

FACILITATING ADULT LEARNING

(Special Section for School Psychology Program)

Summer, 2007

HRD 630
(207) 780-5312

E. Michael Brady
mbrady@usm.maine.edu

I. Course Description

This course examines the theory and practice of facilitating adult learning. The aim of the course is to develop a working knowledge of numerous approaches to facilitation including analysis of students' strengths and weaknesses in particular learning contexts. Special emphasis will be placed on developing skills in making presentations and leading group discussions.

II. Goals of the Course

By way of this course participants will . . .

1. . . . be able to describe the characteristics of effective teaching of adults.
2. . . . articulate their own philosophy of facilitating adult learning.
3. . . . develop skills in conducting a lecture/presentation and facilitating a group discussion. These sessions will be videotaped and critiqued.
4. . . . increase knowledge of issues related to both content and process in facilitation of adult learning. Activities in goal #3 (above) will be based on a wide range of substantive issues related to teaching (see Appendix A).
5. . . . grow in understanding the relationship between facilitation of learning and adult education theory.

III. Major Questions Upon Which This Course is Based

1. What constitutes effective teaching and, specifically the facilitation of learning among adults?
2. Why should I teach? What is its purpose and value?

3. How does adult learning theory relate to facilitation? How does the way I learn relate to the way I teach?
4. What are the effective approaches to presenting information and leading group discussions?
5. How can I improve my skills as a facilitator of adult learning?

III. Required Readings

Brookfield, S. and Preskill, S. (2nd Ed.) (2005). *Discussion as a way of teaching: tools and techniques for democratic classrooms*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Nagel, G. (1994). *The Tao of teaching*. New York: Donald Fine.

V. Recommended Readings

There are a substantial number of monographs, periodicals, and studies on the subject of facilitating of adult learning. A partial list of sources may be found in Appendix B.

VI. Requirements for Completion of the Course

1. Each member of the course will read the required books and come to class prepared to discuss the topics at hand. Within-class participation is an important component of this learning experience.
2. Each participant in the seminar will conduct one lecture/presentation (approximately 20 minutes) and lead one group discussion (approximately 30 minutes) on a topic related to facilitating adult learning. For a partial list of topics which may be of interest, see Appendix A. These sessions will be videotaped for students' use in self-evaluation. Immediate in-class feedback by fellow seminar members will also be provided. All members of the seminar are responsible for providing helpful and guiding criticism. Individuals will submit a 750 – 1000 word self-evaluation one week after each of their facilitation activities. These self-evaluations will include appropriate references to readings and class discussions, integration of the oral and written feedback received from peers, reflections on watching oneself on video, and will conclude with an action plan to improve one's facilitation skills.
3. Each member of the course will choose one book on the art/science of facilitating adult learning from the annotated list of recommended books (Appendix B) or elsewhere and write a 750 – 1000 word book review. The review should include a basic summary of the book and a critique. Making connections to issues treated in

HRD 630 is encouraged. In addition to the written review, a brief oral presentation on the book will be made in class.

4. At the end of the course participants will write a summative self-evaluation (Learning Synthesis Report), between 1500 – 2000 words in length, which articulates content learned and skills developed this semester. A set of cues/guidelines for this self-evaluation will be provided toward the end of the course. Data sources to consider for writing this reflective essay include oral and written feedback from classmates on the lecture/presentation and group discussion facilitation, review of one's own videotapes, and reflections on teaching technique and philosophy gained through reading.

In Summary, the following processes/products are required for successful completion of this course:

1. Deliver one 20-minute lecture/presentation
2. Written reflection/evaluation of #1
3. Facilitate one 30-minute group discussion
4. Written reflection/evaluation of #3
5. Written book review
6. Brief oral presentation of #5
7. Written summative evaluation (LSR)

VII. Use of *Blackboard* Software

Since this is a blended or “hybrid” course, e.g., we will be using video conferencing, on campus “face-to-face” sessions, and online discussions, *Blackboard* is an essential tool in HRD 630. While there will be other applications the primary ways we shall use *Blackboard* will be to discuss ideas about and strategies for teaching and debriefing the course readings.

