**INTS 316-004: Introduction to Childhood Studies**

School of Integrative Studies

Fall, 2019

**Instructor:** Julia Shadur, Ph.D.

**Class Meeting Time:** Tuesday/Thursday, 9:00-10:15am

**Class Location:** Innovation Hall, 209

**Instructor’s Office:** Enterprise Hall, 404

**E-Mail:** [jshadur@gmu.edu](mailto:jshadur@gmu.edu)

**Office Phone**: 703-993-1819

**Office Hours:** Tuesday, 10:30-11:30am and by appointment

**Note:** Elements of this syllabus are subject to change per the discretion of the professor. Any changes to this syllabus will be announced and provided to the students in writing.

**Course Website:** This course will use Blackboard for sharing information relevant to the course such as important announcements, changes to the syllabus or schedule, assigned readings/articles, and grades. As a student in this course, it is your responsibility to remain aware of all announcements and information posted on this website.

**Required Textbook:** Berns, Roberta (2013; 10th Edition). *Child, Family, School, Community: Socialization and Support.* Belmont, CA: Thompson.

The textbook is available at the GMU Bookstore, Amazon, and [www.chegg.com](http://www.chegg.com).

The majority of required readings come from the textbook. The textbook also serves as a reference for you throughout the semester and should be a source of information for your written assignments and final project, including (when relevant) chapters of the textbook that are not directly assigned as part of the course schedule. Additional assigned research articles and chapters will be provided on Blackboard.

**Course Description and Overview:** This learning community course focuses on the study of childhood from birth to adolescence. It approaches childhood from the perspective of several disciplines, including psychology, sociology, education, developmental psychopathology, and developmental science. The reading and assignments have been chosen to foster thinking about childhood theory, research, policy, and practical applications of this knowledge to decisions regarding children and youth. In addition, students will be introduced to a number of contemporary issues that, when confronted, will introduce students to a number of complex and scientifically unresolved childhood issues that will allow for the development of important analytical, evaluative, and decision-making (i.e., critical thinking) skills. We will study underlying processes both in normative and atypical child development from childhood through adolescence. We will also consider the interactions and transactions between children and their environments across development. This learning community employs a number of methods of teaching, learning, and assessment in order to meet varying individual needs and to capitalize upon the strengths and skills of all learners.

**Course Learning Objectives:** By the end of the course you should be able to:

* Understand both qualitative and quantitative research methods involved in the study of childhood (e.g., case studies, participant observations, randomized control trials).
* Understand the differences between psychological, sociological, and educational perspectives on children and childhood.
* Develop skills of investigation, analysis, creative problem solving, communication, and writing through group and individual projects.
* Understand children and childhood from non-academic sources such as art, books, film and the larger media.
* Consider both individual (e.g., temperament, personality, cognitive processes) and contextual processes (e.g., home, school, neighborhood, culture) underlying child behavior and functioning across development.
* Identify central issues, tensions, and methods in recent developmental psychopathology research
* Use the developmental psychopathology framework and related models to make informed guesses about hypothetical clinical cases
* Describe the contribution of genetic, contextual-environmental, familial-environmental, neurobiological, and cognitive models of child development

**Mason Core learning objectives fulfilled by this course include:**

**The Social and Behavioral Sciences Learning Outcomes. You will be able to:**

* Explain how individuals are influenced by contextual factors
* Demonstrate awareness of changes in social and cultural constructs
* Use appropriate methods and resources to apply social and behavioral science concepts, terminology, principles and theories in the analysis of significant human issues, past or present.

**Writing Intensive (WI) requirements fulfilled by this course:** The faculty Senate Writing Across the Curriculum Committee has approved this course to fulfill the Writing Intensive (WI) requirement in the Integrative Studies major. These requirements are met in 4 ways: 1) ~5 in-class short reflection assignments on class material, 2) a 4-page paper that critically analyzes the bidirectional relationship between a child’s environment and their behavioral/social difficulties through analysis of a character in a movie, and 3) a final experiential group project that will include a 5-page written component that is completed individually. Class time will be devoted to instruction on how to complete assignments successfully and the instructor will provide detailed comments on all writing components for the course.

**Course Requirements and Evaluation:**

1. Participation in class, including in-class written reflections and activities (20%)
2. Tests 1 & 2 (Each test is worth 20%)
3. Childhood Studies in the Movies paper (20%)
4. Experiential Learning (EL) group project: Observation of an infant/child
   1. Individually-written paper (10%)
   2. Group in-class presentation (10%)

**Participation in class discussions and completion of in-class written reflections:**

In preparing for class, you should read the pertinent assignments before the subject is discussed in class to enhance discussion and understanding. Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions. Students are encouraged to share relevant insights, knowledge, or experiences with the class during our class meetings or group discussions. If you have an excused absence, please send an email to the instructor before class begins on the day you are absent. Additional documentation may be required.

