

YSS3219 Developmental Psychology
AY2021-22, Semester 2
Dr. Cheung Hoi Shan

Developmental psychology is a field that examines human growth and development over the lifespan. This module focusses on human development from infancy to adolescence, including physical, cognitive, perceptual, social and emotional growth. The study of child development is interesting and essential – it allows us to understand why we as adults are what we are, and what we can do as a society to nurture future generations of well-adjusted and good citizens.

Aims of the course:

1. To provide you with a basic grasp of findings, theories and methods in developmental psychology, and to critically evaluate them;
2. To help you appreciate the need to base theory on empirical findings;
3. To help you think critically about developmental psychology and its application in everyday life;
4. To familiarise you with literature resources in developmental psychology, including local literature.

Schedule:

Seminars: Tuesdays and Fridays, 4-5.30pm,

Office hours: Tuesdays 10-11am; Fridays 2-3pm

By appointment: [Link TBA](#)

Format:

- Tuesdays – Interactive seminar
- Fridays – Student-led presentation and class activities
- Student-led presentations happen from Week 3 to 12.
- Active class participation in both sessions is expected of every member of the class (even for non-presenting students), so it is essential to have read the materials beforehand and be sufficiently prepared.

This course covers the following key topics in child development, as summarised below.

| Week | Topic | Week | Topic |
|------|---|------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Developmental themes and contexts | 7 | Mid-term quiz |
| 2 | Developmental theories Research methods and ethics | 8 | Cognitive development I |
| 3 | Biological foundations & heritability | 9 | Cognitive development II |
| 4 | Infant perception | 10 | Parents, peers and gender |
| 5 | Emotional development and attachment | 11 | Aggression and bullying |
| 6 | Language development | 12 | Moral development |

Required text:

Leman, P., Bremner, A., & Park, R. D. (2019). *Developmental Psychology* (2nd ed.). London: McGraw Hill Education.

Other essential readings (i.e. journal articles) are found in e-reserves. Interactive lectures will complement information presented in the readings.

Course requirements/assessments:

| Mode of assessment | Weightage (%) | Due date |
|--|---------------|--------------|
| Mid-term Quiz | 25 | 4 Mar, 2022 |
| Empirical article presentation & seminar lead (group work) | 20 | Fridays |
| Individual research paper Annotated references and paper outline – 5% | 30 | TBA TBA |
| Final quiz (take-home) in lieu of a final examination | 25 | 12 Apr, 2022 |
| Total | 100 | |

Mid-term quiz

Consists of 30 multiple choice questions and 4 short-answer questions. The quiz will be administered in class via Canvas on 4 March 2022. Topics covered from Weeks 1 to 6 will be examined, including contents discussed in seminars, student presentations and assigned readings.

Empirical article presentation and seminar lead

An empirical article will be assigned for each Friday seminar, starting from Week 3. Working in groups, prepare a **brief** presentation of the article. There is no need to provide excessive details, as your classmates are expected to have read the article. Rather, focus more on identifying the key messages in the article, why they matter for child development, and how they link to the broad topics covered in the course. Critically, you should work towards designing thought-provoking questions or class activities that would facilitate a discussion related to the topic. Students who encounter difficulties in the process of preparing for the presentation may arrange for an optional consultation session. The consultation, if needed, should occur at least one week before the presentation.

Individual research paper

The topics for the research paper will be released in Week 3. Papers should not exceed 2,000 words (excluding any tables, reference lists, etc.), and should observe the APA style and format conventions. All assignments will be checked for plagiarism. The research paper is due on **(TBA)**, to be submitted via Canvas.

An annotated reference list and a general outline of your research paper (in bullet points) is due on **(TBA)**, constituting 5% of the total grade. The purpose of this assignment is to provide you

with individualised and timely guidance for your final research paper. Submissions are to be made on Canvas.

Final Quiz

The final quiz is an 18-hour take-home assessment. It consists of one essay question, and should be written in no more than 2,000 words. Note that this is a word limit, not a word requirement.

