

PSYCHOLOGY 475: COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Summer 2012

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Office Hours: Mondays 12:45-1:45; by appt; or chat directly after class!



Lecture Place and Time:

June 25th-July 19th, Esslinger 112, Monday-Thursday 2pm-3:50pm
*No Class on Wednesday July 4th!

Course Description:

Did you know that you can do certain things better than a child?

- You know that people act in accordance with their desires and beliefs – 4-year-olds do not know this yet.
- You have the ability to sit still (like through a lecture!), but a 3-year-old's brain isn't capable of sitting still for that long.
- You can decipher a map, but a 2-year-old cannot represent what pictures symbolize.

That might not be surprising...but did you know that sometimes children are smarter than you?

- You might learn a second language, but a 3-year-old could do it a lot better.
- You might be able to distinguish between your friends' faces, but a 6-month-old can distinguish faces even in other species.
- You might hear the difference between sounds in your native language, but 9-month-old infants can tell the difference between sounds in any language.

Humans undergo remarkable changes in their cognitive abilities. This class will explore memory, language, social cognition, face recognition, symbolic and analogical reasoning, action processing, and a myriad of other skills that develop early in life. What accounts for such huge changes in knowledge and ability throughout development? We will consider a variety of accounts regarding how mental abilities develop, while paying a particular focus to developments in infancy and early childhood. We will focus on this young age for the first 3 weeks, and then take a peak at later developments during the last week of the course.

Cognitive development is an exciting field, with an ever-increasing number of investigators benefitting from recent innovations in experimental techniques and theoretical advances aimed at elucidating the steps of human development. My hope is that you also will join in the current excitement for this fascinating discipline and find opportunities for challenge and learning. To accomplish this, we will not only use the textbook, but will also read several empirical research articles to take a closer look at research conducted in this field.

Course Website:

The course blackboard site will be a critical source of information throughout the term. Selected readings and important announcements will be listed there. Major changes to assignments will also be communicated via e-mail. In addition, slides to accompany lectures, review questions for exams, paper topics, and scores will be posted there. Please make sure you are able to view slides in pdf format. Slides will be available by 11:59pm the night before the lecture (at the latest).

Course Materials:

Textbook:

Galotti, K. (2011). *Cognitive Development: Infancy through Adolescence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Note: A copy of the textbook is on reserve in the Knight Library.

Additional Readings:

Available on Blackboard under “Readings” tab

Course Requirements:

Grades for the course will be based on:

--Two **in-class exams** (50% of final grade, 25% each)

--A **final paper** (30% of final grade) addressing chosen cognitive developmental question, 5-7 double-spaced pages

--Four **reading responses** (14% of final grade, with each response worth 3.5%), 1-2 double-spaced pages each, addressing weekly assigned readings

--**Participation** (6% of final grade) will be determined via in-class written responses throughout the 4 weeks of the course.

In-class multiple-choice and essay exams (50% of final grade, 25% each) will take place on Monday July 9th and Thursday July 19th.

Exam #1 will cover material from weeks 1-2 while Exam #2 will cover material from weeks 3-4. The format of the exam will typically be 30 multiple-choice questions and 2 essay questions. There will always be a choice of 4 essay questions to choose from for the writing portion.

Final paper (30% of final grade) will be due on Monday July 16th at the start of class – hard copies only. Papers must address topics described in the Paper Guidelines under Course Documents on the blackboard course website. For each paper, you will write a 5-7-page double-spaced discussion of the assigned topic. Guidelines for paper formatting and stylistic conventions are available on blackboard under Course Documents as well. *You must use APA style*. Late papers will have one letter grade (10 points) deducted every day that they are late unless a doctor’s note or similar documentation is given demonstrating why you were unable to write/turn in your paper.

Reading Responses (14% of final grade, 3.5% each)

Each week, you are responsible for selecting one day of assigned textbook reading for that week and *typing* a 1 to 2-page double-spaced response to be turned in at the beginning of class on Thursday June 28th, Thursday July 5th, Thursday July 12th, and Wednesday July 18th. The assigned reading for which you write a response is your choice, as long as it was assigned for a day during the week you're turning it in. Responses should demonstrate 1) that you have read the assigned pages and 2) your thoughts and reactions to the content. Your grade will be based on both components. A good format for a response would consist 1-2 paragraphs of summarizing followed by 1-2 paragraphs of your own thoughts on the material. Your own thoughts may connect material you learned in lecture to the textbook, provide personal stories or anecdotes that bear on the textbook, or just your opinion on the importance or quality of the material.

