

First Year Seminar: *You and Your Learning Brain: Fall 2015*

Annie Jonas, Ed.D., Instructor

Class Location and time: Location Morse 205, T: 11:00 – 12:20 and Th: 11:00 – 2:20 and every other Friday (Friday 2s): 11:00 – 12:20. (Note that this timeframe is different than other courses with a longer block scheduled on Thursdays for community engagement.)

This is important information about when this course meets! This course will meet every Tuesday and Thursday and every other Friday. The calendar included with this course will assist you in your planning. This course also includes a significant service-learning component at a local elementary school, **Isaac Dickson**. We will travel together to Isaac Dickson on most Thursdays of the course.

This is a service-learning course!

Service-Learning engages students in mutually beneficial partnerships with the community. As such, engagement with the community will be significant and sustained over the course of the semester/term. Students will be asked to think critically about the connections between the course content and service and the importance of civic responsibility.

TEXT:

Siegel, D. (2013). *Brainstorm: The power and purpose of the teenage brain*.

Deak, J. and Deak, T. (2013). *The owner's manual for driving your teenage brain*. San Francisco: Little Pickle Press.

There are many more required readings for this course that will either be distributed in class, available on the course *Moodle* page or held on reserve in the library.

Course Description:

This course explores how the fields of education and neuroscience are intersecting to guide our current understanding about learning and the brain. The course investigates this expanding field through the lens of educators who seek to improve teaching and learning. Your brain, and the unique developmental stage of late adolescence, is the starting point for our exploration. The course incorporates an experiential approach to learning that requires students to engage in practices that are being explored as brain-supportive such as regular exercise and mindfulness meditation. The course includes a significant service-learning component within a 3rd grade classroom throughout the

semester. The partnership with a 3rd grade provides an experiential opportunity to explore theories and concepts learned in this class. This partnership connects you with two 3rd grade classrooms where you will also be offering one-on-one mentoring and tutoring.*This course operates on a non-traditional schedule which includes one extended lab period once a week to accommodate the experiential approach and our service-learning partnership.

Course Goals:

The first year seminar engages students in a semester of inquiry around an interdisciplinary topic or question. Utilizing various modes of inquiry as well as varied and engaging pedagogies, the seminar aims to help students develop their ability to think critically, assess problems broadly, and communicate effectively. It aims to help students connect with faculty, peers, the College, and the Triad curriculum. It also encourages students to become aware of their potential and their limits and to seek the resources (of faculty, staff, peers, and self) in order to succeed in all aspects of their first year. A focus on the triad as related to the history and philosophy of progressive education is a unique component of this FYS course:

- Work: Understand some of the questions of work in our culture as well as the history of work at Warren Wilson College, and consider their place within these constructs.
- Service: Understand some of the theories and challenges of service (and of service-learning); engage in service activity, either co-curricular or integrated into the course.
- Triad: Begin to synthesize the Triad experience by reflecting on Academics, Work, and Service and seeking intersections among them.

Course Objectives:

One who successfully completes this course will be able to:

1. Identify unique aspects of the adolescent brain as it relates to human development, cognition and emotion.
2. Identify specific practices that are known to support brain health and overall personal health.
3. Demonstrate a sensitivity to individual, cultural and community differences as explored in the classroom and through service-learning.

4. Demonstrate an ability to apply new knowledge and skills with regard to learning and the brain through in-class assignments as well as through our community engagement experiences.
5. Participate in logical, analytical and informed dialogue.
6. Demonstrate cooperative and egalitarian group participation.
7. Present evidence of analytical thinking and demonstrate an ability to synthesize information.
8. Demonstrate an ability to apply understanding of concepts related to learning and the brain through the development and implementation of lessons and approaches at our 3rd grade service-learning site.

Activities and Projects:

20 points: Ongoing assignments: For each class day on which course readings are assigned, a brief short-answer quiz will be given and/or a short response will be expected so that students may demonstrate an understanding of concepts in the reading.

10 points: Journal for use in class and outside of class: You will be using a journal throughout this course as a way to reflect on course readings, discussions and activities. Bring your journal to class. Being prepared in class, each time, with a journal dedicated *solely to this class* will be how points are earned for this component of the course.

