In an age where the quality of teacher education programs has been called into question, it is more important than ever that teachers have a fundamental understanding of the principles of human learning, motivation, development, and assessment. Theory to Practice: Educational Psychology for Teachers and Teaching is a series for those who teach educational psychology in teacher education programs. At a time when educational psychology is at risk of becoming marginalized, it is imperative that we, as educators, “walk our talk” in serving as models of what effective instruction looks like.

Each volume draws upon the latest research to help instructors model fundamental principles of learning, motivation, and development to best prepare their students for the diverse, multidimensional, uncertain, and socially-embedded environments in which these future educators will teach. Topics include: Teaching on and for learning, teaching on and for motivation, teaching on and for development, teaching assessment in educational psychology, preparing advocates in teacher education and beyond, and teaching educational psychology across non-traditional contexts.

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The inaugural volume, Teaching on Assessment, is centered on the role of assessment in teaching and learning. Each chapter translates current research on critical topics in assessment for educational psychology instructors and teacher educators to consider in their teaching of future teachers. Written for practitioners, the aim is to present contemporary issues and ideas that would help teachers engage in meaningful assessment practice. This volume is important not only because of the dwindling presence of assessment-related instructional content in teacher preparation programs, but also because the policy changes in the last two decades have transformed the meaning and use of assessment in K-12 classrooms.

Praise for Teaching on Assessment

“This thought-provoking book brings together perspectives from educational psychology and teacher education to examine how assessment can best support student motivation, engagement, and learning. In the volume, editors Nichols and Varier present a set of chapters written by leaders in the field to examine critical questions about how to best prepare teachers to make instructional decisions, understand assessment within the context of learning and motivation theory, and draw on assessment in ways which can meet the needs of diverse learners. Written in a highly accessible language and style, each chapter contains clear takeaway messages designed for educational psychologists, teacher educators, teachers, and pre-service teachers. This book is essential reading for anyone involved in teaching or developing our future teaching professionals.” Lois R. Harris, Australian Catholic University

“This impressive book provides a wealth of contemporary and engaging resources, ideas and perspectives that educational psychology instructors will find relevant for helping students understand the complexity of assessment decision-making as an essential component of instruction. Traditional assessment principles are integrated with contemporary educational psychology research that will enhance prospective teachers’ decision-making about classroom assessments that promote all students’ learning and motivation. It is unique in showing how to best leverage both formative and summative assessment to boost student engagement and achievement, enabling students to understand how to integrate practical classroom constraints and realities with current knowledge about self-regulation, intrinsic motivation, and other psychological constructs that assessment needs to consider. The chapters are written by established experts who are able to effectively balance presentation of research and theory with practical applications. Notably, the volume includes very important topics rarely emphasized in other assessment texts, including assessment literacy frameworks, diversity, equity, assessment strategies for students with special needs, and data-driven decision making. The book will be an excellent supplement for educational psychology classes or for assessment courses, introducing students to current thinking about how to effectively integrate assessment with instruction.” James McMillan, Virginia Commonwealth University


INTRODUCTION. Preparing Pre-Service Teachers for Assessment of, for, and as Learning, Chad M. Gotch, Kira J. Carbonneau, and Dustin S. J. Van Orman. Making Valid Instructional Decisions: Teaching Educators to Consider Validity Evidence, Davis Gerber, Matthew Ryan Lavery, and Jonathan D. Bostic. SECTION II: BRIDGING ASSESSMENT AND EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY. Motivating Students and their Teachers Through Self-Regulated Learning and Reframing Assessment Language, Maria K. DiBenedetto and Dale H. Schunk. Conceptualizing and Using Classroom Assessment to Support Students’ Learning and Self-Regulation, Peggy P. Chen and Sarah M. Bonner. Motivating Assessment: How to Leverage Summative Assessments for the Good of Intrinsic Motivation, Lia M. Daniels, Gabrielle Pelletier, Amanda I. Radil, and Lauren D. Goegan. SECTION III: ASSESSMENT AND DIVERSE LEARNERS. Assessment as Learning: Fostering
Teaching Motivation for Student Engagement

Debra K. Meyer, Elmhurst University; Alyssa Emery, Iowa State University


Helping teachers understand and apply theory and research is one of the most challenging tasks of teacher preparation and professional development. As they learn about motivation and engagement, teachers need conceptually rich, yet easy-to-use, frameworks. At the same time, teachers must understand that student engagement is not separate from development, instructional decision-making, classroom management, student relationships, and assessment. This volume on teaching teachers about motivation addresses these challenges. The authors share multiple approaches and frameworks to cut through the growing complexity and variety of motivational theories, and tie theory and research to real-world experiences that teachers are likely to encounter in their courses and classroom experiences. Additionally, each chapter is summarized with key “take away” practices.

A shared perspective across all the chapters in this volume on teaching teachers about motivation is “walking the talk.” In every chapter, readers will be provided with rich examples of how research on and principles of classroom motivation can be re-conceptualized through a variety of college teaching strategies. Teachers and future teachers learning about motivation need to experience explicit modeling, practice, and constructive feedback in their college courses and professional development in order to incorporate those into their own practice. In addition, a core assumption throughout this volume is the importance of understanding the situated nature of motivation, and avoiding a “one-size-fits” all approach in the classroom. Teachers need to fully interrogate their instructional practices not only in terms of motivational principles, but also for their cultural relevance, equity, and developmental appropriateness.

Just like P-12 students, college students bring their histories as learners and beliefs about motivation to their formal study of motivation. That is why college instructors teaching motivation must begin by helping students evaluate their personal beliefs and experiences. Relatedly, college instructors need to know their students and model differentiating their interactions to support each of them. The authors in this volume have, collectively, decades of experience teaching at the college level and conducting research in motivation, and provide readers with a variety of strategies to help teachers and future teachers explore how motivation is supported and undermined. In each chapter in this volume, readers will be provided with rich examples of how research on and principles of classroom motivation can be re-conceptualized through a variety of college teaching strategies. Teachers and future teachers learning about motivation need to experience explicit modeling, practice, and constructive feedback in their college courses and professional development in order to incorporate those into their own practice. In addition, a core assumption throughout this volume is the importance of understanding the situated nature of motivation, and avoiding a “one-size-fits” all approach in the classroom. Teachers need to fully interrogate their instructional practices not only in terms of motivational principles, but also for their cultural relevance, equity, and developmental appropriateness.

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