VIII. Policy on Incompleteness

While the instructor will grant an “I” grade to those who are unable to complete all their work by the end of the term, all members of the course are encouraged to complete HRD 630 on time.

IX. General Grading Policy

The final grade for this course will be determined by a combination of factors: one's participation in the class discussions, the quality of the lecture/presentation and group facilitation, the book review, written reflection/evaluations, and final Learning Synthesis Report.

X. Accommodations

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please see Mike as soon as possible. At any point in the semester, if you encounter difficulty with the course or feel you could be performing at a higher level, consult with him. Students experience difficulty in courses for a number of reasons. For problems with writing skills or time management, make an appointment to see a student tutor at The Learning Center, Luther Bonney, 2nd floor (Portland Campus) by calling 780-4228. Help is also available through the Counseling Center, 106 Payson Smith (780-4050) and the Office of Academic Support for Students with Disabilities, Luther Bonney, 2nd floor (780-4706).

XI. Relationship Between HRD 630 and CEHD Mission

Reflection and Critical Inquiry - This course invites students to critically examine teaching/facilitation practices and the reasons for those practices based upon sound adult education theory.

Diversity - Issues involving gender, age, race, class, and/or sexual orientation are crucial variables in facilitating learning. These issues are addressed in selected readings in the course and will be explored in discussions. Additionally, students may choose to focus specific attention on issues related to diversity in either or both of their facilitations.

Connections and Partnerships - It is not the goal of this course to be field-based or to extend connections into the community. However, students are encouraged to take the facilitation skills they develop in HRD 630 and bring them into service in schools and community agencies (concurrently or at a later time).

Performance Assessment - Outcomes of this course are two in-class facilitations (with peer and faculty feedback), a written book report, and a final evaluation essay which articulates the theoretical learning and skill-development achieved in the course.

COURSE OUTLINE

Thursday, May 17	Introduction of Participants Review of the syllabus Critical Incident Questionnaire
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Note: This class will be held via “Video Conference” technology from various campuses and satellites within the University of Maine System. The class will meet from 1:00 – 3:30 PM.

Between May 17 and June 22, we shall discuss issues related to the facilitation of adult learning, debrief course readings, and prepare for the first on-campus facilitation (e.g., “lecture/presentation) by using *Blackboard*.

Outline key themes for each week of discussion??

Week of May 21 –

Week of May 28 -

Etc.

January 22	Introduction of participants Review of the syllabus Critical Incident Questionnaire
January 29	Nominal Group Technique: “What are the characteristics of an effective facilitator of adult learning?” Small group exercise with “Facts/Foundations”
February 5	Critical Incident: Establishing standards for effective presentations Providing constructive feedback and other issues related to upcoming student lectures/presentations
February 12	Three lectures/presentations with videotaping and critique Note: It is critical that we adhere to a strict schedule: #1 = 7:05 - 7:50 ; break from 7:50 - 8:00; #2 = 8:00 - 8:45 ; #3 = 8:45 - 9:30
February 19	No Class - Winter Break
February 26	Three lectures/presentations
March 5	Three lectures/presentations
March 12	Remaining lectures/presentations Debrief first phase of facilitations
March 19	Collaborative learning experience on the art

and science of group facilitation

March 26	No Class - Spring Break
April 2	Sharing of book reviews Issues in preparation for group facilitations
April 9	Three discussion facilitations
April 16	Three discussion facilitations
April 23	Three discussion facilitations
April 30	Remaining discussion facilitations Conclusions and course evaluation
May 7	Reserve date (in case of a class cancellation due to snow) <u>All papers due</u> in order to avoid receiving an “Incomplete”

APPENDIX A

ISSUES RELATED TO TEACHING / FACILITATION FROM WHICH TO CHOOSE TOPICS . . .

Preparing a syllabus . . . The use of advance organizers . . . Ethics in teaching . . .
Use of assigned readings . . . Learning contracts . . . Teaching via case studies . . .
Uses of writing . . . Use of computers in class . . . Risk-taking in adult learning . . .
Enhancing motivation . . . Effective use of PowerPoint . . . Mind maps . . .
A specific philosophy of teaching . . . Designing curriculum . . . Questioning skills . . .
Providing constructive feedback . . . Journal writing . . . Evaluating performance . . .