25 points: Successful participation in, and completion of the **service-learning/civic engagement component** of the course including consistent participation on site at Isaac Dickson Elementary School each week, writing a weekly reflection after each visit and developing, designing and implementing 2 successful field experiences (off-site) for the elementary students and ongoing writing assignments related to service and civic engagement that you will post to the **e-portfolio**.

25 points: Critical Reflection Responses: Students will complete a total of 3 critical reflections (one in the first two weeks of the course, a larger mid-term reflection, and one at the end of the course.) The prompts for the responses follow the course progression and course content. Details will be provided for each prompt. A longer critical reflection paper is assigned at mid-term and at the end of the course. The final includes a rough draft that will be peer edited before final submission. The first critical reflection paper is worth 5 points and the mid-term and final are worth 10 points each.

10 points: Final Synthesis Project: The final project is an opportunity to synthesize the learning from this course including an incorporation of a reflection on the development and implementation of the service-learning component, as well as a reflective component that includes a direct connection to new understanding of the brain and

learning. Finally, the project requires that a student reflect on one's own educational journey in relation to these components. Participation in your peers' presentations is a critical part of this project. Attendance at other students' presentations is required. For each day missed of the presentations, 10% will be reduced from your final grade for this project.

10 points: Responsibility and Initiative (*class participation*):

0 – 3 points:

- more than three absences
- rarely participates in class discussion, undermines experience of class
- rarely prepared for class
- rarely followed through with in class assignments

4 – 6 points:

- more than two absences
- participates in group discussions/activities most of the time
- came to class prepared sometimes

7-10 points:

- 0-2 absences
- consistently participates in group discussions and activities
- regularly came to class prepared
- was consistently reliable in working on group projects in class
- demonstrated leadership in class

Total: 100 points

Evaluation Scale:

100 - 93: A 92 - 85: B 84 – 77: C 76-69: D below 69: F

Class Expectations:

1. Active participation in class is expected. Be prepared to be active in class which may include physical exercise. Come to class prepared to sweat, be active, be engaged, be curious. This course is for you and your growth and development. Engage and you will gain tremendously.

2. Cooperative behavior (including speaking in turn, attentiveness to speakers) is expected from all students in the creation of a safe learning environment for all.
3. At the beginning of class, assigned work will be collected (should it be necessary to hand in an assignment **any time following the due date**, the grade for the assignment will be reduced by 10% each day past the due date.)
4. Open collegial communication among students and with the instructor is an expectation. Speak up, share what you are experiencing, ask for help as needed and keep lines of communication open and honest.

Course Policies:

Attendance: Students are expected to be prepared for and to attend all class meetings and to arrive on time. Class time provides valuable opportunity to explore theories and ideas and consider application of theories. Missing a class means you are missing important content critical to the course. **Two late arrivals will be counted as an absence. Note that attendance is included as a significant part of your class participation grade. More than two absences will have a significant impact on your participation grade for the course. If you are sleeping in class or otherwise distracted (with phones, studying other material, etc) you will be considered absent. After six absences, you will fail the course.**

Assignments: The instructor will be happy to review and comment on drafts of written assignments or drafts of projects if they are submitted **five days before** the due date.

Academic Honesty: Students are required to maintain academic honesty as described in the student handbook. A violation of academic honesty may result in a failing grade for the course.

Student Support Services:

Accommodations:

Warren Wilson College makes reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students should notify Deborah Braden, Educational Access Coordinator, ext. 3791 or dbraden@warren-wilson.edu to arrange an appointment.

Writing Studio:

The Writing Studio is a comfortable space in lower Sunderland where students meet in pairs to make progress on their writing assignments. The well-trained crew members are delighted to help you tackle your assignments for this class. They ask you to bring a copy of your assignment, two copies of any draft you have started (it's also fine to come before you begin writing), and a willingness to work together to make the most of your hour together. They'll offer you feedback, tips, encouragement, and a cup of tea. Schedule your sessions online at <http://www.warren-wilson.edu/~writingcenter/>.