Participation (6% of final grade)

Throughout the course, I will pose 13 questions in class and ask for a half-page written response. Students must turn in at least 11 responses to receive full credit for participation. Points will be deducted thereafter. Responses need to be thoughtfully constructed in order to receive this credit.

Academic Honesty:

All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. No form of cheating or plagiarism will be tolerated. Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's product, words, ideas, or data as one's own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate, and specific references. By placing one's name on work submitted for credit, the student certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements. On written assignments, if verbatim statements are included, the statements must be enclosed in *quotation marks*. Unauthorized collaboration with others on papers or projects can inadvertently lead to a charge of plagiarism. In addition, it is plagiarism to submit work in which portions were substantially produced by someone acting as a tutor or editor. If you are in doubt about your work, please consult me, or seek assistance from the staff of Academic Learning Services (PLC 68; 346-3226). If cheating is discovered on the exams or plagiarism on the paper, then the university will be notified and appropriate action will be taken.

Accommodations:

You are strongly encouraged to contact Disability Services (164 Oregon Hall; 346-1155) if you have a non-documented condition that creates difficulty for you as a student. If one of the following applies to you, please see me as soon as possible to make adjustments:

- Documented learning or medical disability
- Non-documented need for adjustments to help you learn
- Member of a sports team that travels this quarter
- Non-native speaker of English

With advanced planning, adjustments are relatively straightforward. Adjustments at the last minute can be problematic and sometimes are not possible.

Outline of Lecture Topics and Important Due Dates

June 25 th	Course Overview / What is Cognitive Development?
June 26 th	Theories and Perspectives on Cognitive Development Chapter 2 - p. 17-38, Chapter 3 – p. 52-58
June 27 th	Sensation and Perception in Infancy Chapter 3 - p. 59-77
June 28 th	Action Processing and Redescription Articles #1 and #2 on Blackboard: (1) <i>Infants parse dynamic action</i> ; (2) <i>Action experience alters 3-month-old infants' perception of others' actions</i> <u>Due: Reading Response #1 (on the assigned textbook pages from the 26th or 27th)</u>
July 2 nd	Memory and Object Knowledge in Infancy Chapter 4 (all)
July 3 rd	Language Development I: Typical Trajectory and Important Milestones Chapter 5 (all)
July 4 th	NO CLASS – HOLIDAY
July 5 th	Language Development II: Critical Periods and Special Cases Article #3 on Blackboard: <i>Age of immigration and second language proficiency among foreign-born adults</i> <u>Due: Reading Response #2 (on either Ch4 or Ch5)</u>
July 9 th	Exam #1 on material from weeks 1-2
July 10 th	Symbolic Understanding Chapter 6 – p. 169-177, Article #4 on Blackboard: <i>The credible shrinking room: Very young children's performance with symbolic and nonsymbolic relations</i>
July 11 th	Theory of Mind Chapter 8 – p. 236-245, p. 256-269
July 12 th	Executive Functioning Chapter 6 – p. 177-183, Chapter 9 – p. 288-296 <u>Due: Reading Response #3 (on the assigned textbook pages from the 10th, 11th, or 12th)</u>
July 16 th	Analogical Reasoning and Decision Making Chapter 11 – p. 344-353, Article #5 on Blackboard: <i>Working memory and inhibition as constraints on children's development of analogical reasoning</i> <u>Due: Final Paper (hard copies only, at start of class)</u>
July 17 th	Childhood Memory and Eyewitness Testimony Chapter 7 – p. 194-223, Chapter 10 – p. 305-324
July 18 th	Adolescence – Further Developments Chapter 13 - p. 411-434 <u>Due: Reading Response #4 (on the assigned textbook pages from the 16th, 17th, or 18th)</u>
July 19 th	Exam #2 on material from weeks 3-4