During ~5 class periods, 5-10 minutes will be spent preparing a written response about a topic that is related to that day’s material that you will turn in at the end of class. Each reflection will involve responding to a specific prompt that you will be asked, related to the class material. It is therefore in your best interest to attend and be actively engaged in each class period. Completion of the in-class reflections will be used toward your participation grade, in addition to your participation in group activities and class discussion on a regular basis.

**Tests (2): *In class on 10/3/19 and 11/19/19***

There will be 2 non-cumulative tests each worth 20% of your final grade. These exams will primarily cover material presented and discussed in class and the readings. Exams will include multiple-choice, matching, definitions, and short answer questions. We will discuss the exams and how to prepare in class.

**Childhood Studies in the Movies Paper:** ***Due on BB on 10/29/19 by 9:00am.***

Detailed instructions and the grading rubric will be posted on Blackboard. The detailed grading rubric outlines how points will be assigned, so it is in your best interest to review both the instructions and grading rubric when writing your paper. Each item on the rubric must be addressed to receive full credit. Papers must be submitted on Blackboard.For this assignment, students are asked to write a 3-4 page paper (double-spaced, 12 Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins) reviewing and critically analyzing a popular media work that focuses on some aspect of childhood studies and child development. You will be asked to briefly summarize the character in his or her environment and hypothesize how the individual’s life has influenced his or her emotional/behavioral difficulties, and how the individual’s emotional/behavioral difficulties have influenced his or her life. You will discuss how the character’s childhood experiences exemplify two or three aspects or topics of child development, including parent/family processes, developmental milestones, peer relations, and the impact of the environment on the individual and vice versa. Use course materials (text, supplementary readings, class notes, films, or handouts) to build a framework of theory and research to analyze the character’s development. In short, you are to use the course to describe the character’s development and use the character’s experiences to illustrate the course. Select one movie from the following movie options: *Thirteen, We Need to Talk about Kevin, Prozac Nation, Temple Grandin, To the Bone,* and *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close.*

**Experiential Learning (EL) Group Project: Observation of an Infant/Child**

This project includes two components:

**IN-CLASS GROUP PRESENTATION: *Due 12/3/19 (Groups 1-6) or 12/5/19 (Groups 7-12)***

**INDIVIDUAL PAPER: *Due on BB by 12/6/19 at 11:59 midnight***

We will spend a large portion of the semester working toward the final EL project which will involve group work and individual work. You will be responsible for completing the assignment and presentation with your group, but you will submit a 4-5 page paper that you write yourself. Your group will also do an in-class presentation together. Details on the assignment requirements and rubrics will be posted on Blackboard. The detailed grading rubric outlines how points will be assigned, so it is in your best interest to review both the instructions and grading rubric when writing your paper. Each item on the rubric must be addressed to receive full credit. Papers must be submitted on Blackboard. You will work in groups of 2-3 students. You and your groupmates will work together on an observational assessment of a child in his/her home and out-of-home environment. You will have at least 2 observation sessions throughout the semester lasting at least 1 hour each. These observations should be at least 1 month apart so you can see some change over time. You will together make observations and hypotheses about temperament, self-control, regulation, developmental milestones, peer/sibling relations, behavioral patterns and reinforcement, and overall behavioral/social functioning. You will also have the opportunity to interview the child’s caregiver(s). You will be asked to write a 4-5-page paper (double-spaced, 12 Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins) integrating your observations with what you have learned in the class. The paper will be written independently but you should complete the observations with your classmates and meet as a team to discuss your thoughts and interpretations of your observations. You will also complete a group presentation together on the last two days of class that will be 10 minutes long.

**Late Work**. Papers and other assignments are to be submitted via Blackboard by the beginning of class on the day due (i.e., by 9:00am) unless otherwise specified. Late work will be reduced one letter grade per day that it is late (including weekends). No work will be accepted over one week late without a valid written medical excuse or notice of other unexpected event or emergency. Unless otherwise stipulated, work should be submitted online via Blackboard before the beginning of class. Excused absences from tests may be granted by the instructor in cases of medical or other emergencies. Proper documentation will be necessary.

There may be opportunities to earn extra credit points during the semester. These will be described in class and posted on Blackboard.

