

Child Development

PSYC 313-001 & 002

Monday & Wednesday

Section 002
9:00am-10:20am
Robinson-B Room 228

Section 001
3:00pm-4:15pm
East Building Room 122

Instructor Information

Sarah Thomas

Office: David King Hall 1034 (basement level- left of the Coke machine)

Email: sthoma39@masonlive.gmu.edu (this is my preferred method of contact)

Office Hours: Mondays, 10:30-11:30am

Mailbox: located on the second floor of David King Hall, down the hall from the Undergrad Office

Required Textbook

Siegler, R., DeLoache, J., Eisenberg, N., & Saffron, J. (2011). *How children develop* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Worth Publishers.

Other articles will be assigned as required reading throughout the semester. They will be available to you via Blackboard.

Course Description

This course will acquaint students with the developmental journey of the child from conception to early adolescence. It will emphasize an empirical, theoretical, and applied approach to child development and will cover major topics including cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development. Developmental theorists such as Freud, Piaget, Erikson, Vygotsky, Bowlby, Skinner, and Bronfenbrenner will be covered. Note that this is not a course on parenting or abnormal development.

Course Goals

At the end of this course students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate comprehension of key processes and events of child development
2. Critically consume empirical research
3. Recognize and employ practical applications of developmental knowledge and research

Class Format

Lecture material will be taken from the textbook, additional readings, and other sources. Students are responsible for all material discussed in class and the material from the textbook, unless otherwise noted by the instructor. Aside from lectures, classes will also consist of a variety of discussion, small group activities, and/or short videos. I will post lecture slides to the course Blackboard page.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance at every class meeting, and arriving on time, is important for each student's success and learning in this course. Information will be presented in lecture that is not available in the textbook. In order to make the most out of your learning experience, it is imperative that you are not only present at each class meeting, but are alert, attentive, and ready to learn. Attendance sign-in sheets will frequently be passed around class for your signature to keep track of attendance. Fifteen points overall can be earned throughout the semester by frequently being in class, arriving on time, and participating. Points will be deducted at the instructor's discretion for unexcused absences, failing to actively engage in the class, complete readings, and extracurricular technology use during class. *Please limit technology use (cell phones and computers) to course related material during class time.*

Article Critiques

Two times during the semester you will choose a scholarly article to critique. These will be worth 15 points each, and should be 1.5-2 pages in length, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12pt font. All critiques will be due at the **start of class** on the specified dates. Both hard copies and electronic submissions through Blackboard will be accepted. Late submissions will NOT be accepted. You will review/summarize key points of the article, reflect on the findings, and relate it to your own experiences. A list of articles to choose from will be available to download from Blackboard. A rubric and clear description of expectations can also be found on Blackboard.

Toy Project

Most toys made for children are assigned a suggested age rating (e.g., "For ages 4+"). Your assignment will be to find a toy (or two toys) in a store and write a description (2-3 pages, double spaced, 12pt. Times New Roman font) and evaluate how developmentally appropriate it is for the age rating. You are not required to purchase the toy, simply provide a description and a picture of the toy. This project will be worth 40 points total. You will be required to identify the skills that the toy should elicit, and comment on the theories that support these skills. A rubric and clear description of expectations for this project can also be found on Blackboard. Late submissions will be deducted 1 point per day, no submissions will be accepted later than 5 days after the project is due. Electronic submissions will be accepted through Blackboard.

Small Group Discussions

Periodically, throughout the semester, I will provide the class with discussion question(s) that should promote debate and conversation among the class. No written assignment will be required for these discussions; it is simply a way to encourage critical thinking about the topics we discuss in class. Points are earned simply by being present in class and participating in the group discussions. Additionally, I will ask groups to report on what they discussed. There will be 3 small group discussions throughout the semester and each will be worth 5 points. If you are absent on the day that we do a discussion, you will forfeit those points. No make-ups are permitted.

Exams

There will be 4 exams in this course, of which only 3 will be factored in to your final grade. Therefore, you may use the highest 3 exam scores toward your overall final grade. This means students may **only drop one exam**. If you miss one exam, your grade will be based on the other three exams. The final exam is *not* cumulative; each exam is worth 40 points. There will be absolutely NO make-up exams. Exams will consist of both multiple choice and short answer questions, and will cover material from lecture, class discussions, and the textbook.

Points for the Course

Assignment	Possible Points
Attendance	15
Article critiques – 15 points each x 2	30
Toy project – 40 points	40
Small group discussions – 5 points each x 3	15
Exams – 40 points each x 3 (required)	120
Total points	220

Grade Calculation

Grades will simply be calculated by total points earned in the course. For example, if you receive 205 points in the course, I will divide that by 220, and you will receive an 93%, which is a A.

Grade Breakdown (these correspond to percentages)

A+ 100+%	B+ 89 – 87%	C+ 79 – 77%	D 69 – 60%
A 100 – 93%	B 86 – 83%	C 76 – 73%	F 59% and below
A- 92 – 90%	B- 82 – 80%	C- 72 – 70%	

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.

Psychological Services

Life is stressful and we all need a little support sometimes. Students are encouraged to contact Counseling & Psychological Services (caps.gmu.edu) 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 any assistance.

Disability/Other Issues

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

Official Communications via GMU E-mail & Blackboard

Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

I will also regularly post rubrics, instructions, articles, slides, and other important class information on Blackboard, and it is required for students to check it regularly. Please check Blackboard first before emailing me if you are looking for information about an assignment.

