Seminar on Transformative Learning through Community

ELMD, CCU, Fall Semester, 2026

Instructor: Chiho Yang, Associate Professor & Director,
Institute of Strategic & International Affairs, National Chung Cheng University
Class Hours & Location: 2:10-5:00 pm, Monday; Room 335, Education Bldg. II
Study Room: Room 602, College of Social Sciences Bldg. II
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Course Description

This course probes the possibility of transformation and empowerment through *adult learning environment*. First reviewing transformative learning theory, the course proceeds to perspectives on adult education, the awakening of critical consciousness, network of learning resources, adult learning and educator's role in transformative learning, then discusses how transformative learning occurs among learning communities in various venues, including arts-based programs and leadership development in the higher education sphere, adult basic education and communicative courses in workplaces, and other special learning groups.

Course Goal

The purpose of this course is to help students develop knowledge on adult learning and understanding of how learners achieve change of mentality and empowerment of life in the process of learning. In addition to studying cases of the best practice in a global context, students have a chance to demonstrate and analyze similar situations in their home areas, compare with the cases discussed in class, and seek possible solutions for future improvement, hence acquire practical knowledge on the process of transformative learning through community. Students are also encouraged to cultivate abilities of independent analysis and critical thinking from a leader's perspective, with resources management and educational planning in a multicultural environment.

Assessment

10% for participation *(attendance, punctuality,* and class discussion)
30% for assignments on weekly readings
30% for presentation
30% for term paper

***During class, including lectures, discussions, and student presentations, students may use electronic devices only for course-related learning activities. Please refrain from using electronic devices for purposes unrelated to the course.**

Assignment & evaluation criteria

1. Weekly reading

During *weeks 2 to 11*(except holidays), students should hand in a 300-word essay on the reflection question based on the assigned reading every week in WORD or PDF, and upload on CCU ecourse2 no later than *the Friday* prior to class. Evaluation criteria: (a) reflection (40%); (b) criticism and questions (40%); (c) timeliness and conciseness (20%).

2. Oral presentation

In *week 3* students will select their cases for presentations during *weeks 11-16*, then presenting on a weekly basis. The presentation should be on slides including background information and theoretical review, analysis of this case and comparison with similar cases in the student's home area or elsewhere worldwide, reflection and feedback, and discussion questions or activities. Presentation slides should be uploaded on CCU ecrouse2 no later than *the Friday* prior to class. Each presenter will give oral report for one hour, and lead discussion for another half. Evaluation criteria: (a) case background and theoretical review (10%); (b) analysis and comparison (30%); (c) reflection and feedback (30%); (d). discussion questions or facilitation of activities (20%); (e) timeliness, content organization and presentation skills (10%).

3. Term paper

In *week 5* students will briefly report their decision on the selected topic for term paper, which should correspond to the topic chosen for your oral presentation. It should be extended by incorporating comparable cases from other contexts or regions. The paper should include an introduction providing relevant background information, a review of relevant theories and literature, analyses and reflections on the selected cases, and a conclusion proposing a model of best practice. This assignment accounts for 30% of the final grade and will be assessed based on the following criteria: (a) introduction and literature review (20%); (b) analysis and comparison of cases with reflection (40%); (c) feedback, extended issues, and proposed model of best practice (30%); (d) timeliness and paper format (10%).

Academic integrity and the use of AI

Academic misconduct including plagiarism may result in failing the course and further penalties. Avoid using other's words, ideas or products without giving proper credit to the original author. When working on weekly essays, presentations and term papers, make sure to paraphrase, quote and cite properly.

At the end of all assignments, presentation slides and term papers**, please include a disclosure statement clearly identifying the names and version of any AI tools used,**

the purpose for which they were used, and how they contributed to the preparation of the work.

Weekly Schedule (subject to change at the discretion of the instructor)

Week (Date)	Topic & Reading
(Sep. 7)	**Couse introduction: learning vs. education**
2 (Sep. 14) *(Assignment due Sep. 11)*	**Transformative learning in community** "Fostering transformative learning," Ch. 1 & "Transformative learning theory," Ch. 2 in Mezirow, Taylor & Associates (Eds) (2009), pp. 3-23. *Reflection question*: Share your experience of transformative learning, either as a teacher or as a student, through ONE of its six core elements.
3 (Sep. 21) *(Assignment due Sep. 18)*	**How adults learn — a brief review on andragogy;** ***selecting cases for presentation*** "New perspectives on andragogy," Ch. 9 in Knowles, et. al., (2020), pp. 167-185. *Reflection question*: Share a personal experience that illustrates ONE of Knowles's six principles of adult learning.
4 (Sep. 28)	**Holiday observed (No class)**
5 (Oct. 5) *(Assignment due Oct. 2)*	**Process model, diversity and inclusion in an adult learning classroom** ***briefing on topics for presentations and term paper*** "Andragogical process model for learning," Ch. 4 in Knowles, et. al. (2020), pp. 51-71. "Diversity and inclusion in the adult education classroom," Ch 11 in Knowles, et. al. (2020), pp. 211-228. *Reflection question*: According to the reading, explain what you consider to be the most important process element of an inclusive adult education classroom in your cultural context.
6 (Oct. 12) *(Assignment due Oct. 9)*	**Banking education vs. problem-posing education** Ch. 2 in Freire (2000), pp. 71-86. *Reflection question*: Can problem-posing education be applied to all fields of education? Do you believe young learners have the ability to question, differentiate, and think critically? Why or why not?
7 (Oct. 19) *(Assignment due Oct. 16)*	**Critical consciousness in learning** Ch. 3 in Freire (2000), pp. 87-109 (**excerpt**). *Reflection question*: Is it beneficial or problematic to reveal and transform the "true world," as described in the reading? Share your experience of conscientização: When did this occur for you, and what were you becoming conscious of?