The quiz will be released via Canvas at 06:00 on Tuesday, 12 Apr 2022, and the response is due at 23:59 on the same day on Canvas. The time given is more than enough, and you should be able to complete it within the standard seminar time if you know your concepts well. As such, it is absolutely not necessary to skip other classes or college commitments on Friday for this quiz.

All quiz questions may test materials discussed in seminars, student presentations and assigned readings.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

There is NO FINAL EXAMINATION for Developmental Psychology. Please ignore the examination date that has been assigned by Registry. You are done with this course after Week 13!

Course/College Policies

1. Late Assignment

Your assignment will be considered late if it misses the deadline without a VR note or Medical Certificate from a Doctor. For every late assignment, the grade will fall by 3 percentage points (or a 1/3 of a letter grade) per 24 hours after the deadline. Please note the following from the Academic Regulations (p. 19): "Students are expected to plan and manage their workloads, and to ensure they do not lose work through IT malfunction. Students are expected to submit work on or before the deadlines specified in the syllabi or as advised in class."

2. Canvas page usage

Announcements will be made mainly in class, or through Canvas. Weekly lecture notes will also be posted on Canvas. A discussion forum will be set up for students to post questions related to the course, or to share learning resources (e.g. an interesting YouTube video). I will visit the discussion page on a weekly basis. Participation in the forum will also count towards your class participation grade.

All required readings are listed in the course syllabus (table below). Readings in addition to chapters from the course text have been uploaded onto e-reserves.

3. Attendance

- Students are expected to attend all classes. Students must request the permission of the faculty member to be absent from classes. Unauthorised absences will adversely affect a student's class participation grade.
- Permission to be absent from class for reason of extra-curricular activities is not automatic and is at the discretion of the faculty member.

4. Social media usage and food in the classroom

You may use your laptop in class for academic purposes (i.e. accessing lecture notes, course materials, doing quick online searches related to the lecture/discussion). Please refrain from using social media in class, as it is a huge distraction to you and classmates seated around you (and to the instructor, if she happens to see it). You are welcome to bring food and drinks (non-alcoholic...) into class, but do keep the classroom clean.

5. Academic integrity

Yale-NUS College expects its students to abide by the highest standards of academic integrity as a matter of personal honesty and communal responsibility. Acting with academic integrity requires that (a) students do their own work, (b) students not interfere with the work of others, (c) students accurately and honestly represent the content of their work, and (d) students properly attribute others' work. Violations of the College's academic integrity standards undermine both the community and the individual growth of students. Accordingly, they will be addressed with the utmost seriousness and sanctions ranging from grade penalties to expulsion. Examples of violations of academic integrity include plagiarism, copying or sharing homework answers, submitting work completed for one course as 'new' work for another course, or fabricating or falsifying research data. For more information please visit the Student Services website, Policies and Procedures section: <https://studentlife.yale-nus.edu.sg/policies/academic-integrity/>

The Yale-NUS Library provides resources on citations and plagiarism here: <http://library.yale-nus.edu.sg/plagiarism/>

6. Health and wellness contacts

If you are experiencing undue stress, please do not hesitate to discuss this with the course instructor. If you feel that you might benefit from private counselling, please contact the Yale-NUS Health and Wellness Centre. The wellness centre also offers a wide range of enriching workshops and events. You may also wish to reach out to Vice Rector within your residential College. <https://studentlife.yale-nus.edu.sg/wellness/>