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| **Grading Scale for this Learning Community** | | |
| 97-100 A+  93-96 A  90-92 A-  87-89 B+  83-86 B  80-82 B- | 77-79 C+  73-76 C  70-72 C-  69-60 D  Else F  All final scores of 0.5 and above will round up, all final scores below will round down. | |
|  | | **Percentage** |
| **Participation** Collaborative learning is an important feature of SIS learning communities. Students are expected to attend class (arriving on time and remaining until the end of the session), to participate actively and responsibly, and to hand in all assignments when due. Students are expected to read and be prepared to discuss the assigned texts. There will be various in-class assignments which may be graded as a component of participation, including in-class written reflections based on material from the readings and class time. | | 20% |
| **Tests 1 & 2** (worth 20% each) | | 40% |
| **Childhood Studies in the Movies Paper** | | 20% |
| **Final: Experiential Learning (EL) Group Project: Observations of an infant/child**  a) Individually-written paper (10%)  b) Group presentation in class (10%) | | 20% |

**Written Assignment Grading Standards**

All assignments are due at the beginning of class or as otherwise noted in the daily schedule and must be typed using 12 point font and one-inch margins, double-spaced. You must correctly and consistently use APA style for citations (we will discuss this in class).

# **Score of A: Superior**

* Addresses the topic fully and explores the issue thoughtfully.
* Shows substantial depth, fullness and complexity of thought.
* Demonstrates clear, focused, coherent, and logical organization.
* Is fully developed and detailed. The point is clear and well stated.
* Good introduction with clear thesis statement, and an effective conclusion.
* Evidences superior control of diction, syntactic variety, and transition between paragraphs; only a few minor flaws.
* Integrates evidence from texts to support ideas and arguments.
* Proper citation of texts using a standard citation method.

# **Score of B: Strong**

* Clearly addresses the topic and explores the issue.
* Shows some depth and complexity of thought.
* Is effectively organized. Easy to follow and understand.
* Is well developed, with supporting detail. Logically coherent.
* Demonstrates control of diction, syntactic variety, and transition; may have a few minor mechanical flaws.
* Proper citation of texts using a standard citation method.

# **Score of C: Competent**

* Adequately addresses the topic and explores the issue.
* Shows clarity of thought but may lack complexity.
* Is organized. Can be followed with some difficulty.
* Is adequately developed, with some detail. Some logical fallacies or incoherent sentences/paragraphs.
* Demonstrates competent writing; shows some flaws in syntax and grammar.
* Proper citation of texts using a standard citation method.

# **Score of D: Weak**

* May distort or neglect parts of the topic.
* May be simplistic or stereotyped in thought.
* May demonstrate problems in organization.
* May have generalizations without supporting detail or detail without generalizations; may be undeveloped. Logically flawed; several incoherencies.
* May reveal patterns of flaws in language, syntax or mechanics.
* Improper citation method.

# **Score of F: Inadequate**

* Demonstrates serious inadequacy in addressing the topic.
* Fails in its attempts to discuss the topic. Illogical.
* May be deliberately off-topic. Extremely difficult to follow.
* Is so incompletely developed as to suggest or demonstrate incompetency.
* Is wholly incompetent mechanically.
* Improper citation method.

**Campus Policies:**

It is our shared responsibility to know and abide by George Mason’s policies that relate to all courses, which include topics like:

* Academic integrity
* Student and instructor conduct
* Accessibility and accommodations
* Campus resources

**Accommodations:** George Mason University is committed to creating and maintaining a welcoming and inclusive educational, working, and living environment for people of all abilities. George Mason is also committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the University, or be subjected to discrimination. George Mason provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals. Reasonable accommodations shall be made in a timely manner and on an individualized and flexible basis. Discrimination against individuals on the grounds of disability is prohibited. The University also strictly prohibits retaliation against persons arising in connection with the assertion of rights under this Policy.

If you have learning or physical difference that may affect your academic work, furnish appropriate documentation to Disability Services (703-993-2474, SUB 1, Suite 2500, website: ds.gmu.edu, email: [ods@gmu.edu](mailto:ods@gmu.edu)). Disability Services is open 9am-5pm M-F. Disability Services facilitates reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals. In addition to providing the appropriate forms and documentation to the instructor, please take the initiative to discuss any learning differences or accommodation needs individually with the instructor as well. You and your instructor will discuss a plan for how the accommodations will be implemented throughout the semester for the course. All matters of this nature will be held in strict confidence. If special accommodations are needed for test-taking, please contact the Disability Services Testing Center (SUB 1, Room 3313, 703-993-1708, email: [dstests@gmu.edu](mailto:dstests@gmu.edu), hours: 9am-4:45pm M-F)

**Additional Campus and Academic Resources:**

Writing Center (703-993-1200, Robinson Hall A, Room 114, writingcenter.gmu.edu, wcenter@gmu.edu). The University Writing Center provides tutors who will help you to brainstorm, structure, revise and edit written work (and help you compile and check your citation of sources!). Please make an appointment directly with the center staff for help.

