



Introduction to Developmental Psychology: Infancy and Childhood

Psychology 112

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Please don't call before 8:00AM or after 11:00PM.

Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 1:30-2:30 and by appointment. Or please drop by or drop me a note if you have a question or want to talk about the class.

Meeting times: Tuesday/Thursday 11:30-12:50; Preston 128

Required Texts: *Child and Adolescent Development (5th Edition)* Siefert & Hoffnung
Readings on the Development of Children (3rd Edition) Gauvain & Cole

Course Description:

A human life begins with a single cell and unfolds in almost inconceivable complexity. Developmental psychology is the scientific study of change and continuity over the lifecourse. This course is an introductory survey course in developmental psychology that focuses on the period between conception and puberty. While each life unfolds in its own unique pattern, we will explore the ways biological, psychological, cultural, and sociological influences systematically combine to shape its course. This class will help you to develop an understanding of concepts, methods, and research findings central to the study of developmental psychology.

Form at and Goals:

This course has five primary goals:

1. to learn the factual information that is the basis of our scientific understanding of developmental psychology
2. to begin to address the primary literature in developmental psychology
3. to understand the interrelationship of social, biological, and cognitive development
4. to appreciate the interdisciplinary nature of the study of development
5. to recognize the diversity of life experiences that shape individual development

Although this is a 100 level class, this doesn't mean it is an *easy* class. In some ways, introductory classes require a lot more work on the part of students because there is a lot of information that will be new to you and because there is a lot of factual information that you need to master. A course designated at the 100 level means that you aren't expected to have any background in psychology to understand the material presented. If you become confused, or feel like I'm expecting you to understand a concept that I haven't introduced yet, PLEASE STOP ME AND ASK ME TO EXPLAIN! If you don't feel comfortable asking during class, drop by my office, send me an e-

mail, or ask me after class. Remember, if you don't understand the material, other people in the class probably don't either, and they will be really grateful to you for asking.

Course Requirements:

It is your responsibility to attend all classes and learn material presented during lectures, class discussions, and in your assigned readings. You are also responsible for keeping yourselves informed of any changes that are announced in class or through the e-mail system regarding assignments and changes in schedule. Because much of class time will involve discussion of outside readings, it is *imperative* that you keep up with the reading and come prepared for class. The better prepared you are, the more you can contribute to all of our learning experiences. Reading assignments should be completed before class on the dates indicated on the syllabus.

Please bring your book to class when we are discussing readings from Gauvin and Cole.

This will allow us to refer to individual tables and particular details in the text.

Evaluation:

There are three major criteria on which you will be evaluated: your performance on Readiness Assessment Tests (RATs), short assignments, and empirical essays.

Readiness Assessment Tests. Readiness Assessment Tests are short quizzes (around 20 multiple choice and true/false questions). There will be five RATs given during the course of the semester. Their purpose is to save time reviewing material you were assigned to read outside of class and to ensure that everyone has the basics of the material down before we elaborate on that material during lecture and discussion. There are THREE parts to each RAT.

First, you will take the RAT individually. This is a closed-book quiz.

Second, you will take the same RAT with an assigned group of three other students. The group will turn in the group RAT for grading. This is also a closed-book quiz.

Third, after receiving your graded group RAT, your group will have 5 minutes to write an appeal to any question that was marked wrong on the group RAT. Your appeal must be based on a defense of the correctness of your answer. If your appeal is accepted, your grade (both individual and group) will be changed accordingly. The appeal is done open-book. There are no appeals on individual RATs.

Both the individual and group RAT will count toward your final grade. The total of the individual and group RAT scores will be worth 25% of your grade. Each part must count toward at least 10% of your grade. If your group grade is LOWER than your individual grade at the end of the semester, you will receive the higher of the two (in other words, your group can't drag you down, but they will probably help you up).

Short assignments. During the course of the semester you will be asked to do around 15 short assignments. Sometimes the goal of these assignments will be to help you prepare for in-class work by thinking about things ahead of times. Other times, the goal will be for you to summarize what you've done in class and tie up loose ends. Sometimes it will be for you to think about an issue that we won't have time to discuss in class. All short assignments must be turned in **during class the day they are due**. Assignments can be written either in prose or in a coherent outline form. They

can also be neatly handwritten rather than typed. **NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** Assignments will be graded 0 (not done), ✓- (minimally completed), ✓ (good job), or ✓+ (excellent). Your best 10 assignments will contribute towards your final grade

Empirical Essays: Colleges - especially small, liberal arts colleges - are a really unique developmental context because you can walk around for days, weeks, or even months without seeing any children. To help bring you closer to the subject of this class, you will be spending some time observing children in a very particular environment: the Bard College nursery school. At least four times during the semester, you will do observations at the nursery school and discuss your observations in a formal empirical essay. Observations will be done outside of class time during an assigned time slot chosen to fit with your schedule. If you miss your assigned observation time, you need to arrange to do your observations at another time **AT THE CONVENIENCE OF THE NURSERY SCHOOL STAFF.** The primary obligation of the Nursery School staff is to the children they serve. They have generously allowed us to observe the children and learn from them. It is your responsibility to fit yourself into their schedule rather than to expect them to accommodate yours. They have seventeen children to take care of! Please be courteous and help them accommodate us by showing up when you are expected and following the guidelines they have established. If you lose the privilege of doing observations in the Nursery School, that part of your grade cannot be made up.

