

Collaborative Learning and Instruction

Fall 2015

Dr. Emma Mercier

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Class: Wednesday 4-6.50pm

Office hours: Thursday 11.30-1.30

Purpose

The purpose of this course is to examine the research on collaborative learning and consider what it has to say about using it for instruction. The beginning of the course focuses on theoretical questions about collaboration and collaborative learning to provide a basis for later discussion of applications. We then look at a range of research that proposes ways of implementing and supporting collaborative learning. These will range from work that focuses on the design of tasks, group composition, roles and interaction behaviors. We will also think about what research says about the role of the teacher in the collaborative classroom. Throughout the class, we will build a document outlining what the research says about orchestrating collaborative activities in classrooms.

Assignments and Grading

Attendance and Participation: 10%

All of our class sessions will require discussion of the articles and be a number of collaborative activities to take part in during and between classes, as such, attendance and participation are essential to everyone having successful learning experiences during the course.

Critical presentation of one form of collaborative learning technique: 15%

There are a number of different forms of collaborative learning which we will discuss during the course. On four occasions, small groups will present one of these to the class and describe the research behind them and critiques in light of the broader literature (you will do one of these during the semester). The presentations should last about an hour (they can be longer) and give an overview of the method, research that supports it and discuss and critique of the method. Ideally the presentation will include an activity that is based on the method for other students to participate in.

Weekly blog posts: 10%

Responses to blog posts: 5%

I'm switching from weekly reflection papers to blog posts this year – we'll see how it goes. Each week, there will be a prompt for you to respond to about the reading. Please post by midnight on Tuesday – so people have time to read your posts and

respond before class on Thursday. You get 1% for every blog post (for a total of 10%) and responses will be graded in terms of frequency of participation (5% for frequent posters – less for those who don't respond most weeks). Blogs will be in Moodle – but we'll revisit this a couple of weeks into the semester and see if it's working well enough to continue.

Final Paper: 60%

In-class 'elevator pitch' on Dec 3rd: 5%

Paper: 55%

For the final paper, you will discuss the following questions:

What does the research on collaborative learning tell us about how to implement collaborative learning in classrooms?

To do this, select one (or more) aspect(s) of the research on collaborative learning and write a critical review of the literature. Aspects of the literature that might be addressed include, but are not limited to: the role of the teacher, collaborative interactions, learning to collaborate, assigning roles in groups, CSCL.

Due dates:

Outline of what you are going to write about: Oct 22nd (1-2 pages).

The purpose of this outline is to provide a conversation starter for a meeting with me – so we can plan your paper and make sure it is well scoped and you know where to find resources. The outline can take any form that is most useful to you (and depending on the stage you are with the work) e.g. including narrative text, concept map, bullet points etc.

Final paper: Dec 12th (approx 20 pages)

Send these to me by email by midnight on the 12th (or early morning on the 13th). Do NOT send me an email at 11.30pm asking for another couple of hours to work on it. I won't check email until about 8am on Sunday morning, so you won't get a response. I'm also not going to look at the time stamps on the emails for when you actually submit the paper ☺

Grades and Grading Scale

Students may elect a course grade or satisfactory/unsatisfactory. Letter grades will be the default option.

Plus and minus grades will be assigned for the semester grades. Grades will be assigned as follows:

A+	At the discretion of the instructor		
A	93-100%	C	73-76.9%
A-	90-92.9%	C-	70-72.9%
B+	87-89.9%	D+	67-69.9%
B	83-86.9%	D	63-66.9%
B-	80-82.9%	D-	60-62.9%
C+	77-79.9%	F	Less than 60%

Course Policies

Attendance and late assignments

Attendance is very important during this course. If you are going to be absent for a particular class, please let me know as soon as possible. If you are unwell or traveling and wish to call into the class, let me know in advance and we can set up a Skype or Facetime session.

Blog posts are due on Tuesday night each week to receive credit. Late posts must be discussed with me before submission to receive credit.

Late submissions and extensions are not encouraged. Get in touch with me as soon as you can to discuss any issues arising with submission of your assignments.

