PSYC 566 – Cognitive and Perceptual Development
Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:30-11:45am
Robinson Hall A349
DRAFT as of 8/14/2015

Instructor:	Timothy W. Curby, PhD	Office:	David King 2046
Phone:	703-993-2457	Office Hours:	Tue. 2:45-4:45pm
Email:	tcurby@gmu.edu	Website:	http://disc.gmu.edu

Course Description:

How do children learn a sense of number? How does experts' thinking differ from novices'? Among other topics, this course surveys the current theory and research on development of perception, memory, concepts, problem solving, intelligence, and academic skills. Focusing primarily on children, we will draw on a variety of sources including podcasts, articles, and a textbook for class discussions.

Required Readings & Listening:

Siegler, R. S., & Alibali, M. W. (2005). Children's thinking (4th Ed.). Pearson/Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, New Jersey. ISBN 0-13-111384-4.

Other readings are supplied by the instructor.

Podcasts: Links to relevant podcasts are to be listed to along with the readings.

Requirements:

The final form of the syllabus will be determined on the first day of class, collaboratively with the students. However, the general outline of the course activities are described below.

Class Leader (2)

Students will act as discussion facilitators for each class meeting. Class Leaders will be responsible for asking thought-provoking questions that facilitate discussion. You may do a thought paper for the class you lead discussion.

Participation (25)

Without participation (and attendance), this course does not work. Therefore, students are expected to be in every class. Missing more than 3 classes may result in failing the course.

Weekly Thought Paper (10)

For one of the two class periods per week, you must write a brief thought paper. Thought papers should be 1½ - 2 pages. The thought paper should pick an issue inspired by the readings and react to it. These should not be summaries. Beyond the assigned readings, you can also incorporate information provided in the relevant RadioLab episode. (Relevant episodes for a given topic are provided.)

Thought papers must be brought to class on which we are discussing the topic.

Topic Website

Students will help create a parent/teacher/layperson resource page for a topic of their choice. Each "website" will actually be hosted on a common WordPress/Wix page with each group controlling a section pertaining to their topic. Students will have to compile information on a topic, summarize it for a lay audience, and put it into an electronic format.

Students have wide latitude when it comes to the topics they may choose, but all must have a developmental spin on them. Students may choose disorders (e.g., Alzheimer's Disease) or they may choose a topic (e.g., Long-Term memory).

Websites are expected to use pictures (with rights), text, and figures or tables, to convey important aspects of the topic. Text should include at least 2,000 words and be based on research and current understandings. Instead of an APA-style bibliography, a list of resources will be provided, with a short description of what's helpful about that source. A short description of the history or description of seminal studies may be provided. Important would be the application of the topic and how it's important for everyday life. Given the developmental nature of the course, it is also important to provide some sort of developmental aspect to the write up. Etiology, treatment/interventions, ways to foster, what can go wrong, may each be important to include as well as other topics.

Questions to address as a class:

- What platform shall we use?
- Will more than one person be allowed to work on a given website?
- Should there be a peer review?
- What due dates should there be?
- How much shall the websites be worth?

Grading Procedures

Each assignment is weighted according to the following:

Class Leader (2)	5%
Participation (25)	10%
Thought Papers (10)	30%
Website	
Synopsis	5%
Proposal	10%
Text	25%
Aesthetics	15%

Grades will be calculated as follows:

> 93% = A, 90 – 92 = A-

87 – 89 = B+, 83 – 86 = B, 80 – 82 = B-

77 – 79 = C+, 73 – 76 = C, 70 – 72 = C-

60 – 69 = D

< 60 = F

The Honor Code

Students in this course are expected to behave at all times in a manner consistent with the GMU Honor System and Code. (http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm). Students are encouraged to study together as much as possible throughout the course, however, no assistance, sharing of information, or discussion of exam items or answers between students may take place. For all work, the name that appears on the paper must be the author. Violations of the Honor Code will not be tolerated in this course and will be immediately reported according to GMU procedures. The instructor reserves the right to use software to determine the extent to which the work is the student's. The instructor for this course reserves the right to enter a failing grade to any student found guilty of an honor code violation.

Miscellaneous

The deadlines for adding and dropping classes are as follows:

Last day to add classes: September 8, 2015
Final Drop Deadline: October 2, 2015

Official Communications via GMU Email: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their mason email account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly

Recording of classroom lectures is not allowed without explicit permission by the instructor.

