

# Cognitive Development: Summer 2009

Monday-Thursday 2:00-3:50

105 Peterson

## Instructors

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## Course Description:

### **Do you know how much more you can do than a child?**

- You know that other people act based on their own wants and beliefs, but many four-year-olds don't understand that.
- You can sit still (like through a lecture!), but a three-year-old's brain isn't ready for that yet.
- You can read a map, but a two-year-old can't represent what pictures symbolize (and a chimpanzee can!)

### **Maybe none of that is surprising. But do you know SOMETIMES how much "smarter" a child is than you?**

- You might be doing well learning a second language, but a two-year-old could do it a lot better.
- You might be able to tell your friends' faces apart, but a six-month-old could do that, and do it with monkeys, too (and you couldn't!)
- You can only hear the difference between sounds that are used in the languages you know, but nine-month-olds can tell the difference between sounds that are used in other languages, too.

Across development, we see remarkable changes in the abilities that humans use in going about their lives, whether it be in memory, language, social cognition, face recognition, symbolic and analogical reasoning, and myriad other skills. What accounts for the huge change in knowledge and ability that we see in human development? We will consider different accounts of how mental abilities develop, as well as the scientific methodologies psychologists use to investigate cognitive development. A particular focus will be the latest breakthroughs in the study of cognition in infancy and early childhood, as these are areas where rapid scientific progress is currently being made.

## Text:

There is no required text for this course. Readings, including chapters selected from textbooks as well as empirical pieces, will be available under blackboard as pdfs.

**Grading:** Your grade in the course will be based on four weekly tests (19% each), a class project (20%), and reading responses (4%).

**Tests:** The four tests will be multiple choice and short answer/essay. They will not be cumulative, although basic concepts covered during the first week will be required for understanding later material. Tests will be administered during the first hour of class on Thursdays, and lecture will follow the test. A list of review questions *covering lecture material* to assist in your preparation for each of the tests will be provided on

Tuesdays and updated on Wednesday to include that day's material. Spending time with the study guide and working together with others in the class in preparing answers to the study guide questions will be very helpful in improving your exam performance. You will be responsible for material covered in assigned readings as well, and we encourage you to construct your own study guides for these sources.

**Class Project:** You will be examining transcripts of parent and child language to examine a hypothesis that you generate about a topic we have covered in class. The final written product will be a (somewhat abbreviated) APA-style paper including Introduction, Method, Results, Discussion, and References (Abstract and Title Page not needed). More information about the class project will be provided to you in class on Monday, July 27<sup>th</sup>. All work must be turned in as a hard copy, not as email. Relevant due dates for the project are as follows:

Wednesday 8/5 in class: Hypothesis, Method, and Proposed Data Analysis due

Thursday 8/6 in class: Be prepared to discuss your hypothesis with the rest of the class.

**Official Due Date of Final Paper: 3:30 pm Thursday 8/13 (Extension granted until 10:00 am Monday 8/17)**

**Reading Responses:** On Thursday of each week, you will turn in two 1- to 1-and-a-half-page (double-spaced) responses to assigned readings for that week. You can choose the readings for which you write your responses. Responses can be in the form of notes on the readings or your own opinions or feelings about what you have read.

**Extra Credit** to improve your overall grade by up to 2% can be earned by participating in Psychology Department research through the Psychology Department Human Subjects Pool. For each credit of participation assigned to Psych 475, you can earn a 1% improvement to your final grade. You can gain information by contacting the human participants coordinators, Adam Kramer and Ida Moadab, by email at [hscoord@uoregon.edu](mailto:hscoord@uoregon.edu). You can also gain additional information by going to the HSP website at <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~hscoord>. Please note that the maximum amount of extra credit is 2%. Studies must be completed by Thursday, August 13<sup>th</sup>.

### TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR LECTURE TOPICS

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Lecture Topic</u></b>	<b><u>Readings</u></b>
7/20	Introduction and Piagetian Infancy	nothing due
7/21	Infancy and Perception I	1 and 2
7/22	Infancy and Perception II	3 and 4
7/23	TEST I and Goal Understanding	5 and 6
7/27	Final Project Discussion and Language I	7 and 8
7/28	Language II	9, 10a and 10b
7/29	Learning and Intellectual Disabilities	11
7/30	TEST II, Gender and Cognitive Bases of Stereotyping	12, 13, and 14
8/3	Memory and Executive Function	Readings for Weeks 3 and 4 TBA

8/4	Imagination, Pretend Play, Symbolic Representation
8/5	Self and Theory of Mind I (Hypothesis, Method, and Proposed Data Analysis Due)
8/6	TEST III and Project Ideas Feedback
8/10	Theory of Mind II and Autism
8/11	Intelligence and Achievement
8/12	Adolescence
<b>8/14 1:00</b>	<b>TEST IV (PLEASE NOTE FRIDAY 1:00 ADMINISTRATION DATE AND TIME)</b>
<b>8/17</b>	<b>10:00 am FINAL PAPER DUE TO ALISON'S MAILBOX IN STRAUB</b>

### **IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

**Missing Tests:** Tests can be made up *only* with appropriate documentation, e.g., doctor's note. Tests must be made up within a week of administration date or a grade of "0" will be entered for the test. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructors and schedule a make up time.

