

Instructor: Nicholas Hertz

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Class Hours and Location: Monday/Wednesday 211-001, 10:30-11:45 AM, IN 136

Monday/Wednesday 211-002, 1:30-2:45 PM, PLANET 206

Office hours: Monday 12-1 PM, 1014C David King Hall or by appointment

### Course goals

Developmental psychology is the study of how humans change and stay the same over time. In this course, we will examine development from birth through death with a focus on the cognitive, social and emotional aspects of development through various contexts. This course is designed to provide students with a basic understanding of the principles of developmental psychology as well as the ability to comprehend and think critically about topics within the psychological field.

### Required text

The Developing Person Through the Life Span (10th Edition)

Author: Kathleen Stassen Berger

ISBN-10: 1319015875

*Note: Feel free to buy one of the earlier editions of the book. I will be teaching from the 10th edition, but the lecture will cover anything that is not present in the earlier editions.*

Reading should be completed by the dates indicated on the schedule. Reading the material in advance will help you to get the most out of lectures and discussions.

### Grading

The final grade will consist of the following weighted components:

Best 3 of 4 exams (30% each)	70%
Developmental Research Paper	20%
Attendance and Participation	10%

Final Grades will be assigned as follow:

A+	95-100%	C+	77-79%
A	90-94%	C	73-76%
B+	87-89%	C-	70-72%
B	83-86%	D	60-69%
B-	80-82%	F	< 60%

### Exams (70%)

All exams will be in multiple-choice format and will cover material from the text and related lectures. Students are required to bring their own Scantron forms (**Form 882-E or compatible forms**) to each in-class exam. The final exam will be cumulative. Students who have taken all

exams prior to the final and are satisfied with their grades (whatever that means to you individually) are not required to take the final exam.

#### **Exam Make-Up Policy:**

Make-up exams are not permitted. Because you can drop your lowest test grade, if you miss an examination that will automatically be the text exam that you drop.

#### **Developmental Research Paper (20%)**

There is one research paper for this class. For this assignment you will be asked to pick 1 of 3 controversial topics in developmental psychology. The three topics are: do parents matter, do adolescents make the same decisions as adults, and is divorce ok for kids. You will need to choose one of these three topics to research. You will need to use at least 4 sources for this paper - all from peer-reviewed academic journals. You may use other sources as well, but this is the minimum. This paper will be 3-4 pages double spaced with 1 inch margins. You will be graded on your understanding of the topic, your ability to pick a side and support your arguments using sources, your ability to correctly cite your sources, and your ability to follow the parameters set for you. You will be given detailed instructions and a grading rubric for this paper which will be discussed about in class and posted on blackboard.

#### **Turning in Papers:**

Papers are due by 10 PM the day they are due. Papers should be submitted on blackboard. 10:01 is considered late—do not turn in late!

#### **Attendance and Participation (10%)**

Attendance and participation is required for success in the class. Participation makes the class more enjoyable for both you as students and me as the teacher! You will be graded on attendance and participation by contributing to group discussions and filling out short questions that will be randomly given times during the course of the semester.

Preparation for class includes completing the readings by the assigned due dates. In order to be attentive, you should not engage in any multi-tasking activities during class – that means no texting, e-mailing, web surfing, doing homework for other classes, etc. Engaging in such activities is distracting for those around you, and for the instructor. If you must arrive late or leave early, please do so as quietly as possible and be considerate of your classmates by sitting near an exit.

#### **Succeeding in this course**

While learning the terminology will be important, simply memorizing definitions won't be enough to earn a good grade. Instead, you will be asked to integrate and apply information, which requires a deeper level of understanding.

Lectures in this course are intended to review and expand on information in the text, as well as provide an opportunity for discussion and questions. Due to time constraints, not every important concept covered in the text will be discussed in class. For that reason, it is important that you carefully read and study the text, as well as attend lectures.

## **Absences**

Dropping the lowest exam grade is intended to provide relief for anyone who needs to miss graded work due to illness, personal or employment obligations, or any other reason. If you find that you must miss more work than can be dropped, I encourage you to consult the catalog or contact your advisor or academic dean's office for information on withdrawing from a course, including late and selective withdrawal policies and procedures.

## **Technology expectations**

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.

All grades, assignments, and other class materials will be posted on Blackboard.

## **Disability accommodations**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Services (DRS) at 703-993-2474.

## **Honor code**

George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. It is every student's responsibility to familiarize himself or herself with the Honor Code. The Honor Code is available at: <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/> All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee.

**Important dates:**      Last day to add a class – September 4  
                                    Final Drop Deadline (no tuition penalty) – September 9  
                                    Web Withdrawal Period – September 10-30  
                                    Selective withdrawal period – October 1-28

**Enrollment:** Every student is responsible for verifying correct enrollment. Graded work will not be returned to students who are not officially enrolled.

**Class cancellations:** I will send out an email as soon as I know that class is cancelled/any schedule changes. Check e-mails and Blackboard for announcements about closures or class cancellations. To make-up cancelled classes, we may reschedule class for another date and time, or there may be an assignment on Blackboard to complete during the regular class hours.

## **Schedule:**

### Week of

Aug 27	M: Introductions and The Science of Human Development W: Theories of Human Development
Sep 3	M: <b>Labor Day (No Class)</b> W: Theories of Human Development
Sep 10	M: Genetics and Human Development W: Genetics and Human Development
Sep 17	M: Prenatal Development and Birth W: Prenatal Development and Birth
Sep 24	M: <b>No Class</b> W: <b>Exam 1</b>
Oct 1	<b>HFES 2018 (No class this week)</b>
Oct 8	T: The First Two Years - Biosocial and Cognitive Development W: The First Two Years - Psychosocial Development
Oct 15	M: Early Childhood - Biosocial and Cognitive Development W: Early Childhood - Psychosocial Development
Oct 22	M: Middle Childhood - Biosocial and Cognitive Development W: Middle Childhood - Psychosocial Development
Oct 29	M: Adolescence - Biosocial and Cognitive Development W: Adolescence - Psychosocial Development
Nov 5	M: <b>Exam 2</b> W: Emerging Adulthood - Biosocial and Cognitive Development
Nov 12	M: Emerging Adulthood - Psychosocial Development W: Adulthood - Biosocial and Cognitive Development
Nov 19	M: Adulthood - Psychosocial Development W: <b>Thanksgiving Break (No Class)</b>
Nov 26	M: Late Adulthood - Biosocial and Cognitive Development W: Late Adulthood - Psychosocial Development
Dec 3	M: Death and Dying W: <b>Exam 3 / Research Paper Due</b>
Dec 12	<b>Final Exam (Section 1 = 10:30 AM, Section 2 = 1:30 PM)</b>

This schedule is subject to change, if things do change I will post an updated schedule to blackboard.