If you are a student with disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 709-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Life is stressful and we all need a little support sometimes. Students are encouraged to contact Counseling & Psychological Services (3129 Student Union Building I, http://caps.gmu.edu/) at 993-2380 for assistance with any kind of psychological/life problem or crisis situation. I can help with referrals for students with particular counseling needs so please feel free to talk with me for help with anything.

Tentative Schedule of Topics

	Date		Topic	Siegler Chap.	Reading 1	Reading 2	Podcast	
1	9/1/15	1	Introduction	1				
	9/3/15	2	Biological bases of cognitive development	-	Diamond & Amso	Nelson		
2	9/8/15	3	Developmental Shifts	2	Kloep & Hendry (2015) Developr	Elkind (1967)	RadioLab Limits: Limits of the Mind	http://www.radiolab.org/story/91711-limits-of-the-mind/
	9/10/15	4	Information Processing	3	Rose et al (2012)			
3	9/15/15	5	Sociocultural Theories of Development	4	Vygotsky (1966)		RadioLab: Lucy	http://www.radiolab.org/story/91706-lucy/
	9/17/15		NO CLASS - Wedding					
4	9/22/15	6	Problem Solving	10	Pashler et al (2008)		Psych Files: The learning styles myth: An interview with Daniel Willingham	http://www.thepsychfiles.com/2009/03/episode-90-the-learning-styles-myth
	9/24/15	7	Language and Thought	6	Frost e tal (2013)	Mandler (2004)	RadioLab: Words: A World Without Words	http://www.radiolab.org/story/91729-a-world-without-words/
5	9/29/15	8	Symbolic Representation	11	DeLoach (2004)	Lillard (2002)	RadioLab: Bliss: Mr. Bliss	http://www.radiolab.org/story/257194-man-became-bliss/
	10/1/15	9	Reading Development		Hart et al (2013)	Hulme & Snowling (2012)		
6	10/6/15	10	Numeracy Development	11	Anderson et al (2000)	Le Corre et al (2006)	RadioLab: Numbers: Innate Numbers	http://www.radiolab.org/story/91698-innate-numbers/
	10/8/15	11	Development of spatial cognition		Baillargeon (1994)	Frankenstein et al (2012)	SRCD Presentation: Starting Points and Change in Spatial Development	https://youtu.be/75v4njjDhkc
7	10/12/15		NO CLASS - Monday Schedule					
	10/15/15	12	Executive Function	5	Diamond (2012)	Zelazo & Carlson (2012)	SoundSeen: In the Room with Adele Diamond	https://vimeo.com/7708845
8	10/20/15		NO CLASS - Conference					
	10/22/15	13	Development of perception and attention		Warm et al (2008)			
9	10/27/15	14	Memory development	7	Garcia et al (2011)	Wiley & Jarosz (2012)	To The Best of Our Knowledge: Meet Your Brain; Memory and Forgetting	http://www.ttbook.org/listen/60401
	10/29/15	15	Inter-sensory Integration		Viswanathan et al (2012)	Witthoft & Winawer (2013)		
10	11/3/15	16	Emotions and Cognitive Development		Thompson & Lagattuta (2006)		RadioLab: Animal Minds: Spindle Cells	http://www.radiolab.org/story/91703-spindle-cells/
	11/5/15	17	Self-Regulation		Myrseth & Fishbach (2009)	NRC (2000)	RadioLab: Choice: How Much Is Too Much?	
11	11/10/15							http://www.radiolab.org/story/91641-how-much-is-too-much/
	11/12/15	18	Motor Skills and Cognition		Carlson et al (2013)	Grissmer et al (2010)		
12	11/17/15	19	Conceptual Development	8	NRC (1999)		RadioLab: Time: It's All Relative	http://www.radiolab.org/story/91586-its-all-relative/
	11/19/15	20	Theory of Mind	9	Spreng et al (2009)		RadioLab: Who am I?	http://www.radiolab.org/story/91496-who-am-i/
13	11/24/15	21	Issues in the assessment of cognitive development		Richters (1997)	Tucker-Drob (2011)	RadioLab: Diagnosis	http://www.radiolab.org/story/91662-diagnosis/
	11/26/15							
14	12/1/15	22	Collaboration and Social Learning		Lillard (2007)		RadioLab: The Good Show: One Good Deed Deserves Another	http://www.radiolab.org/story/104010-one-good-deed-deserves-another/
	12/3/15	23	Culture, Schooling, Cognition		Rajaram (2010)			
15	12/8/15		Website Presentations					
	12/10/15		Website Presentations					