
Preface

My path to authoring this second edition of *Educational Psychology* evolved from a fundamental love of working with students, combined with a respect and passion for science-based education. In addition, I believe I have a unique perspective on education and psychology, and I wanted to create an Educational Psychology textbook that uses that perspective to inform educational best practices. My journey into educational psychology did not begin with a typical graduate program in that field. Like many of us, my education and professional career evolved through graduate training in several related fields. In this preface, I would like to detail some of that history to help you understand my perspective.

I began my doctoral education in the Brain Research and Neuropsychology Laboratory at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. This position was a natural fit, building on my long-standing strengths in the sciences. Additionally, I pursued work in this lab because the primary focus of the work was on students with disabilities and how they compared to more typically developing peers. I found this fascinating and wanted to learn more. Specifically, my laboratory work centered on understanding the electroencephalographic differences between children with and those without a primary diagnosis of ADHD. Through this work, I began to develop a more general interest in learning and how it is realized through formal education. Expanding on my initial role in this lab, I also became involved in cognitive remediation, helping students directly address academic issues through remedial techniques grounded in cognitive psychological theory and neuropsychology. This compilation of work broadened my focus to the general intersection of psychology and education.

After I received my doctorate, I was accepted as a clinical psychology post-doctoral fellow at The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics, Kennedy Krieger Institute. I was told it was my unique background in neuroscience and education that was pivotal in securing this highly competitive position. Once I began my clinical duties, I found that I was able to use my skills in scientific research and learning to bring a fresh perspective to the assessment of children with learning differences. I assessed hundreds of children with difficulties spanning all the DSM classifications applied to children. With each case, I learned more about the breadth of individual differences and how to help students learn and grow in a formal educational setting.

It was also in this role that I was introduced to the phenomenal power of interdisciplinary collaboration and its ability to generate uniquely tailored and comprehensive educational programming making use of current, scientifically proven educational best practices. At the Kennedy Krieger Institute, a team of specialists trained across a broad range of disciplines worked collaboratively to address the unique referral question of each student. Disciplines included speech-language pathology, behavioral psychology, education, clinical psychology, medicine, nursing, and occasionally other disciplines unique to the case. Each week, the entire team met to review their findings for a particular student. Interdisciplinary conferences begin with professionals from each discipline formally presenting their findings and recommendations, followed by an in-depth conversation on the child's needs culminating in a comprehensive summary of recommendations supporting the education and unique learning needs of the child. This experience had a significant and lasting impact on my views of professional applied work relative to education practice and how it can be dramatically enhanced through the shared perspectives of different professional disciplines.

After my post-doctoral experience, I accepted an academic position in educational psychology at the State University of New York, Cortland. It was here that I developed a passion for teaching preservice teachers and other emerging professionals. Over the years, I recognized a need for an Educational Psychology textbook with an eye toward how traditional topics in the field can be understood through the lens of interdisciplinary collaboration. This ultimately led to the first edition of this book.

In this second edition, I have continued with the traditional layout of topics typically included in Educational Psychology textbooks, but with updated content to better mirror current best practices and interdisciplinary perspectives. Throughout the book, I have maintained a straightforward, easy-to-read writing style with an overall focus on collaboration as a tool to better develop educational excellence. I hope you will be able to use this book in your college course and keep it as a resource in your professional life.

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