

# LL250: Foundations of Adult Learning (Online)

## Course Syllabus

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## Course Information

### Course Description

Welcome to Foundations of Adult Learning! "Foundations" is a course in which you will engage in further self-reflection about yourself as a learner, consider the School for New Learning's particular philosophy and practice of adult education, and develop your plan for learning here at SNL. In the process, you will learn further about the opportunities, resources, and options available for you to meet degree requirements and achieve your professional goals.

The primary outcome of Foundations is a comprehensive plan for your own program of study. In the process of developing this Learning Plan, you will learn about a model for learning from experience. You will become more familiar with SNL's competence-based approach and how it compares with traditional educational approaches.

Each person enters Foundations at a unique point in his or her history. Some adult learners have been in college before; others have not. Some have advanced to high levels on the career ladder; others are reentering the job market. Some are well into middle adulthood; others are still under thirty years of age. However diverse your classmates are, all are here to discover more about themselves as learners and to create Learning Plans that will work for them.

The course's text, **The Foundations of Adult Learning Resource Book** (Foundations Book), contains materials that you will use throughout your SNL career. The sections, forms, exercises, and readings will help you plan specific phases of your degree program, as well as introduce you to theories of learning and ideas about the liberal arts. In this course you will read and become familiar with the contents of this book, but it is also a reference that you should consult frequently beyond the course and as you enter into subsequent phases of your degree program.

## Credits

6 credit hours

## About the Instructor

See the Instructor's profile (Staff Information) on this Blackboard site.

## Useful Contacts

- School for New Learning Center for Distance Education: [snlonline@depaul.edu](mailto:snlonline@depaul.edu). Response time is within 24 hours.
- Blackboard Help: [Blackboard@depaul.edu](mailto:Blackboard@depaul.edu).

## Course Learning Goals

After completing this course you will have:

- demonstrated an understanding of your learning style
- produced a working draft of your Learning Plan (Working Document)
- demonstrated knowledge of your focus area (or investigation about possible focus areas) through research
- identified or have leads on a professional advisor
  - **or** have researched your career/focus area enough that you are ready to begin honing that research towards identifying a professional advisor
- identified and transferred appropriate coursework from accredited colleges as demonstration of competence
- written a proposal, draft outline, or draft essay of an independent learning pursuit
  - **or** written a revised autobiography or essay of your instructor's choice
- self-assessed your abilities as a mindful learner and developed strategies for strengthening your skills where necessary

## Course Resources

- Required: **Foundations of Adult Learning Resource Book**, available online for free through this Blackboard (see tab, "Resource Book") or on the SNL Forms Website.
- Required: **The Kolb Learning Styles Inventory**. Boston, MA: Hay Group. This can be ordered from our online bookstore at <http://www.mbsdirect.net>
- Required: Additional readings available from the course's **eReserves** site.
- **SNL Website**: [http://www.snl.depaul.edu/current/undergrad\\_index.asp](http://www.snl.depaul.edu/current/undergrad_index.asp), following the left hand navigation bar to the Forms page and other pages

- **The Writing Guide for SNL Students:** <http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html>
- Colleagues and Friends with whom you will conduct informational interviews

## Course Competencies

L-2: Can use one's ideas and those of others to draw meaning from experience.

L-3: Can design learning strategies to attain goals for personal and educational development.

F-1: Can design a plan for development in one's Focus Area based on an analysis of elements that comprise the area.

## Course Structure

This course consists of ten modules. The estimated time to complete each module is one week.

*To view the course schedule, click on the Schedule link on the left-hand navigation bar. This page contains the most recently updated listing of the topics and assignments due for each week of the course.*

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## Assessment

### Course Grading Criteria

Foundations of Adult Learning is a Pass-Fail course. The final grade is based upon the successful and timely completion of all assigned readings, discussions, written work and assessments that are listed in the Course Schedule, given in the Blackboard site. The learning outcomes for the L-2, L-3, and F-1 competencies indicated in Module 1 will be assessed based upon the written evidence that you present online and in paper submissions to your instructor/faculty mentor.

### Assessment Criteria for Writing Assignments

In order to receive credit for writing assignments, your writing must demonstrate achievement of the following criteria:

1. **Reflection:** For assignments that specify reflection as a required activity, your writing should demonstrate to the reader that you have made indepth, thoughtful connections between concepts and, when appropriate, your personal experiences.
2. **Detail:** Writing is effective when an appropriate level of specificity is achieved. Your writing will demonstrate this when appropriate evidence is included to support ideas and opinions.

