

### Psych 704: Life-Span Development

The course will cover concepts, theories, methods, and research findings of human development as they apply to physical, social, emotional and cognitive development from conception to death. The purpose of this course is to provide a broad introduction to the study of development that will enable students to better understand human growth and changes across the life-span.

This course is a discussion-based seminar, and thus reliant on the participation of all students. Given this format, it is imperative that everyone come prepared to participate for each class session. As part of class preparation, students should prepare a brief list of themes/issues/questions across the readings that strike you as interesting, as well as your reactions to the material, either theory or empirical. For example: Are there parts of an argument in a chapter or article that especially appeals to you or that you disagree with? How does material fit with other readings, your previous experiences, and knowledge? Are the measures and research design appropriate for the questions being studied? Are the conclusions justified? How can this information be applied, either in interventions or in educational settings? These will not be turned in, however three times per semester (students can choose what weeks), students will extend these into brief (2-3 pages) **reaction papers** to be submitted. The beginning of each class will be devoted to student-generated discussions based on these musings. Each class will include a discussion of a real world application of the week's topic.

A **review of an empirical article** (2-3 pages) is due October 18. Choose an article to review from an academic journal that presents findings of an evaluation of an intervention designed to address an issue discussed in class. The choice of journal and article needs to be cleared in advance. Discuss how relates to class material, critically review the article—methodology and conclusions drawn.

A **final paper** (10-15 pages) written in the format of a research grant proposal is due December 14. Using the principles and knowledge you have developed in this course, you will choose a topic of interest from the class and design a scientific study—the study can be an intervention study, where you will propose an intervention based in past literature or, the study can further explore basic developmental processes. The grant proposal should include (a) the aims of the proposed research; (b) a relevant literature review; (c) the significance of the proposed research and description of how results can be applied; (d) hypotheses (e) a clear and detailed method/design section; and (f) a brief results section that tells how the data will be analyzed. Ideally, the chosen topic will have its origins in the readings/class discussion, but the final package will be a unique creation based on the required readings, plenty of additional reading, and the author's particular interests, skills and knowledge base. This is an opportunity for you to investigate a question related to human development in your field.

Evaluation:	
Participation	25%
3 reaction papers	25%
Article review due 10/1	10%
Final aper due 12/14	40%

All students must adhere to the university honor policy. 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.

Remember: last day to add is September 6 and last day to drop is September 30

Text & Readings:

Laurence S., Bornstein, M.H. Vandell, D.L. and Rook, K.S. (2011). *Lifespan Development: Infancy Through Adulthood*. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.  
Additional readings will be available on dropbox

**August 30 Introductions and syllabus**

**September 1 Theories of Development**

Chapter 1 of text, pages 3-19  
Chapter 2 of text

**September 6 Research Methods**

Chapter 1 of text, page 19-34

**September 8 Prenatal**

Chapter 3 of text

**September 13 Infancy: Physical, Brain and Cognitive Development**

Chapter 4 of text

Chapter 5 of text, pages 123-137

National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2005). Excessive Stress Disrupts the Architecture of the Developing Brain: Working Paper #3.

<http://www.developingchild.net>

**September 15 Infancy: Language Development**

Chapter 5 of text, pages 138-150

Bialystok et al. (2010). Bilingual Minds. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 10(3), 89-129.

**September 20 Infancy: Social-Emotional Development— Temperament**

Chapter 6 of text, pages 151-163

Phillips, D. A., Fox, N. A., & Gunnar, M. R. (2011). Same place, different experiences: Bringing individual differences to research in child care. *Child Development Perspectives*, 5, 44-49

**September 22 Infancy: Social-Emotional Development— Relationships and Context**

Chapter 6 of text, pages 163-180

NICHD Early Child Care Research Network (2006). The NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development: Findings for Children up to age 4 ½ years.

[http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs\\_details.cfm?from=&pubs\\_id=5047](http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs_details.cfm?from=&pubs_id=5047)

**September 27 Early Childhood: Physical and Cognitive**

Chapter 7 of text

Clements, D.H. and Sarama, J. (2011). Early childhood mathematics intervention. *Science*, 333, 968-970.

**September 29 No Class Rosh Hashanah**

**October 4 Early Childhood: Social-Emotional**

Chapter 8 of text

Mervis, J. (2011). Past Successes Shape Efforts to Expand Early Intervention. *Science*, 333, 952-956.

**Journal and article for review needs to be cleared by this date**

**October 6 Special Lecture from Craig and Kate: Measures**

**October 11 No Class Monday Schedule**

**October 13 Special Lecture from Craig and Kate: Personal Experiences**

**October 18 Watch 49 Up (movie following children from age 7 to age 49)**

**Review is due**

**October 20 Finish 49 Up & Discuss Paper Topics**

Rogow, F. Discussion guide for 49 Up

**Come to class prepared to describe what you plan to propose in final paper**

**October 25 Middle Childhood: physical and cognitive**

Chapter 9 of text

Birch, S. H., & Ladd, G. W. (1997). The teacher-child relationship and children's early school adjustment. *Journal of School Psychology*, 35(1), 61-79.

**October 27 Middle Childhood: Social-Emotional**

Chapter 10 of text

Diamond, A. and Lee, K. (2011). Interventions shown to aid executive function development in children 4 to 12 years old. *Science*, 333, 959-964.

**November 1 Adolescence: Physical and Cognitive**

Chapter 11 of text

Fulgini, A.J. (2007). Family obligation, college enrollment, and emerging adulthood in Asian and Latin American families. *Child Development Perspectives*, 1(2), 96-100.

**November 3 Adolescence: Social-Emotional**

Chapter 12 of text

Wheeler, M.E., Keller, T.E., and DoBois, D.L. (2010) Review of Three Recent Randomized Trials of School-Based Mentoring. *SRCD Social Policy Report*, 24(3).

**November 8 Early Adulthood: Physical and Cognitive**

Chapter 13 of text

Henig, R.M. (August 18, 2010). What is it about 20-somethings? New York Times

**November 10 Early Adulthood: Social-Emotional**

Chapter 14 of text

Cowan, C.P & Cowan, P.A. (1995). Interventions to Ease the Transition to Parenthood: Why They Are Needed and What They Can Do. *Family Relations*, 44(4), 412- 423.

Psych 704: Life-Span Development  
Fall 2011  
T & Th 9-10:15 University Hall 1203

Rachel Chazan Cohen  
Rcohen8@gmu.edu  
Office hours Th 10:30-11:30 or by appt.  
David King Hall 2048

**November 15 Middle Adulthood: Physical and Cognitive**

Chapter 15 of text

Johnson, S. (2009). Emotions and the brain: Laughter. *Annual Editions: 2009-2010*, pp. 145-149.

**November 17 Middle Adulthood: Social-Emotional**

Chapter 16 of text

Wink, P., & Dillon, M. (2002). Spiritual development across the adult life course: Findings from a longitudinal study. *Journal of Adult Development*, 9(1), 79-94.

**November 22 Later Adulthood: Physical and Cognitive**

Chapter 17 of text

Herzog, A.R., Franks, M.M., Markus, H.R., & Holmberg, D. (1998). Activities and well-being in older age: Effects of self-concept and educational attainment. *Psychology and Aging*, 13, 179-185.

**November 24 No Class Thanksgiving**

**November 29 Later Adulthood: Social-Emotional**

Chapter 18 of text

Salthouse, T.A. (2006). Mental exercise and mental aging. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 1, 68-87.

**December 1 Student short presentations on paper**

**December 6 Student short presentations on paper**

**December 8 Concluding thoughts and student evaluations**

**Papers due COB 12/14**