

SESP 201 Human Development: Childhood and Adolescence Spring 2010

Monday and Wednesday 3:00 PM-4:20 PM ANNENBERG G02

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Required Readings: Berk, L. (2009). Child Development, 8th Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
Selected journal articles posted on blackboard.

Course Objectives:

The goal of this course is to provide you with a strong grounding in human development and to introduce you to the principles of developmental theory, methods and research. We will cover the age range from conception and infancy through adolescence and the transition into early adulthood. Domains of development that we will cover include physical, perceptual and motor development, cognitive and language development, social and emotional development, and changes in children's understanding of the self and of morality. Both normative development (what are typical changes that occur for all children?) and individual differences (how do children differ from one another and what causes these differences?) will be examined.

While the emphasis is on the basic theory and research of the scientific field of human development, the course will also demonstrate how developmental theory and research can be applied to improving the lives of children and their families. It is hoped that exposure to the scientific study of human development will: a) enrich your understanding of children and adolescents and the individual, familial and societal factors affecting their development; b) improve your ability to evaluate research on human development; c) help inform choices you will make regarding the lives children and adolescents, whether in the personal or professional realm.

Course Requirements:

Students are expected to:

- 1) attend lectures (attendance will be part of your grade!) (5%)
- 2) participate in class discussions/exercises and read the assigned readings before class (5%)
- 3) complete 3 active learning projects (30%)
- 4) take one midterm exam (20%) and a final exam (40%)

Students should regularly consult the blackboard site associated with the class, where announcements will be made and resources will be placed. Students are strongly encouraged to visit the TA and the Instructor during their office hours – we are here to help you understand and appreciate the course material.

Evaluation:

Exam questions will involve a mixture of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions, and will be based on both the readings and the lecture material. You are responsible for material in the text not covered in lecture, and material in the lecture not covered in the text. Grades are based the following:

Grade	Points	Percentages
A	4.0	93-100%
A-	3.7	90-92%
B+	3.3	87-89%
B	3.0	83-86%
B-	2.7	80-82%
C+	2.3	77-79%
C	2.0	73-76%
C-	1.7	70-72%
D	1.0	60-69%
F	0	<60%

Course Policies:

- 1) *Disabilities*: students with documented disabilities should contact the instructor at the beginning of the quarter to discuss any special arrangements that may be required
- 2) *Make-ups*: students may only arrange a make-up exam in the case of a serious and unavoidable cause. In all cases the instructor must be contacted **before** the time of the scheduled exam, and in the case of an illness a signed physician's note must be provided.
- 3) *Scholastic Dishonesty*: will result in a failing grade or other sanctions. See Northwestern's principles regarding Academic Integrity (<http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/uniprin.html>) and "Academic Integrity at Northwestern, a Basic Guide", available from the SESP Office of Student Affairs.

Active Learning Projects:

These out-of-class projects are designed to give you hands-on learning and writing experience. They will make up 30% of your final grade. Details of assignments will be posted on Blackboard.

Project #1: Design Your Own Child Development Study (5 points, 1-2 pages in length). You will be asked to: a) formulate your own research question regarding child development and b) briefly outline a research strategy that could be used to answer that question.

Project #2: Observation of Cognitive or Social Development (5 points, 4 pages including notes). You will be asked to team up with another member of the class and together complete one of two observational tasks, focusing on an aspect of cognitive or social development. For the cognitive development task, if you know a child between the ages of 4 and 8 years who is willing to be interviewed (and whose parent gives you permission to interview the child), you will ask the child to complete two Piagetian conservation tasks, and to record your observations of the child's responses. For the social development task, you will unobtrusively and anonymously observe parents and their children in a grocery or toy store, and record observations regarding their parenting strategies.

Project #3: Analysis of Child Development Research with Policy Recommendations (20 points, 6 pages excluding references). A special session will be held outside of class to help you learn how to navigate through electronic and journal resources. You will be asked to:

- 1) Choose from a list of topics to be provided which apply child development research and knowledge to understanding real-world issues or problems
- 2) Locate 3 recent empirical research papers on the topic that are published in peer-reviewed academic journals (publication date must be after 2000)
- 3) Summarize the papers and provide policy recommendations that follow from the results of the papers.

Course Schedule:

The following schedule is a guideline, subject to minor changes as the quarter proceeds. Students are required to complete their readings before the lecture on each topic as we will not always review the

textbook material in class, and will assume knowledge of it in the class lecture and discussions.

Date:	Topic:	Readings:	Projects Due:
03/29	Introduction, Context and History of Child and Adolescent Development	Chapter 1	
03/31	Developmental Theory and Methods	Chapter 2	
04/05	More Methods	Chapter 2, A #1	
04/07	Conception and Prenatal Development	Chapter 3	ALP1 - 5%
04/12	Infant Early Capabilities, Reflexes and Development	Chapter 4	
04/14	****NO CLASS***** ENJOY☺		
04/19	Cognitive Development: Piaget and Vygotsky	Chapter 6	
04/21	Cognitive Development: Information Processing	Chapter 7	
04/26	Language Development	Chapter 9	ALP2 – 5%
04/28	Literacy and Review for Midterm Exam	A #2	
05/03	Midterm Exam		Midterm 20%
05/05	Emotional Development	Chapter 10	
05/10	Temperament and Attachment	Chapter 10	
05/12	Self and Identity Development, Gender Differences?	Chapter 11, 13	
05/17	Moral Development	Chapter 12	
05/19	Context I. Family and Child Care	Chapter14,pp.425-441	
05/24	Context II. Schooling, Peer and Romantic Relationships	Chapter 15	
05/26	Context III. Risky Behaviors, Poverty, Health and Well-being	pp.621-626, A #3	ALP3- 20%
05/31	****Memorial Day: NO CLASS****		
06/02	Transition to Early Adulthood and Review	A #4 and A #5	
06/09	Final Exam: 7 - 9 PM, ANNENBERG G02		Final – 40%