2022 Syllabus (subject to change)

| Week | Class | Topic & Readings |
|------|----------------|---|
| 1 | Tues 11 Jan | Course overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 1 |
| | Fri 14 Jan | No class – Group fieldwork (refer to handout to be given in Seminar 1) |
| 2 | Tues 18 Jan | Developmental theories and history <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 2 |
| | Fri 21 Jan | Research methods and ethics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 3 SRCD Ethical standards in research Discussion: Fieldwork findings and observations |
| 3 | Tues 25 Jan | Biological foundations and heritability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 4 and 5 |
| | Fri 28 Jan | Student-led discussion 1: The nature vs. nurture debate – or is there one? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collins, W. A., Maccoby, E. E., Steinberg, L., Hetherington, E. M., & Bornstein, M. H. (2000). Contemporary research on parenting: The case for nature and nurture. <i>American Psychologist</i>, 55(2), 218–232. |
| 4 | Tues 1 Feb | Lunar New Year – No class |
| | Fri 4 Feb | Infant perceptions <p>Chapter 6</p> <p>Student-led Discussion 2: Can fetuses perceive?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derbyshire, S. W. G. (2006). Can fetuses feel pain? <i>British Medical Journal</i>, 332(7546), 909. Tighe, M. (2006). Fetuses can feel pain. <i>British Medical Journal</i>, 332(7548), 1036. |
| 5 | Tues 8 Feb | Emotional development and attachment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 7 Documentary: “Are mothers really necessary?” (watch in class) |
| | Fri 11 Feb | Student-led Discussion 3: Is maternal employment linked to poorer development in children? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brooks-Gunn, J., Han, W.-J., & Waldfogel, J. (2002). Maternal employment and child cognitive outcomes in the first three years of life: The NICHD study of early child care. <i>Child Development</i>, 73(4), 1052–1072. |

| Week | Class | Topic & Readings |
|--------|----------------|--|
| 6 | Tues 15 Feb | Language and communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 8 Documentary: "A conversation with Koko the gorilla" (watch in class) Discussion: Can animals acquire human language? |
| | Fri 18 Feb | Student-led Discussion 4: Does media exposure help babies learn to read? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neuman, S. B., Kaefer, T., Pinkham, A., & Strouse, G. (2014). Can babies learn to read? A randomised trial of baby media. <i>Journal of Educational Psychology</i>, 106(3), 815–830. |
| RECESS | | |
| 7 | Tues 1 Mar | No Class – Revise for quiz |
| | Fri 4 Mar | Mid-term Quiz |
| 8 | Tues 8 Mar | Cognitive development I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 9 |
| | Fri 11 Mar | Student-led Discussion 5: Can infants count? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christodoulou, J., Lac, A., & Moore, D. S. (2017). Babies and math: A meta-analysis of infants' simple arithmetic competence. <i>Developmental Psychology</i>, 53(8), 1405–1417. |
| 9 | Tues 15 Mar | Cognitive development II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapters 10 and 11 |
| | Fri 18 Mar | Student-led Discussion 6: Multiple intelligence, the Mozart effect and emotional intelligence – do they exist? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waterhouse, L. (2006). Multiple Intelligences, the Mozart Effect, and Emotional Intelligence: A critical review. <i>Educational Psychologist</i>, 41(4), 207–225. |
| 10 | Tues 22 Mar | Parents, peers and gender development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapters 12 and 13 |
| | Fri 25 Mar | Student-led Discussion 7: Children's peer groups: A case of like attracts like? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lansford, J. E., Costanzo, P. R., Grimes, C., Putallaz, M., Miller, S., Malone, P. S., ... Putallaz, M. (2009). Social network centrality and leadership status: Links with problem behaviours and tests of gender differences. <i>Merrill-Palmer Quarterly</i>, 55(1), 1–25. |

| Week | Class | Topic & Readings |
|------|----------------|--|
| 11 | Tues 29 Mar | Aggression and bullying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 14 (selected sections) |
| | Fri 1 Apr | Student-led Discussion 8: The social status of bullies and victims: Why do children bully? Sentse, M., Kretschmer, T., & Salmivalli, C. (2015). The longitudinal interplay between bullying, victimisation, and social status: Age-related and gender differences. <i>Social Development</i> , 24(3), 659–677. |
| 12 | Tues 5 Apr | Moral development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 14 (selected section) Bloom, P. (2010, May 9). The moral life of babies. The New York Times Magazine. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com |
| | Fri 8 Apr | Course review |
| 13 | Tues 12 Apr | Final quiz (Take-home assessment) – NO CLASS |
| | Fri 15 Apr | Good Friday holiday |