



# Doctorate of Education in Distance Education (EDDE) 801

## Advanced Topics and Issues in Distance Education (Revision 2)

**Status:** Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#) for the current revision

**Delivery mode:** [Paced study](#). Delivered via Brightspace.

**Credits:** 3

**Area of study:** Distance Education

**Prerequisites:** None

**Precluded:** None

**Faculty:** Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences [↗](#)

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**Notes:** Only students admitted into the doctoral program may take this course.

## Overview

The purpose of the EDDE 801 course is to provide doctoral students with understanding of the key theories, principles, concepts, practices, and opinions of the field, so that they may successfully participate in dialogue, debate, and discussions with their peers and instructors, begin the process of developing their dissertation, and engage in advanced study of the remaining topics in the program.

## Outline

The course consists of the following units:

Unit A. Fundamental theories, concepts, and basic research in distance education

- Theory in distance education
- Learning theories
- Taxonomy of the cognitive domain
- Presence (cognitive, teaching, social, emotional)

## Unit B. Distance education as a field of study and practice

- Transactional distance
- Research models, paradigms
- Andragogy

## Unit C. Issues in distance education

- Industrialization of distance education
- Hyper-normal, temporally retarded communications
- Media effectiveness debate
- The no significant difference phenomenon

## Unit D. Principles of practice in online education

- Cohort learning; the cohort model
- Interaction theory
- Multimedia learning principles
- Principles of good teaching

After the program Orientation, students continue study of the contents of the EDDE 801 course throughout the following fall and winter terms. The extended length of EDDE 801 is due to its contents, and to the fact that, as the first course in the program, it has important social as well as content objectives. The course content also requires additional time for students to read, absorb, and reflect.

## Objectives

Consistent with the course title, the purpose of EDDE 801 is to provide information about basic research findings, concepts and principles, accepted practices, and respected opinion in the field of distance education and training. Students are required to participate successfully in intellectual debate and discussions with their peers and instructors, to continue to prepare for the process of doing research for the dissertation, and to participate in advanced study as the program proceeds.

Specifically, at the conclusion of the course students should be able to:

- 1.** Draw on, or contribute to, as required and appropriate, the social and interpersonal resources of the student cohort, to support the personal, social, and learning needs of the EDDE801 course group;
- 2.** Discuss analytically (compare, contrast, critique, and evaluate) the content of the readings and other topics and resources that constitute the course subject matter, including the contributions of classmates and faculty, through various synchronous and asynchronous processes and activities;
- 3.** Describe and critically examine personal teaching and training beliefs and practices, in light of the findings, principles, concepts, and viewpoints found in the distance education and related literature.
- 4.** Apply to personal practice appropriate knowledge and skills acquired from various sources, including reading, observation, discussion, and critical analysis and reflection.
- 5.** Participate in various course activities: produce written treatments of course topics, as assigned or as personally designed, and submit these in a timely manner for consideration by the seminar group and for assessment by the course instructor(s); lead synchronous seminar

sessions and asynchronous conference or forum discussions; support other members of the cohort, as required and appropriate.

## Evaluation

Activity	Weight
<p>Assignment 1: A collaborative presentation, occurring at the program Orientation session in Athabasca in August. Students prepare and present in assigned groups. Topics are to be discussed, negotiated, and prepared by group members, from the options provided, in advance of the Orientation. (The information letter contains contact information for the members of each subgroup, and details on the assignment.)</p>	25%
<p>Assignment 2: Students prepare and post three literature reviews, of approximately 1000 words each, to the Moodle website for asynchronous discussion, and send them to the instructor for review. As well, the instructor may choose a review for class discussion at one of the synchronous seminar sessions. (If a summary is chosen, the instructor will advise the student author of the review in advance.)</p>	15%
<p>Assignment 3: individually produce and submit to the instructor a paper on a topic from the “topics” list, or on an alternative topic identified in advance in consultation with the instructor; individually or collaboratively (students’ choice), make a one-hour presentation (including questions and discussion) based on the topic, at a designated synchronous seminar session; individually or collaboratively (depending</p>	20%

Activity	Weight
upon (2), above), moderate an asynchronous CMC conference/forum on the chosen topic, in Moodle.	
Seminar and CMC Participation: Awarded for regular attendance at and effective participation in the online synchronous (Adobe Connect) seminar sessions, and the asynchronous computer-mediated communications (CMC) discussions conducted from time to time throughout the course.	25%
Course Participation	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Materials

### Digital course materials

Links to the following course materials will be made available in the course:

Rose, E. (2013). *On Reflection: An Essay on Technology, Education, and the Status of Thought in the Twenty-first Century*. Toronto ON: Canadian Scholars Press.

### Important links

> [Course schedule](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery modes may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

*Updated June 9, 2026*

View [previous revision](#) 

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