Course Description

This course is a doctoral level graduate seminar that focuses on critical conceptual and empirical issues facing training and development in the workplace. The course is structured around major training themes such as training needs assessment, design, evaluation and transfer as well as addressing key questions in the field regarding learning and transfer of learning to the job. The course is not designed to "train" trainers but to give participants an appreciation for the critical research issues that must be addressed in the training literature. To appreciate these issues, participants will also be involved in projects designed to simulate the practical issues and constraints in designing a training and development program.

Why a Course on Workplace Training in Psychology?

Many businesses are spending an increasing amount of money on learning activities and training to increase competitiveness and to improve services. Organizational Psychologists can play various roles relevant to improving the quality and effectiveness of employee training. These include: (1) the development of theoretical perspectives and models of what is meant by learning and transfer; (2) the derivation of testable models and the conduct of empirical research on the factors that impact learning during training and the transfer of training to the job; (3) the identification, design, delivery, evaluation, and improvement of training programs; and (4) the study of key issues beyond individual training to broader issues of team training and organizational change and development.

On a more personal note, I became interested in the development of people in the workplace after taking an undergraduate course in Industrial and Organizational Psychology. My interest in training and development continued through graduate school and has led to a major focus of my research and practice efforts since becoming a faculty member. My hope is that this class stimulates you thinking about developing people in the workplace and that you find a career doing what you enjoy as I have in working with training related issues in the workplace.

Course Readings

Assigned readings

Course Structure

The course is structured around core research questions as well as key principles for improving training effectiveness. You will gain an understanding of how individuals have researched issues of
training and development across Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Applied Cognitive Psychology, Education, and other related fields. This includes increasing your knowledge of what key criteria researchers have been interested in predicting (e.g., learning and transfer of learning) as well as the factors that impact knowledge and skill acquisition and its application to the job. You will be exposed to conceptual papers and rigorous empirical research. In addition, you will become involved in a project that calls for developing a training program. The project will enhance your skills in terms of putting together a coherent learning program for employees in an existing job. There is a separate handout that explains the steps in the project that are to be completed.

From a process perspective, this course is organized around principles of high participation and customization. This means that I, as an instructor, have the responsibility of organizing the class and helping to guide you to new levels of knowledge and skill relevant to the area of training and development. I strongly believe that people learn through taking the initiative and actively participating in shared endeavors. The course has embedded many opportunities for you to work with others in your class to gain greater levels of understanding about course content. As students in the class, you will be asked to take an active role in (1) facilitating/leading discussions; (2) linking new concepts/readings with past concepts/readings; and (3) helping with the process of documenting “best practice” principles and guidelines as the class progresses. It is as Rigoff & Associates (2003, Annual Review of Psychology) has discussed as an active inquiry process with a collaborative, horizontal participation structure with fluid responsibilities. The success of this journey depends on the motivation of all of us (me included!) to make it a success!

Course Expectations

Active participation in class discussions is expected – it is why you are here! You (and I) are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. I will often give you questions to think about as you are reading the material to prepare you for the class discussions. In addition, you are expected to complete many pre-class assignments. Of course, you are also expected to come to every class as we have much to learn! Feedback regarding participation is available upon request at any time. Do not be surprised if I come up to you at some point to encourage you to participate even more!

Key Course Assignments

1. Complete assignments and active participation. You will be asked to participate in many ways in the class. All students will (1) lead a discussion about a research paper(s) from readings for that week (facilitator role), (2) take the role of an “historian”(determine how material we are looking at one week links back to previously learned content) and (3) take on a guider role by helping document best practice principles and guidelines of the factors impacting learning and effective training and (4) asked to come prepared (or write up) to discuss the article you choose to focus on for the week and what it added to the article that all students read that week.

2. Complete a research paper (about 10 pages):
(a) take one of the meta-analyses from class (ones down before 2016) and look upstream at key papers that have cited the meta-analysis and write a paper that documents what was found in the meta-analysis and what we have learned since then (what reinforces findings of the meta-analysis, what might challenge a conclusion from the meta-analysis, what adds new knowledge that was not able to be tested in the meta-analysis etc.

OR

(b) take a paper that you liked from the course and look upstream at key papers that have cited that original paper and discuss what was found in the original paper, what has been found since that paper that reinforces what was found in the original paper, challenges the findings, adds to the findings etc.

3. Develop a practice oriented article (6 to 10 pages) that takes research findings and translates it into practical recommendations for improving training (from the meta-analyses or from a set of readings on a particular topic that would be of interest to training practitioners). The practical recommendation can come out of your research project (e.g., if you looked at error management research since the meta-analysis you could write up a practice oriented paper illuminating how to incorporate errors into training).

4. Training project. Participants will work as part of a two person team to complete assigned work relevant to developing a training program. The project will include conducting a needs assessment, writing training objectives, designing a training program, and developing methods of evaluation. A separate handout on the training project will be provided that explains the steps to be completed. Although you will be part of a “team”, much of the work for the project can be completed on an individual basis.

Course Evaluation
The three parts of the class will be graded as follows:

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<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class Assignments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training Project</td>
<td>30%</td>
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Course Topics and Readings

August 30

**Introductions and Overview**

Salas, E., Weaver, S. & Shuffler, M. (2012). Learning, training, and development in organizations. In S. Kozlowski (Ed.). The Oxford Handbook of Organizational Psychology. (peruse the reading – no need to read the paper, look at the figures, title heading etc. and determine 3 concepts/ideas you might be most interested in understanding more about through this class. Come prepared to discuss the following: based on content in this chapter I would like to learn more about xxxxx in this class…..)

Briner, R. & Rousseau, D.M. (2011). Evidence-based I/O Psychology: Not there yet. IO Psychology, 4, 3-22 (be prepared to discuss from your perspective, what is needed to move towards an evidence based field).

Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends (2017). Careers and learning – pages 29 – 36 (I sent you the whole thing if interested – only need to look at pages 29 – 36. (Be prepared to discuss what are the implications of this “trend” for your own career as well as what would be research that matters relevant to the trend)

Introduction to Training Project

Roles in class

Written assignments

September 11

**What do we mean by Learning?**


training and development in organizations. LEA.


September 18

Thinking about Training Transfer


Robinson & Robinson, Training for impact, Chapter 11 Behavioral results: Evaluating transfer of learning to the job

September 25

Training Transfer: What do we know?


October 2

What Needs to be Learned?


Dipboye, R. (1997). Organizational barriers to implementing a rational model of training. In M. Quinones and A. Ehrenstein (Eds.). Training for a
rapidly changing workforce.


October 9

Planning for Instruction
Goldstein & Ford, Chapter 4; pp. 98 – 110


Training Methods and Delivery: What do we know?


Active Learning Processes


Motivational Issues and Creating Learning States


Bauer, K., Orvis, K., Ely, K., & Surface, E. (2015). Re-examination of
motivation in learning contexts: Meta-analytically investigating the role type of motivation plays in the prediction of key training outcomes. Journal of Business Psychology

November 6

Pre and Post Training Factors


November 13

Team training


November 20

Developing Leaders

Training project Due


November 27

Developing Deep Specialization of Skills: Experience and Instruction


Perspectives to Learning and Beyond


Evidenced Based Practice Revisited
Presentation on Practice Papers