

EPSY 420 Child & Adolescent Development Spring 2009

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Class Time: Monday & Wednesday, 4:15-5:35
Class Location: BA 213
Office Location: ED 241
Office Hours: Wednesday 5:45-6:45 &
by appointment

Course Description

This course covers theory and research in social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development and its application to instruction with an emphasis on late childhood through middle adolescence. Prerequisite: Junior or senior class standing.

Course Objectives

“Every generation rediscovers and re-evaluates the meaning of infancy and childhood”
–Arnold Gesell & Frances L. Ilg, *Infant and Child in the Culture of Today*, 1943

Children are an integral part of our society and culture. The study of how children develop from conception to adulthood has been of great interest, especially for psychological researchers. This course is designed to provide a survey of the field of child development. Upon completion of this course you should:

- Understand the core theories of child development.
- Use the language of developmental researchers.
- Critically evaluate the use and reporting of research in the media.
- Apply theoretical knowledge to *real life* situations.
- Understand the roles of nature and nurture.

Bukatko and Daehler (2004) identify six key themes to consider when studying child development. These themes are:

- What roles do nature and nurture play in development?
- How does the sociocultural context influence development?
- How does the child play an active role in development?
- Is development continuous or discontinuous?
- How prominent are individual differences in development?
- How do the various domains of development interact?

Textbook & Articles

Bukatko, D., Daehler, M.W. (2004). *Child development: A thematic approach* (5th Ed.). Boston, MA: Houghton Mufflin Company.

Articles will be available via the course website.

You will also need a reference book for using APA style. The *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*, 5th edition, is the best resource.

Course Website

The website for this course is located at: <http://moodle.bryer.org>. In addition to providing access to course documents and allowing submission of assignments, this will be the conduit to communicate between classes. Your username is the same as your Unix (i.e. myUAlbany) username and initial password is your last name (all lower case). It is advisable that you change your password after your initial login. Also, update your contact information including email.

Course Requirements & Grading

Assignments

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Points</i>
Midterm exam	20
Final exam	20
Research Assignment	
Annotated Bibliography	10
Methodology	10
Poster Presentation	15
Research in the Media Paper	10
Reading reflections	10
CITI Ethics Training	5

Grade Distribution

A = 93+	A- = 90-92	B+ = 87-89	B = 84-86	B- = 81-83	C+ = 78-80
C = 75-77	C- = 72-74	D+ = 69-71	D = 66-68	D- = 63-65	E = <63

Reading Reflections

Prior to each class post a brief (i.e. one or two paragraphs) reflection of the assigned reading(s). You may provide some personal insight or experience, questions for clarification, critique of the theory, connections to other theories studied, etc. I don't expect you to be an expert about the reading but rather to demonstrate that you have completed and thought about the reading(s). Your responses will help shape the lecture. It is also acceptable to respond to someone else's post but I will expect further insight and elaboration beyond "I agree."

Exams

There will be two exams during the semester. Each exam will consist of a multiple-choice portion and a take home essay. Essays should be between one and two pages (excluding reference page) and adhere to APA guidelines. Use of your textbook or other resources is allowed with proper citation. You are expected to complete the essay alone and any consultation with other students is *not* permitted.

Collaborative Instructional Training Initiative (CITI) Training

The issue of ethics is critical for all research with human subjects, and is even perhaps more important when considering child research. An important part of learning about child development is to observe children, and since most students will satisfy the research assignment by observing children, a review of ethical research is vital. All students are required to complete the ethics training provided by CITI located at: <https://www.citiprogram.org>. You will not receive a grade for the literature review nor be allowed to conduct your observations until this training has been completed.

Research in the Media Paper

Find an article from a media organization (e.g. Times Union, New York Times, Time magazine, etc., preferably print) that reports on a child development topic. If the article cites a specific journal article, find that article, otherwise search for peer-reviewed research articles pertaining to that topic. Write a two to three page report containing:

- A summary of the topic.
- How did the media represent the topic/research?
- What does the literature say? Include the research question(s), research method(s), relevant statistics, and results. Be sure to use peer-reviewed journals.
- Discussion of whether the media article accurately represented the research. Was there a bias in the presentation?
- Reference page (not included in page count).

Research Assignment

An important part of learning about child development is to actually observe children. The following options are available with possible topics listed below:

- Observe a child that you know through personal contact (i.e. family or friends). Written consent from the parents must be collected prior to the observation.
 - Attachment, separation, and reunion (crawling babies to about 20 months)
 - Stranger anxiety (approximately 4 months to 18 months)
 - Temperament (2 months onwards)
 - Cognition: Object concept (3 months to 1 year)
 - Cognition: Conservation acquisition (4 years to 8 years)
 - Cognition: 3 mountain task (3 to 6 years)
 - Self recognition (approximately 11 months to 3 years)
 - Language: Creative errors (3 to 5 years)
 - Language: Wug “test” (approximately 3 to 8 years)
 - Gender understanding and constancy
 - Moral reasoning (approximately 2 to 7 years)
 - Infancy: Visual discrimination (approximately 1 month to 4 months)
 - Infancy: Imitation (newborns to about 4 months)
 - Children’s understanding of natural and cultural phenomena (world, germs, witches, fairies, seasons, moon, etc.)
- Observe children in one of the three university daycare centers (it is advisable to do this in pairs). Additional information will be provided if choosing this option.
 - Attachment, separation, and reunion (crawling babies to about 20 months)
 - Stranger anxiety (approximately 4 months to 18 months)
 - Language: Adult scaffolding (Preschool)
 - Play: Gender differences (3 years onwards)
 - Play: Symbolic and pretend play (approximately 2 to 7 years)
- Visit a toy store and document the differences in toys based upon gender, physical skill development, and/or age. You may also wish to visit multiple toy stores to compare the differences between corporate toy stores (e.g. Toys ‘r Us) and family owned toy stores.
- Visit a bookstore and investigate the differences in children’s books (e.g. use of color, shape of book, use of language, pictures, topics, etc.).