Final Grades:

Your final grade will be calculated based on the following criteria:

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| 30% | 5 RATs |
| 30% | 10 short assignments |
| 40% | 4 empirical essays |

Missed RATs, late essays, and absences:

Because it is extremely difficult to evaluate the validity of excuses for missing a class, the general policy will be to permit make-up RATs only for confirmed emergencies or an illness that requires confinement to the Health Center. If you miss a RAT, your individual test score will count as both your individual and group score for that week. Please notify me as soon as it is apparent that a RAT will be missed. Failure to notify me promptly may result in refusal to administer a make-up, with a resultant 0 averaged into the final grade.

ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BY THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON THE DAY INDICATED ON THE SYLLABUS. Long lines at the printer are not a legitimate excuse for a late paper, so **PLAN YOUR TIME ACCORDINGLY!** I expect you to turn in all written assignments on time. It is unfair to classmates who push themselves to complete their work by the due date for you to turn your essay in late. *Everyone* could do a better job given a little more time. All late essays will be dropped 10 points the first day and will not be accepted more than two days late. If you know your essay will be late, you are responsible for informing me on or before the date it is due. Failure to do so may result in refusal to accept late work.

A note on academic integrity:

One important skill that you need to develop is the ability to distinguish between your own ideas and those of other people. Although most obvious in cases where text is copied word for word, plagiarism also includes copying ideas or arguments from one source and presenting them as your own. Plagiarism can involve as little as copying a key phrase or sentence without acknowledging the source. It is easy to avoid. Use quotation marks to indicate direct quotes. If you are presenting an idea or an argument that you read somewhere else, give the person who first developed the idea credit for it. Remember, when in doubt, cite.

Cheating and plagiarism are very serious offenses governed by the Bard student code of conduct. Anyone found cheating on a RAT, purposefully miscorrecting work, or copying work from another source without proper acknowledgment will receive an F in this class and will be referred to the College Judicial System for further action.

CLASS SCHEDULE

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| Sept 3 | Introduction RAT 0: Syllabus | Nov 7 | Lifestage Essay 4 due |
| Sept 5 | Babies assigned | Nov 12 | RAT 6: Early Adulthood |
| Sept 10 | RAT 1: Prenatal Development: Chapters 1, 3 & 4 | Nov 14 | Selections 10.1, 10.2, 11.2 |
| Sept 12 | Selection 3.1 | Nov 26 | RAT 7: Middle Adulthood |
| Sept 17 | RAT 2: The First Two Years | Dec 3 | Selections 10.2, 11.1, 11.3 |
| Sept 22 | Selections 1.2, 4.1, 3.2, 4.2, | Dec 10 | RAT 8: Late Adulthood |
| Sept. 26 | Lifestage Essay 1 due | Dec 12 | Selections 12.1, 12.2, 12.3 |
| Oct 1 | RAT 3: The Play Years | Dec 19 | Lifestage Essay 5 due |
| Oct 3 | Selections 6.1, 6.2, 5.4, 5.5 | | |
| Oct 10 | Lifestage Essay 2 due | | |
| Oct 15 | RAT 4: The School Years | | |
| Oct 17 | Selections 1.4, 1.5, 7.1, 7.2 | | |
| Oct 24 | Lifestage Essay 3 due | | |
| Oct 29 | RAT 5: Adolescence | | |
| Oct 31 | Selections 1.3, 8.2, 9.1 | | |

Revised Schedule

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| Sept 3 | Introduction RAT 0: Syllabus |
| Sept 5 | Babies assigned |
| Sept 10 | RAT 1: Prenatal Development: Chapters 1, 3 & 4 |
| Sept 12 | Selection 3.1 |
| Sept 17 | RAT 2: The First Two Years |
| Sept 12 | Selections 3.1, 4.2 |
| Oct. 1 | Lifestage Essay 1 due Piaget and cognitive development. Selections 1.2, 4.1, 5.1 |
| Oct 3 | RAT 3: Early and Middle Childhood Chapters 9, 10, 12, & 13 |
| Oct 8 | Language development Selections 5.2, 6.1, 6.2 |
| Oct 10 | Behaviorism and social development Selections 5.4, 7.1, 5.5 |
| Oct 22 | Gender Selections 7.3, 1.5 |
| Oct 24 | Lifestage Essay 2 due |
| Oct 29 | RAT 4: Adolescence and Early Adulthood Chapters 15, 16 18, & 19 |
| Oct 31 | Cognitive Change Selections 8.1, 8.2 |
| Nov 5 | Morality Selections 7.2, 1.4, 8.2 |
| Nov 12 | Identity Selections 1.3, 9.1 |
| Nov 19 | Romantic Relationships (readings to be announced) Lifestage Essay 3 due |
| Nov 26 | RAT 5: Middle and Late Adulthood Chapters 20, 21, 23, 24 |
| Dec 3 | Cognition Selections Selections 10.2, 12.1 |
| Dec 10 | Identity within the lifespan Selections 10.1, 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 12.2 |
| Dec 17 | Death Epilogue from Berger, Selections 12.3, 12.4 |
| Dec 19 | Lifestage Essay 4 due |