How to deal with the overly quiet student . . . And/or the overly vocal one . . .

On-line teaching and learning . . . Issues in co-facilitation . . . Mentoring . . .

Facilitation through listening . . . Cooperative Learning . . . “Playful” teaching . . .

“The teachable moment” . . . Using role play . . . Use of overhead transparencies . . .

Effective flipcharts . . . Culturally diverse audiences . . . Fostering self-assessment . . .

Appropriate use of handout materials . . . Teaching to multiple intelligences . . .

Gender differences . . . Selecting books and learning resources . . . Portfolios . . .

Student-centered learning . . . Creating a healthy learning environment . . .

Experiential learning . . . Transformation through teaching and learning . . . Or . . .

Is there some other issue, theme, or question you would like to explore in your lecture/presentation or group facilitation? Feel free to choose one that is not on this list, as long as it links in some manner to the overall themes of facilitation or adult education.

APPENDIX B

AN ANNOTATED LIST OF RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Beidler, P.G. (1986). *Distinguished teachers on effective teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Part of the publisher’s “New Directions for Teaching and Learning” series, this volume consists of a series of reflections by college professors who were selected to contribute essays on the basis of their reputation as excellent teachers. More in the genre of the inspirational and philosophical than the practical.

Brookfield, S. (1990). *The skillful teacher*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Although older now, this remains an often-referenced text within the genre of adult education/teaching literature. This highly acclaimed teacher and scholar offers practical guidelines for lecturing, facilitating discussions, and dealing with special problems in teaching. Brookfield is clear and easily understandable and does a nice job mixing research findings with practical advice.

Brookfield, S. (1995). *Becoming a critically reflective teacher*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

This could be considered the sequel to the author's 1990 book. More focus here on reflective practice and self-knowledge. Introduces the reader to concepts such as teaching diaries, "good practice audits," and structured critical conversation.

Christensen, C.R., Garvin, D.A., and Sweet, A. (Eds.). (1991). *Education for judgment: the artistry of discussion leadership*. Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press

This is a marvelous book of essays about facilitating discussions based on the experiences of numerous teachers at Harvard and elsewhere. Well written and insightful. For many years this book was a core (required) text in HRD 630.

Cranton, P. (2000). *Planning instruction for adult learners*. (2nd Edition). Toronto: Wall & Emerson.

This book is written by a well-respected Canadian adult educator. As the title suggests, Cranton's book is about planning for teaching - how to formulate objectives, select methods, choose appropriate teaching materials, design evaluation strategies, etc. There are also several good introductory chapters about adult learners and learning.

Daloz, L.A. (1999). *Mentor: Guiding the journey of adult learners*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

This is a re-issue of a 1986 book written by Daloz entitled *Effective Teaching and Mentoring*. In the 13 ensuing years the author only made minor changes and, in this rare case, I say that's a good thing. The original 1986 text is one of my all-time favorite books about teaching adults. A key focus of *Mentor* is learning as a transformational journey. The author uses many compelling examples from his own years of practice as a teacher (mostly in higher education.) Luminaries such as Stephen Brookfield, Parker Palmer, and Sharan Merriam consider this book to be noteworthy.

Davis, B.G. (1993). *Tools for teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

A book similar to McKeachie's *Teaching tips*, this is intended to be a "handbook" for the aspiring instructor or experienced one who wants to improve her/his craft. The author offers pointers on a wide range of practical issues facing the classroom facilitator.

Fenstermacher, G. (1992). *Approaches to teaching*. New York: Teachers College.

A well-written book which describes and contrasts three approaches to teaching (executive, humanistic, and liberationist). Several case studies of teaching are presented for reader reflection.

Galbraith, M.W. (Ed) (2004). *Adult learning methods: A guide for effective instruction* (3rd Edition).. Malabar, FL.: Krieger

Contributors to this edited volume include many of the luminaries in the field of adult education, including Brookfield, Caffarella, Marsick, and Wlodkowski. The book is divided into two parts: (1) "Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning" with chapters that address theoretical, research, and design issues; (2) "Methods and Techniques" which treats numerous topics we explore in HRD 630 - lecture, discussion, critical thinking, mentorship . . .