3. **Grammar, Syntax, and Style:** You should use standard English in all of your writing assignments. Your grammar, sentence structure, and style should direct your readers to an understanding of your ideas rather than serving as impediments to such understanding.
4. **Organization:** Make sure that each assignment is coherent from beginning to end.
5. **Accuracy:** Many of your assignments require you to transcribe detailed information from sources such as your college transcripts and course catalogues. It is important that you proofread all transcribed material to avoid unnecessary errors.
6. **Attention to Assignment Specifications:** Your written work should adhere closely to the guidelines established in the description of each assignment.
7. **Consult** the Writing Guide for SNL Students for help in writing your assignments: <http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/SNLAssignments.html>

## Discussion Assessment Criteria

In order to receive credit for your participation in the online Discussion Board of the course it is important that:

- You actively participate in informal online discussions with your classmates and the instructor, when they are required by the syllabus. "Active participation" means that you read and contribute to the online discussions.
- You are able to contribute to the online discussions in a collegial fashion. You should begin your contributions by addressing your peers, maintain a kind and collegial tone, and close with your signature.
- You regularly demonstrate good "listening" skills and active inquiry skills: you pay attention with openness to the commentary of others and you offer constructive and interested commentary, whether in the form of questions or statements.
- You contribute your own original ideas to the online discussion in ways that facilitate learning for others.
- You follow accepted standards of English spelling, grammar, and usage, although you will not be assessed for these particular characteristics when you are on the discussion board. Avoid text-messaging lingo.
- You may be asked by the instructor to take leadership in a particular group for a certain time of the course. If this happens, you will receive further instructions from the instructor.
- Consult Writing Guide for SNL Students to view faculty observations about best practices when posting to discussion boards: <http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/SNLAssignments.html>
- If your participation is unacceptable at any time during the course, your instructor will alert you and encourage your engagement as necessary. If you must be away and unable to access the Discussion Board during the course, you must let your instructor know and be ready to make up missed work as instructed.

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## Policies

### Academic Integrity

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty involving the presentation of the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

- The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's.
- Copying of any source in whole or part with only minor changes in wording or syntax, even with acknowledgement.
- Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment that has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency.
- The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

Plagiarism, like other forms of academic dishonesty, is always a serious matter. If a instructor finds that a student has plagiarized, the appropriate penalty is at the instructor's discretion.

### Disability Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with disabilities on an individualized and flexible basis. The Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD) determines appropriate accommodations through consultation with the student. For certain learning disabilities and/or attention deficit disorders, the Productive Learning Strategies Program (PLuS) determines the appropriate accommodations. See the instructor for more information or call OSD at 773-325-7290 (phone) or 773-325-7296 (TTY); or call PLuS at 773-325-1677.

### Incomplete Grades

The intent of the Incomplete grade is to allow students extra time to complete their final assignments. This need arises because, in the closing weeks of the course, they have an event of significant magnitude that adversely affects their ability to complete the course, e.g. serious illness, death in the family, overseas deployment, or natural disaster.

You must request an incomplete grade in writing two weeks before the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades will be considered only after you have satisfactorily completed at least 75 percent of the coursework, and you have such an unexpected, uncontrollable event that prevents you from completing your course. Do not assume that you will qualify for an incomplete. Students who are failing the course at the point where they request an incomplete will not receive one, nor will they be granted after the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades are given at the discretion of the instructor.

If you do receive permission from the instructor to take an incomplete in the course, you will be required to complete a contract with the instructor, specifying how you will finish the missing work within the next two quarters (excluding summer). Incompletes not finished by the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) will automatically become an F grade on your transcript.

Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee.

NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

## **Protection of Human Subjects**

For more information see: <http://research.depaul.edu/>.

Demonstrating the acquisition of competences in this course can involve “interactions”—interviewing and or observing other people—discussing those interviews or observations with other class members and writing them up in one or more final report(s). As such, these activities qualify as “research” with “human subjects” and are subject to University and Federal guidelines. Because it takes place in the context of this course, your research is exempt from approval by the School for New Learning’s Local Review Board only under the following conditions:

1. The information you collect is **EXCLUSIVELY** for the purpose of classroom discussion and will **NOT** be used after the term is over. If there is any possibility that you will **EVER** use it in further research or for publication, you must obtain approval from the Local Review Board before you begin.
2. You assess and ensure that no “harm”—physical, mental, or social—does or could result from either your interviews and/or observations or your discussion and/or reports.

3. The privacy and confidentiality of those that you interview or observe must be protected. Unless you receive specific permission, in writing, from the person(s) you interview or observe, please change their names, and make sure that their identity cannot be readily ascertained from the information you provide.
  - a. If you want to use real names and relationships, they must sign an “informed consent” document. For information on creating an “informed consent document” see, for example, <http://www.research.umn.edu/consent>.

## **Chronic Illness Initiative**

The Chronic Illness Initiative (CII) provides access to higher education for students disabled by a chronic illness. Students who struggle with illnesses that unpredictably increase and decrease in severity such as chronic fatigue syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus or illnesses requiring frequent hospitalizations such as cancer or heart disease, may have found it difficult, if not impossible, to meet the requirements of a conventional college program. At the School for New Learning, staff and faculty are compassionate and committed to helping CII students achieve their educational goals. For more information, contact CII at [CII@depaul.edu](mailto:CII@depaul.edu).

