

Psychology 205 – Human Development, Spring 2004

Room – Humanities 201

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Text: Human Development (9th edition), Papalia, D.E., Olds, S.W. & Feldman, R.D.

Course Description

Human development is the scientific study of change (and stability) across the human lifespan. In this course we will focus particularly on the physical, cognitive and socio-emotional changes that take place from birth to adolescence. We will only briefly discuss human development in adulthood. The course will be conducted in a combined lecture-discussion format. The primary goals of this class for each individual student are as follows: (1) to gain knowledge about the major psychological and behavioral changes that take place in early life and to some extent later in adulthood; (2) to be able to think critically about the major issues and themes in human development; (3) to understand what constitutes a scientific approach to human development and what methods researchers use to address developmental questions; (4) to develop the ability to formulate relevant and insightful questions on human development; (5) finally, to apply what is discussed in this course to your own life and to become more reflective of your own personal development.

Course Policies

Throughout the semester, in-class assignments will be given without prior notice and out-of-class assignments will always be due at the beginning of a class. It is therefore expected that you attend and be on time to every class. Otherwise, you may lose the opportunity to earn points on certain assignments. You will have the opportunity to make up assignments that are missed for excusable absences. Excusable absences include family emergencies, religious holidays or illnesses, but you must bring appropriate documentation to me the next time we meet in class or during office hours. I also expect that in these cases you will notify me before class by email that you cannot attend. If you only come to me after missing a class with an excuse, I may ignore this excuse unless there is good reason why you didn't notify me beforehand.

It is also expected that you actively participate in class. Much of your evaluation will come from writing assignments that demand that you synthesize information and abstract out general findings and theoretical principles. Passively taking notes and rote memorization of the textbook are strategies that are not likely to serve you well in these assignments. Come to class prepared to think beyond the material presented in the book. We will have many opportunities for discussion based on the assigned readings.

I will not tolerate any disrespect of other students' opinions and ideas. It is likely that you have come from a variety of educational and cultural backgrounds, and this should only enhance the learning experience. I don't expect us all to agree on every issue, but I do expect us to respect each other's right to disagree and hold an alternative opinion. This also holds for the course material. For us to truly appreciate the science of developmental psychology, we must possess a

certain attitude toward the ideas presented by each other, by lecture and in the book. This attitude is one of objective criticism and open-mindedness. I will expect nothing less from each and every one of you.

I will also not tolerate any unnecessary disruptions during class. This includes cell phones ringing and other intrusive electronic devices. Make sure if you have one of these devices that they are turned off before entering class. If you attempt to answer your phone, you will be asked to leave and may not return for the remainder of class.

Finally, the Student Honor Code of Oxford College applies to every member of the class. Please review this Code carefully paying special attention to the section on plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when you use the words and/or ideas of another person without appropriate use of quotations and referencing, in effect claiming that these ideas are your own. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, see me before turning in the assignment. I will not address lightly plagiarism or any other code violations under any circumstances.

Course Assignments/Evaluation

Your final grade will be based on a 1000-point scale composed of the following assignments and exams. The plus-minus system will be utilized in the calculation of final grades.

Ten Reflection papers (10 points each = 100 points): Periodically I will have you respond to what was presented in lecture or in your readings. This will involve writing during the last 5-15 minutes of class. In these reflection papers, you will have the opportunity to present any questions, comments, impressions and/or insights you may have about the material presented. The points you earn for these papers will be determined by the relevance of what you write about to the topics presented in lecture/book and not whether you are necessarily right or wrong. I am simply testing to see how well you thought about the material. Because these papers will not be announced in advance, you will lose all points for not coming to class without a satisfactory excuse when reflection papers are assigned (see Course Policies).