- Interview parents from different family situations (e.g. single parent, two income family, stay at home parent, reconstituted family, etc.) and compare their various experiences raising children.
- Watch and log children's television. Possible topics include use of advertising, subject matter, presentation style, gender differences, etc. If you have personal contact with a child, you may wish to observe their watching habits. This should be done within the normal watching context. That is, you will need to observe the child at times when the parent allows for TV watching.
- Head Start Option – You have the option of visiting a Head Start classroom as part of a University research project. You will administer the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) to students in the classroom. More details will be provided if interested.
- I may approve additional topics.

Annotated Bibliography (10 points)

Find four articles that are related to your topic. For each article include:

1. Citation in APA format.
2. Research question(s).
3. Summary of the research.
4. Summary of the results.
5. Research category.
6. Characteristics of the study that qualify it for this research category.
7. Strengths of the research methodology.
8. Limitations of the research methodology.

You will post your annotated bibliographies in the *Annotated Bibliography Wiki* on the course website. You may consult with classmates to complete your annotated bibliographies, but each student is responsible for contributing four unique sources. A forum is also provided for each group to discuss with your classmates issues related to your topic.

Methodology (10 points)

A methodology is, in essence, a plan of how you intend to collect data. Your methodology should include:

1. Your research question/focus.
2. A methodology plan for your observations. This includes your selection process (be sure to keep anonymity) and observational procedure (e.g. event sampling, time sampling, operational definitions and categories of behavior you will record). Consider carefully how data will be collected. Creating an instrument or form prior to the observation will help tremendously. I also expect you to draw upon the research articles available in the annotated bibliography wiki.
3. Consent forms (where necessary).

Poster Presentation (15 points)

Once you have carried out your observations, prepare a poster to present in class on either April 27nd or 29th. The poster should include:

- An overview of the literature (select the most relevant sources from the annotated bibliography wiki).
- Research question/focus.
- Methodology.
- Observational data.
- Results.
- An abstract of no more than 150 words. Provide copies to distribute to class.

On the day opposite your presentation you will observe and write brief critiques on the provided form of other students' posters. I will collect these critiques to include in feedback provided to students.

Working with a partner

The methodology and poster presentation may be completed in pairs. However, students must participate in all aspects of the research project including developing a methodology, collecting data, and presenting final results. Students who choose to work in pairs must submit a written statement indicating that they both were significantly involved in all aspects of the research project.

Reasonable Accommodation

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning and psychiatric disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation in this class, please notify the Director of Disabled Student Services (Campus Center 137, 442-5490). That office will provide the course instructor with verification of your disability, and will recommend appropriate accommodations. For more information, visit the website of the UAlbany Office for Disabled Student Services.

<http://www.albany.edu/studentlife/DSS/guidelines/accomodation.html>

Academic Integrity

Whatever you produce for this course should be your own work and created specifically for this course. You cannot present work produced by others, nor offer any work that you presented or will present to another course. If you borrow text or media from another source or paraphrase substantial ideas from someone else, you must provide a reference to your source.

The University policy on academic dishonesty is clearly outlined in the Student Bulletin, and includes, but is not limited to plagiarism, cheating on examinations, multiple submissions, forgery, unauthorized collaboration, and falsification. These are serious infractions of University regulations and could result in a failing grade for the work in question, a failing grade in the course, or dismissal from the University.

http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html

Course Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Readings*</i>
Jan-21	Introduction	Chapter 1
Jan-26	Studying Child Development	Chapter 2
Jan-28	Basic Learning & Perception	Chapter 6
Feb-2	Ethical Research & Research Methods	Dennis & Dennis (1941) Cole & Cole
Feb-4	Attachment	Harlow (1958) Chapter 11 (pp. 401-417)
Feb-9	Temperament	Chapter 11 (pp. 384-386, 397-401, 408)
Feb-11	Nature Nurture	Scarr (1992) Baumrind (1993) Star Wars
Feb-16 Feb-18	NO CLASS – Winter Break	
Feb-23	Cognition: Piaget	Chapter 8 (pp. 270-301)
Feb-25	Cognition: Piaget	Media & Research Paper Due
Mar-2	Cognition: Vygotsky	Chapter 8 (pp. 301-306)
Mar-4	Cognition: Information Processing	Chapter 9
Mar-9	MIDTERM	
Mar-11	Language	Take-home essay
Mar-16	Language	Pines (1981) Chapter 7
Mar-18	Intelligence	Chapter 10 Annotated Bibliography Due CITI Ethics Training Due
Mar-23	Intelligence	
Mar-25	Moral Development	Chapter 12 Methodology Due
Mar-30	Moral Development	Crain (1985)
Apr-1	Gender	Chapter 13
Apr-6	Birth Order	Newman (1994)
Apr-8 Apr-13	NO CLASS – Spring Break	
Apr-15	NO CLASS – AERA	
Apr-20	Family	Chapter 14
Apr-22	Peers	Chapter 15
Apr-27	Poster Presentations	
Apr-29	Poster Presentations	
May-4	Review	
May-7	FINAL EXAM 3:30pm – 5:30	Take-home essay due

*Post reflections and questions by 8:00 p.m. the day before class.