Gullette, M. (Ed.). (1984). *The art and craft of teaching*. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press.

This edited volume collects numerous essays from faculty at the Harvard-Danforth Center for Teaching and Learning. Useful suggestions for improving teaching skills (i.e., lecturing, asking questions, grading and evaluation).

Heimlich, J. and Norland, E. (1994). *Developing teaching style in adult education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

A book about the hard-to-define phenomenon of “teaching style.” The authors explore the confluence of personality traits, environment, learning community, subject matter, and students as constituents of an instructor’s style.

Herman, L. and Mandell, A. (2004). *From teaching to mentoring: Principle and practice, dialogue and life in adult education*. London: Routledge.

This book, co-authored by two professors at Empire State College (the State of New York’s independent/distance learning higher education program), is essentially about the art and science of mentoring. Especially interesting chapters include “Asking Questions” and “Waiting as Mentoring.”

Hooks, Bell (1994). *Teaching to transgress*. New York/London: Routledge.

This is a collection of essays written by a noted African-American scholar about values in education, the spiritual role of teachers, and racism and sexism in the classroom. Includes thoughts on critical pedagogy, feminist theory, and Paulo Freire. The gift of freedom - freedom to think critically - is the teacher’s most important goal.

Intrator, S. and Scribner, M. (Eds.) (2003). *Teaching with fire: poetry that sustains the courage to teach*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Eighty-eight poems cherished by teachers (K – college) are shared in this inspirational volume. Alongside each poem is a narrative reflection offered by the teacher who contributed the poem. Each reflection explains why the particular poem is important and how it related to that individual’s experience of teaching.

Jackson, P.W. (1986). *The practice of teaching*. New York: Teachers College.

Contains an excellent chapter reflecting on what one needs to know in order to teach. Another chapter reflects upon the challenge of being uncertain of how effective our teaching is and discusses how teachers can use questions for evaluation.

Jarvis, P. (2004). *Adult education and lifelong learning: theory and practice*. London/New York: Routledge Falmer.

This well-known sociologist of education creates a rationale for the provision of learning opportunities for adults. The book provides a conceptual framework for lifelong learning and several theoretical perspectives on teaching adults. Offers an international perspective with special insight into adult education in the United Kingdom.

Kampol, Barry (1994). *Critical pedagogy: an introduction*. Westport, CT.: Bergin and Garvey.

This is part of a series of critical studies in education and culture edited by Henry Giroux and Paulo Freire. Introduces the concept of critical pedagogy in the context of postmodern education. The author works to elucidate the often confusing language of critical theory. Focus is more on traditional school culture (K – 12) than adult educ.

Knowles, M.S. (1990). *The adult learner: a neglected species*. Houston: Gulf Pub.

An extension of Knowles' more famous *The modern practice of adult education*, the author outlines his theory of andragogy and makes a special effort to connect it with the practice of teaching. He also discusses applications of andragogy in the profession of teaching/HRD.

Knox, A. (1986). *Helping adults learn*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

The author attempts to cover a broad set of issues related to facilitating adult learners, such as needs assessment, using instructional materials, and providing challenging interactions. Each topic is discussed with many specific, concrete suggestions from which the reader can choose.

Ko, S. and Rossen, S. (2004) *Teaching online: a practical guide*(2nd Edition). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

This is a useful handbook that guides the reader through all phases of teaching online. Chapters are dedicated to issues such as course conversion, creating an effective online syllabus, special issues in classroom management, and copyright and intellectual property in the online environment.

Long, Huey. (2002) *Teaching for Learning*. Malabar, FL.: Krieger Publishing.

This book, written by an adult education teacher and scholar with more than 35 years of experience, is based on the thesis that teaching requires results, i.e. learning. Of special note are Long's "philosophical principles" and "energizing principles." At the end of this book the author shares a number of activities and tools for working with adult learners.

Lowman, J. (1984). *Mastering the techniques of teaching*. San Francisco: J-Bass.

Though written with college instructors in mind, this book contains several practical suggestions in the areas of lecturing and leading classroom discussions. Lowman advocates a two-dimensional model of teaching similar to task and maintenance roles often mentioned for group discussions.

