

Psychology 410/510: Spring 2013

INFANCY

Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:00-1:20p.m., Straub 142



Professor:

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Office hours: Tu 10-11, W 9:30-10:30

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Tu 2-3, Th 3-4

Course Description:

Human infancy: a remarkable period in each of our lives that none of us can remember for ourselves. The human infant is a fascinating combination of helplessness and powerful potential, of preprogrammed responses and resilient plasticity. For parents, the advent of a newborn can bring untold joy while wreaking havoc on daily routines and healthy sleep schedules. The pace of change during infancy – which we will define as the period from birth to 24 months -- seems nearly explosive: newborns with little voluntary control transform into walking, talking dynamos. How can we account for the rapidity of change during this crucial period in human development? In what ways do prenatal experiences set the stage for subsequent developmental outcomes? How do cultural attitudes and approaches toward infants vary, and what is the significance of such differences for development? What kinds of parenting practices best promote infants' well-being? What accounts for human infants outstripping the infants of other species in cognitive and linguistic development? What is unique about the human infants' brain? These are among the questions we will consider in this course. A particular focus will be mechanisms and processes that underlie and promote infant development across domains. We will also examine a range of innovative new methodologies that in recent years have provided a new window into the inner workings of the infant mind. I hope you will come away from the course with a host of new information, an appreciation for what psychological science can reveal about fundamental issues concerning human nature and human capability, and an awareness of the many important topics of investigation about infancy that are as yet still in their infancy.

Text: Fogel, A. (2010). *Infant Development: A Topical Approach*. Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY: Sloan Publishing. A copy of the text is available at Knight Library. It may be borrowed for a maximum of two hours at a time.

Required Reading: A list of lecture topics and reading assignments follows. The lecture topics will generally supplement rather than retrace materials presented in the text, and will reflect topical issues of contemporary interest in the field.

Blackboard: Blackboard will be a critical source of course-related information throughout the term. Study-guide questions for exams and exam scores will all be posted online. As well, powerpoint slides from lectures will be posted within a day or two after lectures have occurred. Please check the blackboard website regularly for course-related announcements, and take advantage of the communication features to communicate with your term-project group and to undertake commentary on group debates.

Attendance: Class attendance is important to doing well in this course. And it makes the class a lot more engaging for you as well as for all involved if you are there. Please come and join in our collective learning enterprise. If you anticipate missing more than three classes, please come and discuss it with me.

Grades: Your grade in the course will be based on two exams (30% each) and a term-project (40%). An extra-credit option is available to boost your overall grade by up to 3%. [Graduate students in the course (PSY 510) will have the additional requirement of identifying two informational resources (e.g., websites, review articles, books) describing recent research findings relevant to a topic addressed in one or more lectures. Thus, for graduate students the breakdown for grading will be: two exams (30% each), term project (35%), two informational resources (5%). The same extra credit options available to undergraduates (to boost your grade by up to 3%) will be available to graduate students.]

Exams: The two exams will be short essay format. They will not be cumulative. The first exam will take place in class on Thursday of Week 5, and the second exam will occur in class on Thursday of Week 10 (the last day of class). Material in text chapters 1-5 will be required for the first exam, and text chapters 6-10 will be required for the second exam. A study guide to assist in your preparation for each of the exams will be provided at least one week in advance of the exam. 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.

Term Project: Group debate and individual write-up. The term-project will involve both group and individual components. The goals of the term project are threefold: 1) to provide an opportunity to focus on an issue of debate concerning infancy that is of particular interest to you and to engage in a dialectic with other students on the topic, 2) to communicate with the class at large about your findings in order to help build our collective knowledge base on the topic, and 3) to build your individual writing skills. Because there is no final exam in this course, the term project will be a major focus of your intellectual efforts in the class, and it will account for 40% (35% for graduate students) of your overall grade.

To carry out the term project, you will join together with other students in the class (groups will include 5-6 students) who share an interest in a similar sub-topic within cognitive development. As a group you will research the topic and present a debate on the topic to the class. You have two options for your group debate format: 1) organizing a 15-minute in-class debate in which your group presents both sides of the issue in 10 minutes in a powerpoint presentation, and moderates full-class discussion for 5

minutes, or 2) presenting the two sides of the debate in a powerpoint presentation posted on our blackboard website and moderating comments from the class in response to your debate material over the course of the term. You will need to decide, as a group, which format you prefer. Blackboard presentation of the group debate must be accomplished by Tuesday of Week 9, and in-class presentation of the group debate must be accomplished by Tuesday of Week 10, at the latest.

For the individually-written component of the project, you will write up your own, personal, fully considered position on the topic that you chose to debate on, complete with references to all sources you consulted. It is fine if you ultimately adopt a different position in your final write-up than the one you espoused in your group debate. The project write-up should be 4-5 pages double-spaced (references excluded). It is due latest by Monday of Finals Week.

Extra Credit: There are two extra credit options, each of which potentially enables you to improve your overall grade by as much as 3%. You may choose one or the other, but cannot get credit for both, nor for any combination of the two. Extra credit work is due latest by Friday of Finals Week.

Extra Credit Option 1 (Research Participation): You can participate in Psychology Department research through the Psychology Department Human Subjects Pool. For each credit of participation assigned to Psych 410/510, you can earn a 1% improvement to your final grade, for up to 3%. Also necessary for gaining the extra credit is that you hand in a one-page description of the research you participated in for each of the participation credits. You can gain information by contacting the human subjects coordinator, Bill Schumaker, by email at hscoord@uoregon.edu. You can also gain additional information by going to the HSP website at <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~hscoord>.

Extra Credit Option 2 (Debate Commentary): You can contribute on Blackboard to commentary on the various debates that are presented during the course of the term (your commentary can concern debates presented on Blackboard, or it can continue discussion of debates presented in class). Each double-spaced page's worth of debate commentary that you provide has the potential to improve your grade by as much as 1%, for a total possible improvement of 3%. Excellent, carefully articulated commentary will earn you the full amount of extra credit. You will need to print out your commentary and turn it in by Friday of Finals Week in order to receive your extra credit.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR LECTURE TOPICS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Lecture Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
Week 1	Infancy: The best of times, the worst of times	Ch. 1
Weeks 2-3	Prenatal programming, learning, and birth	Chs. 2-3
Weeks 4-5	Sense and moveability	Ch. 4-5
Week 6	Deeply social	Ch. 6
Week 7	Relationships start early	Ch. 7
Week 8	Concentric circles of belongingness	Ch. 8
Week 9	Health, exceptions and challenges	Chs.9

Week 10 What persists?

Ch. 10

Dates of Special Significance:

May 2 (Week 5, Thursday)

May 28 (Week 9, Tuesday)

June 4 (Week 10, Tuesday)

June 6 (Week 10, Thursday)

June 10 (Finals Week, Monday, 4pm)

June 14 (Finals Week, Friday, 4pm)

First Exam

Last Blackboard Debate Day

Last In-Class Debate Day

Second Exam

Individual Write-up Due

Extra Credit Due

THREE IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL NOTES:

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

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

2. 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. For more information regarding academic honesty and the student conduct code at the University of Oregon, visit the University's Office of Student Life website at: <http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/StudentConductCode/tabid/69/Default.aspx>

3. 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, disabsrv@uoregon.edu, <http://ds.uoregon.edu/>). 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]