

DEVELOPMENT

Psychology 610, Fall 2013
Mon/Wed 10:00-11:50am, Franklin Building 271B



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OVERVIEW

In this course we will discuss a series of central topics within the study of human development, examining cognitive, affective, social, and biological factors. We will strive for some historical perspective on the study of development as well as discussing important contemporary theoretical and empirical issues. We will focus in particular on fundamental processes and mechanisms that influence development, and the research techniques that are opening new windows on such processes. The following are some of the questions we might be considering:

- In what ways do genes and environment interact in children's development?
- How successfully can we identify children at risk, and how can we improve these children's trajectories once identified?
- What can parents do to promote a loving and healthy relationship with their children, and what impact does the quality of the parent-child relationship have on children's development?
- What makes infants and young children such remarkable learners – about language, objects, events, social relationships, and so on?

- How do self-concepts, emotions, self-regulatory abilities, and peer relationships (with members of the same- and opposite-sex) change across development?
- What are some major milestones in biological development, including changes in the brain and body during puberty?

Reflecting the current state of the field, the course will focus heavily on development in the infancy period up through adolescence, but also address the perinatal period and later lifespan. We hope you will find the material to be both challenging and interesting.

REQUIREMENTS

Class participation (10%). Class meetings will typically involve some combination of lecture and discussion. Your contributions to the discussion are key to establishing a lively intellectual climate for the course. If you are the quiet type, please just work on blurting out what occurs to you without censorship. If you are the garrulous type, go for it – I will let you know if you need to rein it in! Since we have a large class size this year, if you feel you miss out on class discussion you can also comment on seed papers on Blackboard to help supplement your class participation, but please do so within two days after the class (in other words, not all at the end of the quarter in retrospect).

Mini-lecture (20%). A 10-15 minute (maximum strictly enforced!) conference-style powerpoint presentation on a current topic, debate, or empirical investigation that is relevant to our course topic of the day. We suggest no more than 10 slides. Sign-ups are the first day of class!

Seed papers (20%). Seed papers are short (approximately 1 page double-spaced) and required to be posted once per week on Blackboard, due by Sundays, 5pm (even when class is not scheduled for Mondays due to holidays). The seed paper will respond to issues raised in the readings assigned for that week. The paper could present an argument about the issues, raise questions regarding the readings, sketch a new research idea on the issues, or any of a number of other possibilities.

Research proposal (50%). The research proposal (10-15 pages double-spaced) will present original ideas for empirical work investigating a question regarding human development. There are several ways you could approach the proposal. It could provide a detailed rationale, with well-formulated methodological details, for empirical investigation of a specific and important question about development. Alternatively, it could present ideas for investigating a set of closely related questions – as in a small grant proposal – which would involve less detail regarding each but cover a wider range of issues that are carefully integrated. Yet another possibility is to focus the proposal on utilizing a new methodology or empirical tool (e.g., a neuroimaging technique, a computational modeling approach) to investigate a developmental question in a new manner. Please do seek me out to discuss your proposal ideas in advance if you would wish to. I would enjoy the opportunity to help you shape them. The proposal is due **Monday, Dec. 9 by 5 p.m., in the form of a digital file emailed to me.**

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Week1:

Sept. 30 – Course Introduction

Oct. 2 – Historical and Contemporary Issues in the Study of Human Development

Week 2:

Oct. 7 – Perinatal Risk

Carrie Clark, Guest Speaker

Oct. 9 –Attachment

Week 3:

Oct. 14 – Early Development, Parenting, Attachment, and Ameliorating Risk

Jennifer Ablow, Guest Speaker

Minilectures: Jimena and Leah

Oct. 16 – Executive Function and Theory of Mind

Lou Moses, Guest Speaker

Week 4:

Oct. 21 – Perceptual Development

Minilecture: Iryna

Oct. 23 – Early Event Processing

Minilecture: Adrienne

Week 5:

Oct. 28 – Language Development, Part I

Minilecture: Jason

Oct. 30 – Language Development, Part II

Erik Pakulak, Guest Speaker

Minilecture: Dori

Week 6:

Nov. 4: Conceptual Development

Nov. 6 – Environmental influence/rearing circumstances

Leslie Leve, Guest Speaker

Minilectures: Kristen and Marina

Week 7:

Nov. 11 – Emotions and Self-Regulation

Minilecture: Robin

Nov. 13 – Imagination

Marjorie Taylor, Guest Speaker

Minilecture: Marcus

Week 8:

Nov. 18 – Self Development

Minilecture: Colton

Nov. 20 – Adolescence

Atika Khurana, Guest Speaker

Minilecture: Arian

Week 9:

Nov. 25 – Social Identities, Intergroup Relations, and Morality Development

Lisa Scheeber, Guest Speaker

Minilectures: Smrithi and Stephanie

Nov. 27 – Biological Development

Week 10:

Dec. 2 – Peer Relationships

Dec. 4 – Lifespan

Ulrich Mayr, Guest Speaker