

# Developmental Psychology

Psychology 376 (CRN 26381)

Winter, 2014

4 Credits

T,TH 12:00pm-1:20pm

101 Living Learning Center

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Office Hrs: Tues. & Thurs. 1:30-2:30, and by appointment  
(Please no phone calls)

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Office Hrs: Mondays, 8:55-10:55, and by appointment  
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## OVERVIEW

This course will provide an introduction into the core issues and scientific methods of studying child development. Multiple aspects of development, including physical, cognitive/intellectual, and social/emotional development from conception through middle childhood, are considered. The approach to these topics is scientific, with an emphasis on recent research findings in developmental psychology. A number of themes guide the integration of the material. These themes, which are emphasized throughout the textbook, are: 1) the interaction between biology and environment throughout development; 2) the ways in which children affect their own development; 3) the mechanisms that underlie developmental change; 4) individual differences in development; and 7) the use of research findings to promote children's welfare.

### Course Objectives

1. To examine age-related changes in children's physical characteristics, social behaviors, and cognition
2. To explore alternative explanations for these changes
3. To develop skills in reading, evaluating, and synthesizing research in child psychology
4. To apply knowledge regarding child psychology to both formal and informal observations of children

## TEXT AND MATERIALS

### 1. Textbook (*the text book is available for purchase at the bookstore*):

Berk, L.E. (2012). *Infants and Children: Prenatal Through Middle Childhood* (7<sup>th</sup> Edition). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon

2. *Pearson's MyVirtualChild* – access code purchased with Berk text package or separately

3. Supplemental readings will be posted on Blackboard.

4. *Optional*: MyDevelopmentLab

**Class website:** <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu>.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your grade in this course will be based on the points you earn on three exams, assignments (including the development of your virtual child), participation in class activities, and attendance.

**Class participation and attendance:** You are expected to attend class. Some topics not found in the reading will be covered in lecture. In addition, there will be some in-class activities in which you will be expected to participate. Furthermore, your contributions to the class are a potentially valuable resource to the other class members. I don't plan on taking attendance regularly, but I may do so periodically (e.g., during small group meetings and discussions) and absences will count against your participation grade. I strongly recommend planning to attend EVERY class. If you know that you must miss a class, or leave a class early, I would appreciate you telling me in advance.

I hope to create a class environment in which you will feel comfortable speaking up in class, but I realize that some of you may be intimidated by speaking in a classroom with potentially 120+ students. If you like, please feel free to send your comments over E-mail, or write them down during class and give them to me, or talk with me after class, during office hours, or by appointment.

**Course assignments:** The assignments for this course are designed to make you an active consumer of the material. They are designed to make you think extensively about the topics of the course, generate new ideas, make new observations in the domain of child development, and to provide you with a forum to express these new thoughts, ideas, and observations in writing and in speech. The schedule of the assignments is designed to keep you up to date and interacting with the material on an on-going basis.

Several of the course assignments require writing. If you feel that your writing abilities may be a hindrance and prevent you from expressing your thoughts in a clear and concise manner, I encourage you to seek the services of the **Writing Lab** at the **Teaching and Learning Services (TLC) (72 PLC, phone 6-3226)**. The Writing Lab (room 72, PLC) is available to all University students on a walk-in basis, and is open Monday-Friday, 9am-4pm.

**All writing assignments are to be typed in a readable font, no greater than 12 point, double-spaced, left justified, and with margins of one inch at the top, bottom, left side and right side.**

**Assignment due dates and tardiness policy:**

Due dates are taken seriously and tardiness is penalized. If an assignment is turned in after the designated date AND time it is considered 1-day late with a 10% penalty. Each subsequent day rolls over at 4pm, with an additional 10% penalty. If you cannot be in town the day an assignment is due, you must TALK with me IN PERSON **before** the due date and make alternative arrangements (a message on my voice mail or via e-mail will not be sufficient). In case of unforeseen events that prevent you from either turning in your assignment on time, or arranging to have somebody else turn in your assignment for you, exceptions may be accommodated but only with legitimate documentation of the excuse. No other exceptions will be made.

Assignments may not be submitted electronically, except by prior permission of the instructor. All assignments must be clearly printed (no fuzzy toner), stapled, and typed in a readable font, no greater than 12 point, double-spaced, left justified, and with margins of one inch at the top, bottom, left side and right side.

**Evaluation of Student Performance (a description of each assignment follows):**

- 1) **Three Exams (300 points total):** Exams are not cumulative in the sense that you will be retested on specific terms and concepts. However, some of the core ideas and principles in the field of child development will repeat themselves throughout the term. You will be responsible for continued comprehension of these important constructs. For example, you will be tested on the bioecological theory in your first exam. In the second and third exams you will be tested on how aspects of the bioecological theory affects later child development. As such, continued comprehension of this theory is necessary throughout the course.
- 2) **Assignments**
  - a. **MyVirtualChild** online assignments
  - b. **Journal Article Critique**
  - c. **Observation Projects**

