

Psychology 205 – Child Development, Fall 2006

Instructor: Dr. Patti Owen-Smith

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Office Hours: Wed. & Fri. 3-4 pm and always by appointment

Texts: The Development of Children (5th Ed.), by Michael Cole, Sheila R. Cole, and Cynthia Lightfoot; Required readings are on line and can be accessed through library e-reserves

About this class: The Psychology of Child Development introduces the student to the field of Developmental Psychology. The major focus will be on those concepts necessary to an understanding of the process of growth from conception through adolescence. The format of the class will include lecture, class discussion, class presentations, and a theory/practice-service/learning format.

Our class will operate on the assumption that the teacher-student relationship is a partnership whereby we learn from one another. ***I make the assumption that we are all teachers and all learners.*** Therefore, each of us will actively participate in and assume responsibility for the class.

Therefore, there are two distinctive features to this class:

1. In-class dialogue and discussion will be a significant component. While I will lecture on a regular basis, I will also expect you to take much of the leadership and ownership of the class. This will ***not*** be a class where you can sit quietly, take notes, and then leave!
2. The most distinctive feature of the class is the Theory/Practice-Service Learning (TPSL) format. A TPSL component can deepen our understanding of the subject we are studying and develop our ability to reflect on, “practice,” and apply to a real life situation what we are learning in the classroom. I believe that knowing facts, reciting theories and concepts, and regurgitating back on an exam what you have memorized is not necessarily reflective of a “deep” understanding of the material nor does it prepare you for real life experiences. Therefore, you will be expected to ***reflect on what you are learning*** by working in a social service agency in the greater surrounding community ***at least*** two hours a week. I will provide you with a list of possible placements and times, and you then may select the placement based on your personal preferences and schedules. Detailed information will be given in class about this component of the class. ***Since the TPSL format will require more time from you, I have compensated you with several “days off” from lecture class (see schedule below).***

Course Goals: Each of us in this class should expect the following:

1. To participate actively in class discussions and in Learn Link conversations on a regular basis and in a thoughtful manner. This means that each of us should be able to frame our conversations around the text, lecture, and the theory presented and to listen respectfully and carefully to one another.

2. To connect the theory of the texts and lectures to the daily lives of human beings from infancy through adolescence. Our community placements will be one important venue for doing this.
3. To understand clearly the ways in which cognitive, physical, and psychosocial development are interconnected and define growth and human experiences.
4. To see the specific ways in which class, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and age intersect to influence growth and development.
5. To grow in heart and mind. This means that we will make a conscious attempt to develop a tolerance and appreciation of others' ideas and convictions, particularly those views that are different from our own.
6. **To enjoy this moment in time in our own journey of learning!**

Requirements of the Course:

1. **Class attendance, participation, and Learn Link entries (10%):** Since your individual voice is considered very significant to the integrity of the course, you should attend every class and actively participate in discussion both in class and on learn link. Each student will make at least 10 Learn Link entries during the course of the semester. Each entry should be a response or personal reaction to a concept presented in the lecture/text, in a film, by another student, etc. and should be approximately 3-4 sentences in length (at least!). It is hoped that these entries will serve as a type of conversation among students in the class. Please respond thoughtfully and respectfully to one another on this conference and demonstrate careful reflection as opposed to an "off the cuff" reaction. I am interested in whether you are able to incorporate ideas from the class and then articulate them.
3. **Response to Readings (20%):** During the course of the semester you will read three articles significant to the field of child development. I will pose a question on our Learn Link conference approximately one week prior to the date your response to the readings is due. This question will be designed to stimulate critical thinking about the article you are currently reading. You will respond to this question using the respective article as support for your answer and will then submit it as a one-page, typed paper. We will also discuss your responses in class. Further details about this assignment will be given in class.
4. **Create-a-Toy Project and Paper (20%):** You will be asked to construct a toy for a child. The purpose of this exercise is to encourage you to think about the stages of childhood in terms of cognitive, physical, and psychological/ emotional development and to apply this understanding to the construction of a toy that might be appropriate for a child from infancy through middle childhood. This project should challenge you to use your knowledge in a practical way so that you might enrich the environment of a child. The novelty and practicality of this exercise should bring to life the theoretical and research information that

you have been reading and studying. You will work collaboratively on this project (but no more than three students!), and each student in the respective group will receive the same grade. You will present your toy and analysis to the class.