Two essay papers (50 and 100 points = 150 points): You will write two short papers on topics that will be announced later. The first paper, worth 50 points, will be 2-3 pages long (typed double-spaced, either 10- or 12-point font). The second paper, worth 100 points, will be 4-5 pages long (typed double-spaced, either 10- or 12-point font). These topic papers will involve synthesizing material presented in both lecture and your readings. You will not be required to research other materials beyond what is presented in class or in your textbook. *Also, the first paper will not be graded.* You will receive the full 50 points if you meet the length requirement and show sufficient effort in addressing the topic to which you will be assigned. The second short paper, however, will be graded for content relevance, argument strength, grammar, organization, etc.

One 8-10 page research paper and presentation (250 points): This paper and presentation will be due toward the end of the semester. You will pick a topic of interest to you. Think of this assignment as your opportunity to develop some expertise on a particular topic by researching it beyond the material presented in your textbook or lecture. In fact, it will be required that you reference additional sources (e.g., books, journal articles, internet) in your paper. By mid-

semester, I will have a list of possible topics from which you can choose, or you may present to me an appropriate topic of your choice for approval. The 5-minute presentation, worth 50 of the 250 total points, is your chance to briefly share what you learned with the rest of the class.

Create-a-toy project (100 points): For this assignment, you will form 2- or 3-person teams and create a toy appropriate for a child younger than 12 years of age. This toy should reflect what you have learned about the *typical* physical, cognitive and socio-emotional abilities of children at different ages. The aim here is for you to use scientific research and theory in a practical way to enrich a child's environment. Each member of a team will receive the same number of points. Evaluation is based on how appropriate the toy is for your particular age group, that is, how well the toy exemplifies what we currently know about the psychological and behavioral characteristics of children within that age group. Each team will present their toy later in the semester. More details for this assignment will be presented in class.

Two midterm exams (100 points each = 200 points): These exams will have the following format. First, you will take a section of the test in class, which will include multiple choice and short answer questions. You will be allowed to bring in with you an index card with notes as a 'cheat sheet.' Second, you will then receive two essay questions that you are to complete at home and turn in at the beginning of the next class. This format gives you an opportunity to pace yourself without time pressure in forming your answer to the essay questions. It also allows you to use your book and notes as resources. You may NOT collaborate with one another on these essay questions. This is to be done individually. Any evidence of collaborative work will be carefully scrutinized, and those who violate this class policy will be in violation of the Emory Honor Code.

One final exam (200 points): The final exam will take the same form as the midterm exams except that both multiple choice/short answer and essay sections will be done in class. Also, approximately 50% of the questions on the final exam will come from the material presented after the second midterm exam, but the other 50% of the questions will come from any material presented throughout the semester. Study guides will be furnished beforehand. And just like the midterm exams, you will be allowed to use one index card with notes as a cheat sheet.

Extra Credit (50 points): I will discuss your opportunities to earn extra points in class.

Course Schedule

January 15: Introduction

January 20: Major issues (chapter 1)

January 22: Major theories (chapter 2)

January 27: Prenatal Development (chapter 3)

January 29: Birth

Infancy and Toddlerhood

February 3: Physical development (chapter 4) **Paper 1 due**

February 5: Cognitive development (chapter 5)

February 10: Cognitive development (cont.)

February 12: Socio-emotional development (chapter 6)

February 17: Socioemotional development (cont.)

February 19: Review Session

February 24: ***Exam 1***

Early Childhood

February 26: Physical and cognitive development (chapter 7)

March 2: Cognitive and socioemotional development (chapters 7-8)

March 4: Socio-emotional development (cont) **Paper 2 due**

March 9, March 11 – No class

Middle Childhood

March 16: Physical and cognitive development (chapter 9)

March 18: Socio-emotional development (chapter 10)

March 23: ***Exam 2***

Adolescence

March 25: Physical and cognitive development (chapter 11)

March 30: Socio-emotional development (chapter 12); *outline for paper 3 due*

April 1: Toy presentations

Adulthood

April 6: Physical and cognitive development (chapters 13, 15, 17)

April 8: Socio-emotional development (chapters 14, 16, 18)

April 13: Research Presentations

April 15: Research Presentations

April 20 – No class

April 22: The end of life (chapter 19); **Paper 3 due**

April 27 – Review Session

Final Exam – May 5 - 9:00-12:00pm