Child Development
PSYC 313 – 001
Mondays and Wednesdays 12-1:15pm, Robinson B228

Instructor Information
Tanya Tavassolie
Office: David King Hall 1032 (basement level, inside 1021)
Email: ttavasso@masonlive.gmu.edu (this is my preferred method of contact)
Phone: 703-993-4712
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12-1pm, or by appointment
Mailbox: located on the second floor of David King Hall, down the hall from the Undergrad Office

Required Textbook

Course Description and Goals
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. The overall goals of this course are to:
1. Facilitate an understanding and appreciation for the complexity of child development
2. Foster critical consumers of empirical 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 the night before every class period. They will be available on the course Blackboard page.

Attendance and Participation
Attendance at every class meeting 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. Please limit technology use (cell phones and computers) to course related material during class time.
Article Critiques

Three times during the semester you will choose a scholarly article to critique. These will be worth 10 points each, and should be 1.5-2 pages in length, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12pt font. Late submissions will NOT be accepted. Electronic submissions will be accepted via email. You will review/summarize key points of the article, reflect on the findings, and relate it to your own experiences. See below for a list of possible articles to choose from, all of which will be available to download from Blackboard. A rubric and clear description of expectations can also be found on Blackboard. Below are options of articles that you may pick from:


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 15 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 via email.

**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 to allow the entire class to collaborate on the topic. 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 50 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article critiques – 10 points each x 3</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toy project – 15 points</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small group discussions – 5 points each x 3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams – 50 points each x 3 (required)</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total points</strong></td>
<td><strong>210</strong></td>
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**Grade Calculation**
Grades will simply be calculated by total points earned in the course. For example, if you receive 180 points in the course, I will divide that by 210, and you will receive an 86%, which is a B.

**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](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 help with anything.

Disability/Other Issues
If you are a student with a 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.

Official Communications via GMU E-mail
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 e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly. As a tip, please include your G-number and the course section in the subject of the email in all email correspondences with all instructors.

Disclaimer
The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus and its content. Any changes will be announced orally and in writing.
# Course Schedule

**Week 1: Introduction**
- **Monday, Aug 25**: Syllabus
- **Wednesday, Aug 27**: Chapter 1: Introduction to Child Development

**Week 2: Prenatal Development**
- **Monday, Sept 1**: Labor Day – No class
- **Wednesday, Sept 3**: Chapter 2: Prenatal Development

**Week 3: Brain & Physical Development**
- **Monday, Sept 8**: Chapter 2: Prenatal Development (cont.)
- **Wednesday, Sept 10**: Chapter 3: Brain & Physical Development

**Week 4: Cognitive Development**
- **Monday, Sept 15**: Chapter 4: Cognitive Development
- **Wednesday, Sept 17**: Chapter 4: Cognitive Development (cont.)

**Week 5: Seeing, Thinking & Doing in Infancy**
- **Monday, Sept 22**: Chapter 5: Seeing, Thinking & Doing in Infancy
- **Wednesday, Sept 24**: Chapter 5: Seeing, Thinking & Doing in Infancy (cont.) & Exam 1 Review
  *Article Critique 1 due by the start of class*

**Week 6: Language & Symbol Use**
- **Monday, Sept 29**: Exam 1 (Chapters 1-5)
- **Wednesday, Oct 1**: Chapter 6: Language & Symbol Use

**Week 7: Conceptual Development**
- **Monday, Oct 6**: Chapter 6: Language & Symbol Use (cont.)
- **Wednesday, Oct 8**: Chapter 7: Conceptual Development

**Week 8: Intelligence and Academic Achievement**
- **Tuesday, Oct 14**: Chapter 8: Intelligence and Academic Achievement
  No Class on Monday Oct. 13 (Columbus Day), Monday classes meet on Tuesday, Oct. 14
- **Wednesday, Oct 15**: Chapter 8: Intelligence and Academic Achievement (cont.) & Exam 2 review
  *Article Critique 2 due by the start of class*

**Week 9: Social Development**
- **Monday, Oct 20**: Exam 2 (Chapters 6-8)
- **Wednesday, Oct 22**: Chapter 9: Social Development

**Week 10: Emotional Development**
- **Monday, Oct 27**: Chapter 9: Social Development (cont.)
- **Wednesday, Oct 29**: Chapter 10: Emotional Development
Week 11: Attachment and Development of Self
Monday, Nov 3  Chapter 10: Emotional Development (cont.)
Wednesday, Nov 5  Chapter 11: Attachment and Development of Self
*Article Critique 3 due by the start of class

Week 12
Monday, Nov 10  Chapter 11: Attachment and Development of Self (cont.) & Exam 3 review

Wednesday, Nov 12  Exam 3 (Chapters 9-11)

Week 13: Family & Peers
Monday, Nov 17  Chapter 12: Family
Wednesday, Nov 19  Chapter 13: Peer Relationships
*Toy project due by 11:59pm November 21

Week 14: Moral Development
Monday, Nov 24  Chapter 14: Moral Development
Wednesday, Nov 26  Thanksgiving – No class

Week 15: Gender Development
Monday, Dec 1  Chapter 15: Gender Development
Wednesday, Dec 3  Exam 4 review

Final Exam Period  Exam 4 (Chapters 12-15)
Monday, Dec 15  10:30am – 1:15pm
Have a wonderful winter break!

Last day to add: Sept 2
Last day to drop: Sept 26
### Important Campus-Wide Dates

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>First day of classes</strong>; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date</td>
<td>August 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labor Day, university closed</td>
<td>September 1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Last day to add classes</strong>—all individualized section forms due Last day to drop with no tuition penalty</td>
<td>September 2</td>
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<td><strong>Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty</strong></td>
<td>September 16</td>
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<td><strong>Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)</strong></td>
<td>September 26</td>
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<td>Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)</td>
<td>September 29 - October 24</td>
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<td>Columbus Day recess (Monday classes/labs meet Tuesday. Tuesday classes do not meet this week)</td>
<td>October 13</td>
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<td>Thanksgiving recess</td>
<td>November 26 – 30</td>
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<td>Last day of classes</td>
<td>December 6</td>
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<td><strong>Reading Days</strong></td>
<td>December 8 – 9</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Exam Period</strong></td>
<td>Dec 10 – 17</td>
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