McKeachie, W.J. (2002). *Teaching tips: strategies, research, and theory for college and university teachers* (11th Edition). Boston, MA.: Houghton Mifflin

An amazingly long-lived primer designed for the beginning college teacher. Many practical "tips" (yes – the title is accurate) about course design, facilitation, and related issues such as assessment, use of technology, etc. Integrated with the practice suggestions are research findings about teaching and learning. For years this book was a core text in HRD 630.

Merriam, S. and Caffarella, R. (2007). *Learning in adulthood*. (3rd Ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

This is an important book in the general field of adult education/learning in that the authors review, in substantial detail, salient research and theory. They focus much of their attention on learning contexts, characteristics of adult learners, and the learning process. While not explicitly a book about teaching, it provides a valuable context for understanding appropriate roles of facilitators of adult learning.

Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative dimensions of adult learning*. S.F.: Jossey-Bass.

The man who conceptualized the theory of transformational learning explicates dimensions of his work in this book. Mezirow discusses the concept of meaning-making, distorted assumptions, perspective transformation, and other important aspects of his well-known work.

Palmer, Parker (1983). *To know as we are known: education as a spiritual journey*. San Francisco: Harper/Collins.

A thoughtful series of essays about how heart and mind can work together in the learning process. Debunks “objective knowledge” in favor of a more inclusive and holistic understanding of what is known by human beings. Beautifully written with numerous references to poetry, philosophy, and theology.

Palmer, Parker (1998). *The courage to teach: eExploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

In some ways, this may be considered a sequel to Palmer's 1983 book. The author picks up on themes developed earlier (the “heart” of teaching, connected vs. disconnected knowing, the building of community . . .) and develops them sensitively and artfully. Palmer has emerged in recent years as a “guru” of teaching and is a highly sought after lecturer and consultant.

Palmer, Parker (2000). *Let your life speak: listening for the voice of vocation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

This brief text reads like a “meditation” on the theme of vocation. Like Palmer's 2004 book (below), this volume is not explicitly about teaching although many ideas the author explores may clearly be related to teaching. Palmer makes the point that vocation does not derive from willfulness as much as it does from listening. Other issues on which he reflects are the importance of holding onto mystery, working with fear, and dealing effectively with one's personal limitations.

Palmer, Parker (2004). *A hidden wholeness: the journey toward an undivided life*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

The most recent book by this famous teacher/writer which, like the volume described above, speaks to issues in teaching more indirectly than directly. Clearly, however, many of the themes explored here - rejoining soul with role, communities of solitude, the power of metaphor, circles of trust, learning to speak and listen - may be applied to the art and craft of teaching.

Rogers, C. (1983). *Freedom to learn*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co.

This is Rogers' classic statement (originally published in 1969) about the nature of learning which has helped to define the humanistic tradition in adult education. Advocates his "student-centered" approach to teaching and learning. This is where Rogers makes his frequently quoted statement about the overestimation of the importance of teaching.

Schon, D.A. (1977). *Educating the reflective practitioner*. San Francisco: J-Bass.

An interesting approach to professional continuing education which stresses the capacity of adult learners to reflect before taking action ("reflection-in-action") in cases where questions cannot be easily answered with established theories.

Silberman, M. (1998). *Active training: a handbook of techniques, designs, case examples, and tips. (Second Edition)*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer.

A "best seller" in the world of training, the author sets three goals: (1) to explore a comprehensive training model (2) to promote an active approach to training (3) to provide practical techniques. This is very much a "handbook" with many lists of best practices as well as exhibits, questionnaires, and exercises.

Strike, K. and Soltis, J. (1992). *The ethics of teaching*. N.Y.: Teachers College Press.

A thought-provoking book dealing with ethical issues such as punishment and due process, intellectual freedom, and equal treatment of students. Supplemental case studies for reader reflection or group discussion round out the book.

Wlodkowski, R.J. (1999). *Enhancing adult motivation to learn: A guide to improving instruction and increasing achievement. (Revised Ed.)* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

The author suggests that every instructional plan should include a thorough and detailed motivational plan, focusing on six specific, sequential areas (attitudes, needs, stimulation, emotions, competence, and reinforcement). A useful framework/model from which to approach helping to motivate learners.