Statement of Academic Integrity

The Code of Policies and Regulations Applying to All Students will be applied in all instances of academic misconduct committed by students. This applies to all exams, presentations, assignments and materials distributed or used in this course.

http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/article1_part4_1-401.html

Equal Opportunity and Access Statement

Your success as a student is of utmost importance to me. If you have a disability or any other special circumstance that may have some impact on your work in this class, and for which you may require special accommodations, please contact me within the first two weeks in the semester so that accommodations can be made in a timely manner. <http://www.disability.illinois.edu/>

Syllabus outline:

Date	Topic	Reading
Week 1 Aug 27 th	Introduction What is collaboration?	In class: Bratman, 1992.
Week 2: Sept 3 rd	What is collaborative learning?	O'Donnell & Hmelo-Silver, 2013 Dillenbourg et al., 1996 Extra: O'Donnell, 2006 Damon, 1984
Week 3: Sept 10 th	Theoretical stances	Jigsaw: One of chapter 1-4 from International Handbook of Collaborative Learning (2013) Akkerman et al, 2007 Extra: Dillenbourg, 1999
Week 4: Sept 17 th	Frameworks	Kaendler et al. (2015)

	for thinking about collaboration in classrooms	Mercier & Higgins (2015)
Week 5: Sept 24 th	Interaction behaviors	Barron, 2003 Roschelle 1992
Week 6: Oct 1 st	Team Characteristics	Azmitia, M. (1988) Bowers et al, 2000 Edmonson, 1999 Gershenoff, A. B., & Foti, R. J. (2003) Halfhill, et al 2005 Karakowsky, L., & Siegel, J. P. (1999) Kutnick, P., & Kington, A. (2005). Maldonado, et al 2009 Margrett, J., & Marsiske, M. (2002). Miell, D., & Macdonald, R. A. R. (2000) Pozzi et al, 1993 Pryor, J. (1995). Strough, J., & Berg, C. A. (2000) Vass, E. (2002). Webb et al., 1998 [you will be assigned one reading to prepare to present to the whole class; the list may be edited depending on class size]
Week 7: Oct 8 th (Scripts presentation)	Collaboration scripts	Lambiotte et al, 1998 Rummel, 2009
Week 8: Oct 15 th (Complex instruction presentation)	Roles	Cohen, 1994 Cohen et al, 1999 Markovsky, 1984
Week 9: Oct 22 nd (Cooperative learning presentation)	Cooperative learning (Tasks)	Johnson & Johnson, 2009; Slavin 1999 Stearns, 1999
Week 10: Oct 29 th (CSCL presentation)	CSCL (Tasks)	Kirschner, 2008 Kapur, 2007 Mercier & Higgins, 2013
Week 11: Nov 5 th	Learning to collaborate?	Hesse et al., 2015 Barron et al., 2009
Week 12: Nov 12 th	Teachers &	Blatchford, 2003

	Collaboration	Webb, 2009 Gillies & Boyle, 2010
Week 13: Nov 19 th	Teachers & Collaboration	Mercier et al., 2015 – symposium & associated papers
Week 14: Dec 3 rd	Final class	Elevator pitch summary of your final paper

Reading list:

- Akkerman, S., Vandenbossche, P., Admiraal, W., Gijsselaers, W., Segers, M., Simons, R., & Kirschner, P. (2007). Reconsidering group cognition: From conceptual confusion to a boundary area between cognitive and socio-cultural perspectives? *Educational Research Review*, 2(1), 39–63. doi:10.1016/j.edurev.2007.02.001
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- Cohen, E.G. (1994). Restructuring the classroom: Conditions for productive small groups. *Review of educational research*, 64(1), 1. Retrieved from <http://rer.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/64/1/1>
- Cohen, Elizabeth G, Lotan, R. A., Scarloss, B. A., & Arellano, A. R. (2013). in Complex Instruction : Equity Cooperative Learning Classrooms, 38(2), 80–86.
- Cortez, C., Nussbaum, M., Woywood, G., & Aravena, R. (2009). Learning to collaborate by collaborating: A face-to-face collaborative activity for measuring and learning basics about teamwork. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 25(2), 126–142. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2729.2008.00298.x
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- Dillenbourg, P., Baker, M., Blaye, A., & O'Malley, C. (1996). The evolution of research on collaborative learning. In *Learning in Humans and Machine: Towards an interdisciplinary learning science* (pp. 189–211).
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doi:10.1177/1046496402250429
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- Hmelo-Silver, C. (2003). Analyzing collaborative knowledge construction multiple methods for integrated understanding. *Computers & Education*, 41(4), 397–420.
doi:10.1016/j.compedu.2003.07.001
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Notes:

- Some readings will come from the International Handbook of Collaborative Learning (2013). This is a useful resource for the whole class, but copies are available in the library.
- Reading list may change during the semester based on the interests of the class members and direction of discussions.
- Some weeks, you’ll be assigned a sub-section of the readings in small groups to present to the whole class rather than having to read everything.
- The reading list contains more readings than are assigned – use these to extend your reading, or help with assignments. Do not hesitate to come and ask me for more!