Study Skills Support:

Lyn O’Hare
Director, Academic Support Services
Telephone: 771-3012
Email: lohare@warren-wilson.edu
Office Location: Morse (top floor)

Safe Space:

Warren Wilson College is a community that respects the dignity of its members. The college is committed to maintaining a positive learning and working environment where diversity is honored and individuals are treated with respect. Due to Title IX requirements, all faculty members are required to report ANY knowledge of sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, or hate crimes related to sex, sexual orientation and/or gender. If you do not wish to have a report made, but do need to talk with someone about an incident that occurred involving sexual and/or relationship violence you can contact the following confidential resources:

WWC Counseling Center
Brian Ammons – WWC Chaplain
Online biased-incident report: <http://www.warren-wilson.edu/student/student-grievance>
Asheville’s Our Voice 24 hour crisis line 828-255-7576
CGR/RISE Hotline – 828-337-3264

[Course Calendar: Note that this class ends in week 15 because we meet during orientation week!]

<u>Orientation week</u>	<u>Topic:</u>	<u>Assignment due:</u>
TH: 8/19	5 Bold Steps Activity: Values Clarification and Team Building	
F: 8/20	ALL DAY SERVICE DAY at the Elementary School!	
<i>Week One</i>		
T: 8/25	Syllabus overview, first assignments (service day reflection) and critical reflection 1 introduction.	Watch Adolescent Brain TED talk on Moodle (posted this week) and read/listen to NPR story on the <i>Teen Brain</i> also posted on Moodle.

TH: 8/27: <u>Class meets at 11:45 in classroom this day.</u>	Come to class prepared to hike/be outside for one hour, bring water bottle and your journal.	Read "Driving your Adolescent Brain" pages 1-41 and read National Geographic article (Beautiful Brains) posted on Moodle, <i>post your reflection/insight about Service Day on your e-portfolio.</i>
<i>Week Two</i>		
T: 9/1	Your connection to the Adolescent Brain (Kathryn Burlison to class)	Read "Driving Your Adolescent Brain": pages: 41 – 59. Critical Reflection #1 is due: <i>Submit on Moodle and to your e-portfolio.</i> Bring your signed dress code form AND the background check form completely filled out to class.
TH: 9/3 <u>Meeting time TBA!</u>	First visit to Isaac Dickson Elementary School, orientation to school and first visit to classrooms	Submit assignment about Isaac Dickson on Moodle. (Assignment described on Moodle and you turn in on Moodle as well.)
F: 9/4	Be prepared to exercise at start of class, mindfulness as a tool	Read Spark!: Chapters 1 and 2: on reserve in the library and watch video on mindfulness posted on Moodle.
<i>Week Three</i>		
T: 9/8	<i>The Essence of Adolescence</i> , prepare for Isaac Dickson	Read pages 1 – 37 in Brainstorm, select one Mindsight tool to practice for the week and write about it in your journal, complete Forum 1 on Moodle.
TH: 9/10 <u>Meeting time TBA!</u>	Second visit to Isaac Dickson Elementary School, support <i>Daily 5</i>	Watch video about Daily 5 (posted on Moodle.)
<i>Week Four:</i>		
T: 9/15	Guest Speaker from Apex Brain Center, Dr. David Hardy: guest speaker in class.	Be prepared to discuss mindsight tool use/practice, Read pages 65-84 in Brainstorm. Complete Forum 2 on Isaac Dickson on Moodle.

		**WORK with small group on lesson from MindUp curriculum, submit responses to questions about lesson on Moodle
TH: 9/17 <u>Meeting time</u> TBA!	<i>Third visit to Isaac Dickson, Teach a lesson from the MindUP Curriculum</i>	
F: 9/18	Come to class prepared to exercise, presentation from Deb Braden, Academic Support Services	Read pages 85-110 in Brainstorm, Read article posted for this week on Mindfulness: Koru: A Program for Teaching Mindfulness to Emerging Adults
Week Five		
T:9/22	Prepare for Isaac Dickson students' college-campus visit, Work on Mindsight tool for your personal use.	Read pages 111-138 in Brainstorm. Be prepared to discuss concept of "Time In". Read Spark!: Chapter 3 (on reserve in the library) Complete Forum 3 on Isaac Dickson on Moodle.
TH: 9/24 <u>Meeting time</u> TBA!	Isaac Dickson ON-CAMPUS visit to Warren Wilson: time TBA	Be prepared with a SOLID plan for delivering 2 icebreakers/games for your IDES students and a focus on brain and learning in their design.
Week Six		
T: 9/29	<i>Mid-term reflection assignment described: Class will be held in the Writing Studio (Basement of library)</i>	Read part III of Brainstorm (pages 140-199) Read lesson 2 from MindUP Curriculum (on reserve in the library) and meet with partner to discuss your approach. Complete Forum 4 on Isaac Dickson on Moodle.
Th: 10/1	Fourth visit to Isaac Dickson, Support Daily 5 and deliver lesson	Be prepared to teach MindUp lesson.