I will use GMU email as a primary way to communicate with the class, and it will be the best way to contact me directly. As a tip, please include your course section in the subject of the email in all email correspondences with instructors.

Cancellation Policy

If the University is closed for any reason (i.e., dangerous weather, hurricane evacuation, etc.), class will be cancelled accordingly. In the case of any class cancellation, whether it is due to University closing or another reason, I will notify students via email of the cancellation and information about any assignments to keep us on track. If the University is closed on the date of a scheduled exam, always plan to take the exam the next time class meets.

Disclaimer

The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus and its content. Any changes will be announced in class and in writing.

Important Campus-Wide Dates

First day of classes; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date; full semester waitlists removed	January 23
Last day to add classes —all individualized section forms due Last day to drop with no tuition penalty	January 30
Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty	February 13
Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)	February 24
Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)	February 27-March 31
Spring Break (no classes)	March 13-March 19
Last Day of Classes	May 6
Reading Days	May 8-9
Class Final Exam Section 002 7:30am-10:15am	Mon May 15
Class Final Exam Section 001 1:30pm-4:15pm	Mon May 15

Course Schedule

Unless otherwise specified, all book and supplemental reading should be completed before class on the day they are scheduled to be discussed

Week	Class Dates	Chapter/Topic	What's Due?
1	Mon 1/23	Syllabus & 1 Introduction	
	Wed 1/25	Chapter 1: Introduction to Child Development	Read Chapter 1; p. 1-37
2	Mon 1/30	Chapter 2: Prenatal Development	Read Chapter 2; p.39-66
	Wed 2/1	Chapter 2: Prenatal Development	Read <i>Chapter 2</i> ; p. 67-84 & <i>Read Bjorn, 2008</i>
3	Mon 2/6	Chapter 3: Brain & Physical Development Nature & Nurture, Brain Development	Read Chapter 3; p.85-119
	Wed 2/8	Chapter 3: Brain & Physical Development The Body: Physical Growth & Development	Read Chapter 3; p.119-127

Week	Class Dates	Chapter/Topic	What's Due?
4	Mon 2/13	Chapter 4: Theories of Cognitive Development Piaget's Theory Information-Processing Theories	Read Chapter 4: p. 129-155 Turn in Article Critique 1
	Wed 2/15	Chapter 4: Theories of Cognitive Development Sociocultural Theories Dynamic-Systems Theories	Read Chapter 4, p.155-169
5	Mon 2/20	Chapter 5: Seeing, Thinking & Doing in Infancy Perception & Motor Development	Read Chapter 5, p. 171-198
	Wed 2/22	Chapter 5: Seeing, Thinking & Doing in Infancy Learning & Cognition	Read Chapter 5, p. 198-213
6	Mon 2/27	Exam 1 (Chapters 1-5)	
	Wed 3/1	Chapter 6: Language & Symbol Use Language Development	Read Chapter 6, p. 215-265 Read Hart & Risley, 2003
7	Mon 3/6	Chapter 7: Conceptual Development	Read Chapter 7, p 259-277
	Wed 3/8	Chapter 7: Conceptual Development	Read Chapter 7, p. 278-295
8	Mon 3/13	No class- Spring Break	
	Wed 3/15	No class- Spring Break	
9	Mon 3/20	Chapter 8: Intelligence and Academic Achievement Defining & Measuring intelligence	Read Chapter 8, p. 297-322
	Wed 3/22	Chapter 8: Intelligence and Academic Achievement Acquisition of Academic Skills	Read Chapter 8, p.322-337 <i>Read Will, 2014</i>
10	Mon 3/27	Exam 2 (Chapters 6-8)	
	Wed 3/29	Chapter 9: Social Development Psychoanalytic Theories & Learning Theories	Read Chapter 9, p. 339-355
11	Mon 4/3	Chapter 9: Social Development Social Cognition & Ecological Theories	Read Chapter 9, p.356-380
	Wed 4/5	Chapter 10: Emotional Development	Read Chapter 10, 383-424 <i>Read Zero to Three, 2010</i>

Week	Class Dates	Chapter/Topic	What's Due?
12	Mon 4/10	Chapter 11: Attachment and Development of Self Attachment, Self-Concept	Toy Project Due 11:59pm via Blackboard Read Chapter 11, p. 425-449
	Wed 4/12	Chapter 11: Attachment and Development of Self Identity (Ethnic, Sexual, Gender) & Self-Esteem	Read Chapter 11, p.449-465
13	Mon 4/17	Exam 3 (Chapters 9-11)	
	Wed 4/19	Chapter 12: Family Family Dynamics, Parenting Styles, Family Changes	Read Chapter 12, p. 467-507
14	Mon 4/24	Chapter 13: Peer Relationships Friendships, Groups, and Status	Read Chapter 13, p. 509-549
	Wed 4/26	Chapter 14: Moral Development Moral Judgment, Prosocial Behavior	Read Chapter 14, p. 554-591 Article Critique 2 Due
15	Mon 5/1	Chapter 15: Gender Development Theories of Gender Development	Read Chapter 15, p. 593-633
	Wed 5/3	Final Exam Review & Catch Up Day	
Final Exam	Mon 5/15	Exam 4 (Chapters 12-15) Class 002 * 7:30am-10:15am * Class 001 * 1:30pm-4:15pm *	

Have a great summer!!