5. **TPSL Reflection Paper and Community Placement (30%):** You will construct an 8-10 page paper that demonstrates how your community experience is related to, clarifies, or reflects what you have learned in this class. For example, if you are working with a child who attends an after-school tutorial program, you might want to consider how your interaction with this child validates or raises questions about what you have learned regarding psychological, physical, or cognitive development in children. (Detailed information about the construction of the final paper will be discussed in class). You are also asked to construct an abstract of your TPSL paper that you will post to our Learn Link conference for all of the members of the class to enjoy and learn from. In many ways this final assignment serves as a type of “final examination” in that you are required to synthesize what you have learned in this class and reflect this understanding in this paper.

Each of you will have an on-site supervisor to whom you will report each week. We will maintain regular contact with this supervisor so as to be certain that this experience is working well for you and the respective agency. The supervisor will evaluate your work at the end of the semester and communicate those results to me. However, this supervisor will *not* assign a grade. Periodically during the course of the semester we will have in-class discussions regarding experiences with these placements. You will be expected to talk about your placement in terms of concepts learned in class.

6. **Quizzes (20%):** You will respond to three short-answer quizzes during the course of the semester.

The plus-minus system will be utilized in the calculation of final grades.

Please make certain that your cell phones are off and that I do not see nor hear them in the classroom at any time!!!!!!

The Student Honor Code of Oxford College applies to every member of the class. Please review this Code carefully giving special attention to plagiarism. Remember that plagiarism occurs when one uses the words of another person with out quotations and without adequate referencing. PLEASE NOTE ALSO THAT THE USE OF FORMER STUDENTS' PAPERS MAY NOT BE USED IN ANY FORM; TO DO SO IS TO VIOLATE THE HONOR CODE!! Should you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please consult with me.

Course Schedule:

8/30	Introduction to course
9/1	Issues in the study of Child Development (Ch. 1)
*9/4	Labor Day Holiday!
9/6	Discussion of Community Placements
9/8, 9/11	Genes and the Environment (Ch.2)
9/13, 9/15, 9/18	Prenatal Development and Birth (Ch. 3)
*9/20	Response to Question #1 due! Discussion
9/22, 9/25	Infant Capacities (Ch. 4)
9/27	Achievements of the first year (Ch. 5)
*9/27	Last Day to drop without academic penalty
*9/29	No Class!
*10/2	End of Infancy (Ch. 6)
*10/4	Quiz 1
*10/6	No Class!
*10/9-10/10	Fall Break
10/11	Early Experience and Later Life (Ch. 7)
*10/13	No Class!
10/16, 10/18	Early Childhood Cognitive Development (Chs. 8 & 9)
*10/20	TPSL Discussion
10/23, 10/25	Early Childhood Social Development (Chs. 10 & 11)
10/27, 10/30	Middle Childhood Cognitive Development (Chs. 12 & 13)
*11/1	Response to Question #2 due! Discussion

11/3	Middle Childhood Social Development (Ch. 14)
*11/6	Quiz 2
*11/8, 11/10	No Class! Collaborative work on Toy Projects
*11/13	Toy Project Due! Presentations
*11/15, 11/17	Toy Project Presentations (continued)
*11/20	TPSL Discussion
*11/22-11/24	Thanksgiving Break!
11/27, 11/29	Adolescent Social and Biological Development (Ch. 15)
*12/1	Response to Question #3 due! Discussion
12/4, 12/6	Adolescent Cognitive and Psychological Achievements (Ch. 16)
*12/8	Quiz 3
*12/11	TPSL Reflection Paper due! Discussion