[Counseling and Psychological Services](http://www.gmu.edu/departments/csdc/) (703-993-2380, SUB I, Room 3129, caps.gmu.edu)

Learning Services (703-993-2999, SUB 1, Room 3129, learningservices.gmu.edu). Learning services provides experience-based learning opportunities through which students explore a wide range of academic concerns.

**Notice of Mandatory Reporting of Sexual Assault, Interpersonal Violence, and Stalking:** As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources such as the Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434, or Counseling and Psychology Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

**Absences from Class**: Students are expected to take full responsibility for their own academic work and progress. Students, to progress satisfactorily, must meet all of the requirements of each course for which they are registered. Students are expected to attend classes regularly. Consistent attendance offers students the most effective opportunity to gain command of course concepts and materials.

An excused absence is an absence for which the student has the right to receive, and the instructor has the responsibility to provide, academic accommodation. Excused absences must be requested promptly and must be supported by appropriate documentation. Excused absences do not alter the academic requirements for the course. Students are responsible for information and material missed on the day of absence. Students are within reason entitled to receive any materials provided to the class during the absence. Students are responsible for making provision to determine what course material they have missed and for completing required exercises in a timely manner.

Events that justify an excused absence include:

* Religious observances
* Mandatory military obligation
* Illness of the student or illness of an immediate family member
* Participation in university activities at the request of university authorities
* Compelling circumstances beyond your control (e.g., death in the family, court appearance)

Absences stemming from work duties other than military obligation (e.g., unexpected changes in shift assignments) and traffic/transit problems do not typically qualify for excused absence. To receive academic accommodation for an excused absence, the student must notify the instructor in a timely manner via email ([jshadur@gmu.edu](mailto:jshadur@gmu.edu)). The notification should be provided either prior to the absence or as soon afterwards as possible. In the case of religious observances, athletic events, and planned absences known at the beginning of the semester, the student must inform the instructor during the schedule adjustment period. All other absences must be reported as soon as is practical. The student must provide appropriate documentation of the absence in writing to the instructor.

**Class Conduct:** All students are expected to conduct themselves professionally and with respect for the speakers and other students. Please be aware that some topics discussed in class are sensitive and be particularly considerate at these times. There will be a zero-tolerance policy for any instances of disrespectful behavior, discrimination, or bullying in the classroom.

**Respect for Diversity:** George Mason University promotes and living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty, and staff. An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds, and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard, and respected.

**Academic Integrity**: It is expected that students adhere to the George Mason University Honor Code as it relates to integrity regarding coursework and grades. The Honor Code reads as follows: “To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the University Community have set forth this: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal and/or lie in matters related to academic work.”  More information about the Honor Code, including definitions of cheating, lying, and plagiarism, can be found at the Office of Academic Integrity website at [http://oai.gmu.edu](http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/). The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. The following is embedded within the Honor Code: 1) All work submitted must be your own. 2) When using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations. 3) If you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. **No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct.** Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited using APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of theft of intellectual property and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

**Additional policies and information specific to this class:**

**Policy on Children in Class:** The university does not have a formal policy on children in the classroom. The following applies to how I would like to include parenting needs in the context of my classroom. All breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as is necessary to support the breastfeeding relationship. I never want students to feel like they have to choose between feeding their baby and continuing their education. You and your nursing baby are welcome in my class anytime, and you do not need permission to leave class to pump. For older children and babies, I understand that minor illnesses and unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to choose between missing class to stay home with a child and leaving him or her with someone you or the child does not feel comfortable with. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable. In all cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your little one needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met. I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is inclusive of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status. While I maintain the same high expectations for all student in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-parenting balance.