## **Adult & Suburban Student Services**

The mission of the Office of Adult & Suburban Student Services is to provide an area where adult students can address their unique and special needs. This office serves as the liaison between adult students and academic and administrative units of the University, helping them to easily navigate DePaul’s system. On-site staff members are available at the Adult Student Center, 11017 DePaul Center, Loop Campus; phone: 312-362-6216.

## **Resources for Student Writers**

The DePaul University Writing Centers offer resources for student writers through drop-in, by-appointment, and online services. Learn more about the Writing Centers by visiting their Web site at <http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/>. For center hours and more information call 312-362-6726 or email [wcenter@depaul.edu](mailto:wcenter@depaul.edu).

## **DePaul Code of Student Responsibility**

The Code outlines the minimum acceptable level of conduct expected of every student of DePaul University, including respectful classroom behavior. DePaul condemns any form of harassment, discrimination, and/or assault behavior and any such conduct is subject to University disciplinary sanctions. See <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/handbook/index.html> for the complete Code.

## **Complaints Regarding Grading, Teaching or Advising**

Students with complaints about grades, teaching, or advising should first try to resolve the problem with the faculty or staff member involved. If no satisfactory resolution can be reached, students may then discuss the matter with the Associate Dean of the School for New Learning, 200 Lewis Center, 312-362-8001.

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## **Course Expectations**

### **Time Management and Attendance**

SNL's online courses are not self-paced and require a regular time commitment EACH week throughout the quarter.

You are required to log in to your course at least four times a week so that you can participate in the ongoing course discussions.

Online courses are no less time consuming than "face to face" courses. You will have to dedicate some time every day or at least every second day to your studies. A typical four credit hour "face to face" course at SNL involves three hours of classroom meeting per week, plus at least three to six hours of study and homework per week.

This course will require at least the same time commitment, but your learning activities will be spread out through the week. If you have any problems with your technology, or if you need to improve your reading or writing skills, it may take even longer.

The instructor should be notified if your life events do not allow you to participate in the course and the online discussions for more than one week. This is particularly important when there are group discussions or you are working as part of a team.

If you find yourself getting behind, please contact the instructor immediately.

### **Your Instructor's Role**

Your instructor's role in this course is that of a discussion facilitator and learning advisor. It is not their responsibility to make sure you log in regularly and submit your assignments. As instructor, s/he will read all postings to the general discussion forums on a daily basis but may not choose to respond to each posting. You will receive feedback to assignments.

The instructor may choose to designate "office hours" when s/he will be online and available and will immediately respond to questions. Depending on the instructor, this response may be by e-mail, instant

messenger or telephone. Otherwise, you will generally receive a response to emailed or posted queries within 48 hours.

## **Your Role as a Student**

As an online student, you will be taking a proactive approach to your learning. As the course instructor's role is that of a learning guide, your role is that of the leader in your own learning.

You will be managing your own time so that you can complete the readings, activities and assignments for the course, and you will also be expected to take a more active role in peer learning.

## **Policy on Late Submissions**

Foundations will demand a significant investment of your time and energy. Weekly readings will include sections from the Foundations Resource book, supplementary readings in the text's appendix, and selections from the DePaul's eReserve site. In various online discussions, you will post reflection pieces based on readings and course exercises. You will also write papers, plans, and assessment documents. Many of the course assignments require research.

The assignments regularly require that you complete the learning activities and exercises that precede them in each module of the course. It is therefore essential that you read the materials associated with each module thoroughly and carefully.

If for any reason you are unable to complete an assignment by the established deadline, you should contact your Foundations instructor immediately for guidance on how to proceed. The expectation for receiving satisfactory credit on any course deliverable (discussion post, assignment, assessment, etc.) is on-time submission. Exceptions to this policy will be considered only in cases involving extraneous circumstances (emergencies) in which you have notified your instructor.

## **General Communication Policy**

The Golden Rule, "Treat others as you want to be treated," sometimes seems forgotten in the rush to stay on top of the bombardment of responsibilities and information overload. In online learning environments the simplest of statements can be misinterpreted when posted without thoughtful concern for the receiving audience. Whether communicating in discussion forums, by telephone, by email, or in person, remind yourself of the Golden Rule; "flaming, "barking" demands or other inappropriate behavior toward your peers or your instructor will not be condoned. Make a conscious effort to be considerate of others when making requests or expressing your point of view, remembering that nothing replaces good manners and common courtesies. By observing the Golden Rule, you will find your own learning experience enriched as you exhibit a positive attitude toward others. For more information consult the DePaul Student Handbook: <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/handbook/index.html>

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