**Late Work:** Written assignments will be marked off 20% for every day they are late.

**Emailing Assignments:** Written assignments may not be turned in through email except with an instructor's permission. If you email an assignment, include 1) any relevant attachments, preferably in Word *and* 2) the body of the written assignment cut-and-pasted into the body of the email itself (unformatted is fine).

**Guidelines for Teaching and Learning:** The Psychology Department has recently developed guidelines for teaching and learning in Psychology. These guidelines can be accessed at the following web address:  
<http://psychweb.uoregon.edu/guidelines/>

Please read these guidelines carefully as they clarify our general expectations and goals for each other in this course.

**Academic Honesty:** As a member of the university community you are expected to be honest and forthright in all your academic endeavors. To falsify the results of one's research, to present the words, ideas, data, or work of another as one's own, or to cheat on an examination corrupts the essential process by which knowledge is advanced. All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly acknowledged and documented. For the consequences of academic dishonesty, refer to the Schedule of Classes published quarterly. Violations will be taken seriously and are noted on student disciplinary records. If you are in doubt regarding any aspect of these issues as they pertain to this course, please consult with the instructor before you complete any relevant requirements of the course. (Text adopted here as recommended from the UO web site regarding academic honesty at: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~conduct>)

**IMPORTANT! PLEASE READ!** With specific regard to assignments for this class:

You are expected to have read and understood the university's policy on academic dishonesty including the

section in which plagiarism is defined. Particularly in cases where aspects of paper-writing involve summarizing the work of others, lifting phrases from the original text is a tempting option. Don't do it! If we find instances of plagiarized work, you will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs and may risk failing the course.

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with the instructor soon. It would be wise to contact Disability Services (164 Oregon Hall, 346-1155). Also please request that the Counselor for Students with Disabilities send a letter verifying your disability. [Counselor for Students with Disabilities: Molly Sirois, 346-3211, 164 Oregon Hall, 346-1073, [sirois@uoregon.edu](mailto:sirois@uoregon.edu)]

## Readings for Weeks 1 and 2

- 1) Bjorklund, D. F. (2005). Chapter 1: Introduction to cognitive development. In *Children's thinking: Cognitive development and individual differences* (pp. 1-25). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. (NOT including crossed-out section "Overview of the Remainder of the Book")
- 2) Bjorklund, D. F. (2005). Chapter 4: Piaget and the neo-Piagetians. In *Children's thinking: Cognitive development and individual differences* (pp. 78-104). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- 3) Bjorklund, D. F. (2005). Chapter 7: Infant perception. In *Children's thinking: Cognitive development and individual differences* (pp. 183-207). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. (NOT including crossed-out sections pp. 199-205)  
and  
Bjorklund, D. F. (2005). Chapter 8: Spatial cognition. In *Children's thinking: Cognitive development and individual differences* (pp. 208-220). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- 4) Pascalis, O., de Haan, M., & Nelson, C.A. (2002). Is face processing species-specific during the first year of life? *Science*, 296, 1321-1323.
- 5) Sommerville, J. A., Woodward, A. L., & Needham, A. (2005). Action experience alters 3-month-old infants' perception of others' actions. *Cognition*, 96, B1-B11.
- 6) Phillips, A. T., & Wellman, H. M. (2005). Infants' understanding of object-directed action. *Cognition*, 98, 137-155.
- 7) Hoff, E. (2005). Chapter 3: Phonological development: Learning the sounds of language. In *Language Development* (pp. 90-129). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- 8) Kuhl, P.K. (2004). Early language acquisition: cracking the speech code. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*, 5, 831-843.
- 9) Hoff, E. (2005). Chapter 4: Lexical development: Learning words. (pp. 140-181). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.  
and  
Hoff, E. (2005). Chapter 5: The development of syntax and morphology: Learning the structure of language. (pp. 219-236). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- 10) Lidz, J., Waxman, S., & Freedman, J. (2003). What infants know about syntax but couldn't have learned: Evidence for syntactic structure at 18 months. *Cognition*, 89, B65-B73.
- 11) Temple, E., Deutsch, G. K., Poldrack, R. A., Miller, S. L., Tallal, P., Merzenich, M. M., & Gabrieli, J. D. E. (2003). Neural deficits in children with dyslexia ameliorated by behavioral remediation: Evidence from functional MRI. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 100, 2860-2865.
- 12) Martin, C. L., & Ruble, D. (2004). Children's search for gender cues: Cognitive perspectives on gender development. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 13, 67-70.
- 13) Bigler, R. S., & Liben, L. S. (2007). Developmental intergroup theory: Explaining and reducing children's social stereotyping and prejudice, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 16, 162-166.
- 14) Taylor, M. G., Rhodes, M., & Gelman, S. A. (2009). Boys will be boys, cows will be cows: Children's essentialist reasoning about human gender and animal development. *Child Development*, 79, 1270-1287.