**Acknowledgement of Risk for EL Project Requiring Off-Campus Educational Travel/Trips**: This course requires that you complete the EL group project which involves observing a child in two settings (home and out-of-home contexts). In most cases, depending on the child/family you are observing, this will require that you and your groupmates travel off campus for these observations (driving, metro, bus, shuttle, etc.). By registering for this course, you acknowledge and assume all risks involved in participating in the EL component of the course and the off-campus travel, and you voluntarily accept said risks. Transportation is the responsibility of you and your groupmates. There are normal dangers found in any type of off-campus educational field trip, including but not limited to, bodily harm or injury, psychological injury, injury to reputation, illness, death, and damage to or destruction of property. Notify me immediately of any safety or personal concerns related to the EL requirement for this course. Please consider any risks and dangers carefully before deciding to continue with the EL observation visits. If you have concerns or questions about your safety and any risk related to this assignment, please set up a time to meet with me to discuss alternative options.

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| **Course Schedule**  Readings are to be read before class on the date readings are due. Note that most weeks we will dedicate two class periods to only one textbook chapter or reading – you should read the assigned material in full by the first day on which the material is assigned. | | | |
| **Date** | **Topics** | **Readings Due** | **Assignments Due** |
| 8/27 | Welcome and Introduction to the Course |  |  |
| 8/29 | Childhood Studies in the News | “Childhood Studies in the News” article of your choice | Bring a “Childhood Studies in the News” article to discuss in class |
| 9/3 | Using Research Methods to Understand Childhood Studies |  | In class: Develop EL groups, provide contact info, and sign up for group presentation date |
| 9/5 | Using Research Methods to Understand Childhood Studies |  |  |
| 9/10 | Theoretical Approach to the Course | Chapter 1: Ecology of the Child |  |
| 9/12 | Theoretical Approach to the Course |  |  |
| 9/17 | Socialization | Chapter 2: Ecology of Socialization | EL project child/family to observe must be identified by this week |
| 9/19 | Socialization |  |  |
| 9/24 | Families and Children | Chapter 3: Ecology of the Family |  |
| 9/26 | Families and Children  Discuss Test Preparation and Study Strategies |  |  |
| 10/1 | Test Preparation & Review |  | Bring questions for Test 1 review |
| 10/3 | **In-class Test 1 (material from 8/27-10/1)** |  | **In-class Test 1** |
| 10/8 | Parenting | Chapter 4: Ecology of Parenting |  |
| 10/10 | Parenting |  |  |
| 10/15 | ***NO CLASS MEETING***  ***(Monday classes meet today instead due to Fall Break)*** |  | First child observation for EL project should be completed by this week |
| 10/17 | Temperament Interview Discussion |  | Temperament Interview:  Interview any adult who knew you as a child about your early childhood temperament. Come prepared to discuss what you learn about yourself and how you feel your current personality, preferences, and way of interacting with the world are consistent or not with your early childhood temperament. |
| 10/22 | Social and Behavioral Outcomes &  Brief Overview of Child Psychopathology (DSM-5) | Chapter 12: Social and Behavioral Socialization Outcomes  DSM-5 Handout  *Provided on Blackboard* |  |
| 10/24 | Social and Behavioral Outcomes &  Brief Overview of Child Psychopathology (DSM-5) |  |  |
| 10/29 | Experiential in-class intervention skill application and practice of Parent Behavior Management Training: Helping the Non-Compliant Child (HNC) | HNC chapters (McMahon & Forehand, 2003)  *Provided on Blackboard* | **Childhood Studies in the Movies Paper Due on BB by 9:00am today** |
| 10/31 | Experiential in-class intervention skill application and practice of Parent Behavior Management Training: Helping the Non-Compliant Child (HNC) |  |  |
| 11/5 | Peer Relations | Chapter 8: Ecology of the Peer Group |  |
| 11/7 | Peer Relations |  |  |
| 11/12 | Non-parental Child Care | Chapter 5: Ecology of Non-parental Child Care |  |
| 11/14 | Non-parental Child Care  Test Preparation & Review |  | Second child observation for EL project should be completed by this week |
| 11/19 | **In-class Test 2 (material from 10/8 – 11/14)** |  | **In-class Test 2** |
| 11/21 | EL in-class group work on final projects/presentations |  | Bring notes from child observation sessions |
| 11/26 | ***NO CLASS MEETING***  Use this time as needed to meet with your EL group |  |  |
| 11/28 | ***NO CLASS MEETING***  **HAPPY THANKSGIVING!** |  |  |
| 12/3 | **EL in-class group presentations (Groups 1-6)** |  | **EL group presentations due in class (Groups 1-6)** |
| 12/5 | **EL in-class group presentations (Groups 7-12)** |  | **EL group presentations due in class (Groups 7-12)** |
| 12/6 |  |  | **EL individual paper due for everyone at 11:59 pm tonight on BB** |