8 (Oct. 26)	**Holiday observed (No class)**
9 (Nov. 2) *(Assignment due Oct. 30)*	**From schooling to deschooling** "Why we must disestablish school," Ch. 1 in Illich (2000), pp. 1-24. *Reflection question*: Compared with Illich's era, what disparities in educational resources exist today between urban and rural areas, and among different socioeconomic groups around the world?
10 (Nov. 9) *(Assignment due Nov. 6)*	**Network of learning** "Learning webs," Ch. 6 in Illich (2000), pp. 72-104. *Reflection question*: Is your understanding of the hidden curriculum similar to the concept described in the reading? Please provide examples based on your educational experience.
11 (Nov. 16) *(Slides due Nov. 13)*	**Learning for social consciousness** **Stephanie:** "Creative alternative realities: Arts-based approaches to transformative learning," Ch. 3 in Mezirow, Taylor & Associates (Eds) (2009), pp. 35-45. **Diana:** "Constructive teaching and learning: Collaboration in a sociology classroom," Ch. 4 in Mezirow, Taylor & Associates (Eds) (2009), pp. 46-56
12 (Nov. 23) *(Slides due Nov. 20)*	**Learning through leadership development & mentoring** **Daniela**: "Fostering transformative learning in leadership development," Ch. 6 in Mezirow, Taylor & Associates (Eds) (2009), pp. 67-77. **Eileen:** "Mentoring: When learners make the learning," Ch. 7 in Mezirow, Taylor & Associates (Eds) (2009), pp. 78-88.
13 (Nov. 30) *(Slides due Nov. 27)*	**Learning through cultural imagination & life education** **Stephanie:** "Transformative approaches to culturally responsive teaching: Engaging cultural imagination," Ch. 8 in Mezirow, Taylor & Associates (Eds) (2009), pp. 89-99. **Quennie:** "Transformative palliative care education," Ch. 10 in Mezirow, Taylor & Associates (Eds) (2009), pp. 111-121.
14 (Dec. 7) *(Slides due Dec. 4)*	**Learning through storytelling & coaching** **Eileen:** "Charting the course: How storytelling can foster communicative learning in the workplace," Ch. 12 in Mezirow, Taylor & Associates (Eds) (2009), pp.136-147. **Daniela:** "Coaching to transform perspectives," Ch. 13 in Mezirow, Taylor & Associated (Eds)(2009), pp. 148-159.
15 (Dec. 14) *(Slides due Dec. 11)*	**Learning through basic education and identity transition** **Alisha:** "Transformative learning in adult basic education," Ch. 15 in Mezirow, Taylor & Associates (Eds) (2009), pp. 172-181. **Quennie:** "From tradesperson to teacher: A transformative transition," Ch. 16 in

	Mezirow, Taylor & Associates (Eds) (2009), pp. 182-190.
16 (Dec. 21) *(Slides due Dec. 18)*	**Learning through sustainability education & empowerment** **Alisha:** "Fostering a learning sanctuary for transformation in sustainability education," Ch. 17 in Mezirow, Taylor & Associates (Eds) (2009), pp. 193-204. **Diana:** "Popular education, women's work, and transforming lives in Bolivia," Ch. 18 in Mezirow, Taylor & Associates (Eds) (2009), pp. 205-215
17 (Dec. 28)	**Preparation for term paper**
18 (Jan. 4)	**Term paper due**

References

Cranton, P. (2016). *Understanding and promoting transformative learning: A guide to theory and practice*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (https://envs.ucsc.edu/internships/internship-readings/freire-pedagogy-of-the-oppressed.pdf)

Illich, I. (2000). *Deschooling Society*. London: Marion Boyars Publishers Ltd. (https://archive.org/details/DeschoolingSociety/page/n5/mode/2up)

Knowles, M. S., et. al. (2020). *The adult learner: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource developmen*t. New York : Routledge.

Mezirow, J., Taylor, E. W., & Associates. (2009). *Transformative learning in practice: Insights from community, workplace, and higher education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, S. B. & Bierema, L. L. (2014). *Adult learning: Linking theory and practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.