand their own biases they may make decisions about curriculum content and instruction that might not be in the best interest of students.

Reflection can help educators understand the biases they bring to the instructional setting. Reflecting on your teaching is critical for student learning and requires certain knowledge, skills, and attitudes. One hallmark of an effective educator is the ability to reflect on curriculum content and instruction before, during, and after each lesson. The learning activities for this topic will guide you to the knowledge and skills needed for reflective teaching.

Read and Complete

- Reflective Teaching

Reflecting on the Current Educational Environment

In this topic, you will reflect on how student differences, cultural diversity, and Special Education impacts the development, design, and implementation of curriculum and instruction.

Read and Complete

- Reflecting on the Current Educational Environment

Learning Theories

No Child Left Behind, recently replaced with the Every Student Succeeds Act, placed new demands on K-12 educational systems to educate every child, and these new expectations push forward, impacting the post-secondary and workplace educational settings in some circumstances as well. This demand has caused educators to research the social and cognitive development of children in order to provide the most appropriate curriculum and delivery of instruction. The research on learning is never stagnant. It is very complex, and it varies as it is
applied to practical settings. As research on learning grows, it will continue to challenge educational systems to develop appropriate curriculum and delivery of instruction to meet the needs of all learners. This course of study will provide you with research on learning theories and opportunities to apply this knowledge to real-life settings.

**Behaviorism**
Learning theory provides educators an opportunity to reflect on the mysteries of the learning process. You will study behaviorism and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the development and modification of curriculum and instruction most appropriate to various instructional settings.

**Read and Complete**

- **Behaviorism**
- **Personal Learning Philosophy** – 7.2 Practical Application: Developing Lesson Plans (scroll to bottom to access)
- Watch the “Lesson Plan” video in section 7.2
- Download the Lesson Plan template from Taskstream
- Write your first WGU-formatted lesson plan

**Cognitivism**
Learning theory provides educators an opportunity to reflect on the mysteries of the learning process. You will study cognitivism and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the development and modification of curriculum and instruction most appropriate to various instructional settings.

**Read and Complete**

- **Cognitivism**

**Constructivism**
Learning theory provides educators an opportunity to reflect on the mysteries of the learning process. You will study constructivism and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the development and modification of curriculum and instruction most appropriate to various instructional settings.

**Read and Compete**

- **Constructivism**

**Comparing Behaviorism, Cognitivism, and Constructivism**
Learning theory provides educators an opportunity to reflect on the mysteries of the learning process. You will compare and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism in the development and modification of curriculum and instruction most appropriate to various instructional settings.

**Read and Complete**

- **Comparing Behaviorism, Cognitivism, and Constructivism**
- Complete Task 1 in Taskstream, including both a WGU formatted lesson plan and an accompanying academic essay

**Philosophy of Learning**
Being an educator requires deep reflection on one's own biases about how people learn. You will have an opportunity to further refine your personal philosophy of learning according to the research on learning theories as you apply them to real-world curriculum and instructional settings.

**Personal Learning Philosophy**
Creating a positive learning environment requires a reflection of one's own personal philosophy. The following resources will allow you the opportunity to take into account learning theory as you reflect on your personal philosophy in the design and development of curriculum and instruction.

**Read and Complete**

- [Personal Learning Philosophy](#)
- Complete Task 2 in TaskStream, including both a WGU formatted lesson plan and an accompanying academic essay
- Complete Task 3 in TaskStream, including two lesson plans (one elementary and one secondary) and an accompanying academic essay

**Final Steps**

Congratulations on completing the activities in this course! This course has prepared you to complete the assessments associated with this course. If you have not already been directed to complete the assessments, schedule and complete your assessments now.