- a) **MyVirtualChild Online Assignments (120 points total):** As part of the textbook package (or purchased separately), students will receive a code to create an account to access the *MyVirtualChild* program. Details regarding the process and assignments for raising a virtual child will be provided in a separate document on Blackboard.
- b) **News Article/Journal Article critique (50 points):** This project is designed to examine issues in the dissemination of research findings. How accurately are research findings disseminated through the media? How important is it that professionals who work with children, including teachers, psychologists, and medical personnel, have skills in evaluating research findings? What questions should parents and professionals ask before they apply research findings as summarized in the media to their own interactions with children. How does an understanding of research methods assist in an informed reading of reports of research findings? This project is designed to assist you in examining these issues while further developing your skills in recognizing research methods and critically examining information from different sources. You will also develop skills in reading primary source materials. The assignment involves comparing a popular account of a psychological investigation with the scientific report. A handout will be provided to explain this assignment in further detail. This assignment is due: **January 21**
- c) **Observation Projects (100 points total):** Students will develop skills in observing children, applying academic material to everyday behavior, and writing observation reports through completion of two systematic observations of aspects of children's environments. There are several choices for each of the assignments. Detailed information on each project option is included on the Web site or from the instructor. Deadlines for each of the observation reports is indicated on the syllabus. A typed summary of your observations (3-5 pages) will meet the requirement for this assignment. Observation projects are due: **February 13 and March 6**
- d) **Course Readings:** Readings are assigned for each class meeting and are to be completed **BEFORE** the class meeting for which they are assigned.

#### POINTS, PERCENTAGE & GRADING

Assignment	Points for Each	How Many	Total Points	% of Grade
Exams	100	3	300	50%
Observation Projects	50	2	100	16%
Article Critique	50	1	50	8%
<i>MyVirtualChild</i> Essays	15	8	120	20%
Attendance & Participation			30	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>600</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Final Grades:

A total of 600 points is possible for the course and the percentage of the total points obtained will be used to determine your grade according to the following:

94-100% = A	74-76% = C
90-93% = A-	70-73% = C-
87-89% = B+	67-69% = D+
84-86% = B	64-66% = D
80-83% = B-	60-63% = D-
77-79% = C+	Below 60% = F

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**COURSE SCHEDULE:** Topics, readings & assignment dates *(the schedule listed here will be adhered to as closely as possible, but is subject to change. Should changes occur, you will be notified).*

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**Week 1: Child Development: Introduction, course overview, theory/history/methods**

T	1/7	Introduction to Child Development	Reading: none
R	1/9	Research Strategies	Reading: Ch 1

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**Week 2: Current Theories of Child Development and Genetic Foundations**

T	1/14	Biology and Environment	Reading: Ch 2, pgs. 69-89; Supplemental Reading: 1
R	1/16	Genetic Foundations: Guest Lecture: Shelley Bosworth, MS, CGC; Board Certified Genetic Counselor	Reading: Ch 2, pgs. 51-68

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**Week 3: Prenatal Development, Teratogens and Birth of the Newborn**

T	1/21	Prenatal Development and Teratogens	Reading: Ch 3 Assignment: Journal Article Critique
R	1/23	Birth & the New Born	Reading: Ch 4

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**Week 4: Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood**

S	1/26	<i>MyVirtualChild</i> Essay Answers for 8 months	
T	1/28	Brain, Body, Motor & Perception Development Guest Lecture: Jessica Flannery, UO Clinical Doctoral Student	Reading: Ch 5
R	1/30	EXAM 1: CHAPTERS 1-5 (covers material from readings, lectures, assignments & video)	

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**Week 5: Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood**

T	2/4	Cognitive Development	Reading: Ch 6, pgs.202-232 Supplemental Reading: 2
R	2/6	Language Development Guest Lecture: Dare Baldwin, Ph.D., UO Developmental Faculty Member	Reading: Ch 6, pgs. 233-245

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**Week 6: Emotional and Social Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood**

T	2/11	Emotional Development	Reading: Ch 7, pgs. 247-264
R	2/13	Attachment	Reading: Ch 7, pgs. 264-287 Assignment: Observation 1

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**Week 7: Attachment Continued & Cognitive Development in Early Childhood**

S	2/16	<i>MyVirtualChild</i> Essay Answers for 19 months, 2, and 3 years	
T	2/18	Attachment II	Supplemental Readings: 3 & 4
R	2/20	Cognitive Development in Early Childhood	Reading: Ch 8, pg. 291-304, Ch 9, pgs. 317-353

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**Week 8: Emotional and Social Development in Early Childhood**

S 2/23 *MyVirtualChild* Essay Answers for 4 and 6 years

T 2/25 Parenting Influences

**Reading:** Ch 10, pgs. 363-372, 378-384, 398-407

R 2/27 EXAM 2: CHAPTERS 6, 7, 9, 10 (material from readings, lectures, assignments & video)

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**Week 9: Middle Childhood**

T 3/4 Cognitive and Self Development

**Reading:** Ch. 12, pgs. 437-450, Ch. 13, pgs. 481-497, Ch. 11, pgs. 411-422 (review Ch. 7, 279-284)

R 3/6 Peers, Friendship & Aggression

**Reading:** Ch. 10, pgs. 372-378, 384-390, Ch. 13, pgs. 497-503  
**Supplemental Reading:** 5  
**Assignment:** Observation 2

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**Week 10: Conclusions**

S 3/9 *MyVirtualChild* Essay Answers for 8 and 10 years

T 3/11 Family Influences

**Reading:** Ch. 13, pgs. 506-527  
**Supplemental Reading:** 6

R 3/13 Summary

**Reading:** supplemental reading

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**Final Exam Week: Exam 3**

W 3/19 Time: 8:00 AM (Absolutely NO Exceptions)

**Location:** TBA

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**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>

ØØ 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](mailto: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](mailto:sirois@uoregon.edu)]