	<i>on learning and the brain (Mind-up Curriculum)</i>	
F: 10/2		Read pages 201-216 in <i>Brainstorm</i> and submit response on Moodle. Prompt posted on Moodle.
Week Seven		
T: 10/6	Discuss <i>Brainstorm</i> , Prepare lesson visit to Isaac Dickson	Read part IV of <i>Brainstorm</i> (pages 217 – 279) No Forum this week as you prepare for your mid-term <i>critical reflection</i> . Meet with partner to discuss lesson 3 of MindUp curriculum, be prepared to discuss.
Th: 10/8	Fifth visit to Isaac Dickson, deliver lesson from Mindup Curriculum	Be prepared to lead lesson on the brain at IDES. **Email first draft of mid-term reflection to peer editing partner and Annie.
Week Eight		
Tu: 10/13	<i>Discuss healthy mind platter and Jackie Dobrinska, guest speaker, comes to class to talk about brain connection.</i>	Read pages 280-313 in <i>Brainstorm</i> ., complete assignment posted on Moodle related to the <i>Healthy Mind Platter</i> , No Forum this week as you prepare your mid-term <i>critical reflection</i> .
Th: 10/15	Visit to <i>Treetops Challenge</i> Course, Reflection activity	Watch videos posted for this week and be prepared to discuss. Submit mid-term critical reflection by 5 pm on Moodle (<i>and also post it to your e-portfolio</i>).
FALL BREAK	FALL BREAK	FALL BREAK
Week Nine		
T: 10/27	Set goals for term, prepare for Isaac Dickson visit	Read SPARK!: Chapter 10 (on reserve in the library), watch video on

		supportive language and be prepared to discuss.
TH: 10/29	Sixth visit to Isaac Dickson, provide tutoring support and begin discussing Treetops experience.	Prepare for Isaac Dickson visit by posting response to Forum 5 posted for this week on Moodle.
<i>Week Ten</i>		
T: 11/3	Preparations for Treetop experience with 3 rd grade students.	Watch video about challenge and the brain (posted on Moodle), complete related assignment
TH: 11/5	Work with Isaac Dickson providing tutoring support and prepare for Treetops experience.	
<i>Week Eleven</i>		
11/10	Final preparation for Treetops experience and introduce final synthesis project and final critical reflection.	Read article: "Can you get smarter?" posted on Moodle, be prepared to discuss. Complete introductory assignment for the Synthesis Project.
TH: 11/12	First group goes to Treetops experience (other group <u>does not</u> have class this day!)	
<i>Week Twelve</i>		
T: 11/17	Plan for reflection with IDES students.	Work on Final Project
TH: 11/19	Second group goes to Treetops	Work on Final Project
<i>Week Thirteen</i>		
11/24	Community Engagement experiential activity to explore values related to service and engagement.	Turn in outline assignment for synthesis project (on Moodle.)
TH: 11/26	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
<i>Week Fourteen</i>		
T: 12/1	Preparation for Synthesis project (peer reviewers)!	Submit response to the "Many Faces of Service" activity from 11/24 to your e-portfolio! Reading/Writing/Reflecting for Synthesis Project

TH: 12/3	<i>FINAL VISIT TO ISAAC DICKSON, Good bye to our 3rd grade partners!</i>	Complete letter to Isaac Dickson students, assignment on Moodle. Bring a hard copy letter to each student in your group (for our last visit to IDES.) Email critical reflection draft to peer editing partner (and cc Annie)
<i>Week Fifteen</i>		
T: 12/8	<i>Synthesis project presentations</i>	Return peer edited paper to editing partner electronically.
TH: 12/10	<i>Synthesis project presentations</i>	FINAL CRITICAL REFLECTION IS DUE on 12/15 (Also post this assignment to your e-portfolio.)

