

# Infancy

Psychology 479 (CRN 35942)

Spring, 2018

4 Credits

M, W 12:00pm-1:20pm

242 Gerlinger

Instructor: Jennifer C. Ablow, Ph.D.  
Office: 475 Straub Hall  
e-mail: [jcablow@uoregon.edu](mailto:jcablow@uoregon.edu) (Please indicate PSY 479 in subject line of email)  
Office Hrs: Mondays & Wednesdays 1:30-2:30, and by appointment  
(Please no phone calls or phone messages)

GTF: Liz Loi, MS  
Office: 439 Straub Hall  
e-mail: [eloi@uoregon.edu](mailto:eloi@uoregon.edu) (Please indicate PSY 479 in subject line of email)  
Office Hrs: Thursdays 12:55-2:55, and by appointment  
(Please no phone calls or phone messages)

## OVERVIEW

### Course Description:

Human infancy is 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 by age two. 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 novel 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.

**Course Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes:** The goals of your participation in this course include the ability to identify major theories about children's development, understand a range of significant research findings regarding mechanisms underlying developmental change, appreciate methodological techniques that are key to sound developmental research, and think critically about the implications of this body of research for developmentally relevant issues such as education, parenting, and support for children with developmental disabilities. As well, you will gain skill in finding relevant articles regarding development, in critically evaluating both research design and quality of evidence, as well as communicating clearly and effectively about developmental issues.

**Student Workload:** When you complete this course, you will have earned 4 credits toward your degree. Four credits is the equivalent of 120 hours of work across the term. Along with the 3 hours spent in class each week you should plan on spending an average of 9 additional hours each week completing assignments (i.e., the reading, exam review, and projects).

**Lectures:** A list of lecture topics (and corresponding readings) follows. The lecture topics will generally supplement rather than retrace materials presented in the readings, and will reflect topical issues of contemporary interest in the field. There will be many opportunities for questions and comments and other contributions during lecture; the more interactive class is, the better.

**Attendance:** Please come to class! Class attendance is important to doing well in this course. And it makes the class so much more engaging for you as well as for all involved if you are here. Please come and join in our collective learning enterprise. If you anticipate missing more than two classes, please discuss it with me (Dr. Ablow) or Liz (the class GSI).

### **MATERIALS**

Readings will be posted on Canvas.

**Canvas:** Canvas will be a critical source of course-related information throughout the term. Course materials, study-guides, and project rubrics will all be posted online. You will also submit all your assignments to Canvas. As well, PowerPoint slides from lectures will be posted within a day or two after lectures have occurred. Please check the Canvas website regularly for course-related announcements, and take advantage of the communication features to communicate with your project team. **Class website:** <http://canvas.uoregon.edu>

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Your grade in this course will be based on the points you earn on two exams, assignments, and participation/attendance in class activities.

**Class participation and attendance:** You are expected to attend class. There is a strong correlation between success on the exams and regular class attendance. **Some topics not found in the reading will be covered in lecture.** In addition, there will be 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, in-class activities, 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. If you must leave class early, please sit in a seat close to a door for an easy, discrete exit.

**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 about the topics of the course, generate new ideas, make new observations in the domain of infant development, and to provide you with a forum to express these new thoughts, ideas, and observations in writing and in speech.

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: (541) 346-3226)**. The Writing Lab 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 (11 or 12 point) , double-spaced, left justified, and with margins no greater than 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. Unless previous arrangements have been made, 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.

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

**1) Two Exams (120 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 exam, it is likely that you will be tested on how aspects of the bioecological theory affect the infant's later development. As such, continued comprehension of this theory is necessary throughout the course.

### **2) Assignments**

a) **Observation Projects (60 points total):** Students will develop skills in observing infants, applying academic material to everyday behavior, and writing an observation report through completion of systematic observations of aspects of infant's development and/or environments. There are a number of choices to choose from for the assignment. Deadlines for several steps of the project are indicated below. A typed write-up of your observations (**5-7 pages**) in APA format will meet the requirement for this assignment. Topic choices, observation procedure, writing tips, and observation paper examples are posted on Canvas under the module, "Observation Paper."

#### **Assignment due dates:**

**May 5:** Choose topic and site by 5 PM (Confirmation of site scheduled) (5 points)

**May 26:** Draft of observation paper by 5 PM (10 points)

**June 8:** Final observation paper due by 5 PM via VeriCite (45 points)

b) **Course Readings:** Readings are assigned for each class meeting and are to be completed **BEFORE** the class meeting for which they are assigned.

c) **Team-Initiative Project: *The Great Policy Debate* (60 points total):** The goals of the team initiative project are threefold: 1) to provide an opportunity to focus on an important, and potentially controversial, national policy issue 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 presentation skills. The team-initiative project will account for 22% of your overall grade.

To carry out the team-initiative project, you will join a team of 3-4 students who share an interest in creating a particular infancy-related policy initiative to be supported at the national level. As a team you will research the initiative and produce a PowerPoint that a) makes the case for the initiative, b) outlines how best to proceed with the initiative, and c) explains why this initiative is especially deserving of support. Remember to include in your presentation possible downsides or costs of your initiative, and how to manage or offset them. As well, your PowerPoint should include

a summary slide that provides a visual “abstract”, or sketch, of the whole presentation. Your team’s PowerPoint presentation must be posted to our course’s Canvas website **before** class on June 4th. In class during Week 10, we will hold our Great Policy Debates. Each team will present on their topic, presenting on both sides of their debate and ending with their summary slide which represents their conclusion. In our final class, we will decide, as a collective, which of the initiatives we will authorize for support. The summary slide of each team’s PowerPoint will be presented to the class that day as an aid to discussion. Each member of the team will also submit via VeriCite (on Canvas) a typed write-up (3-5 pages) of your debate topic, due Friday June 8 by 5 PM.

**Assignment breakdown:**

PowerPoint group presentation and discussion: 25 points

Policy Debate Individual Write-up: 30 points

Group Evaluation Forms: 5 points

- 3) **Attendance & Participation** (32 points total): As stated above, I do not plan to take formal attendance, but in-class activities will count toward your attendance and participation points.

**POINTS, PERCENTAGE & GRADING**

Assignment	Points for Each	How Many	Total Points	% of Grade
Exams	60	2	120	44%
Observation Project	60	1	60	22%
Team-Initiative Project	60	1	60	22%
Attendance & Participation			32	12%
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>270*</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Final Grades:**

A total of 270 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:

%	0-59	60-69	70-73	74-76	77-79	80-83	84-86	87-89	90-93	94-98	99-100
Grade	F	D	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A	A+

\*Yes, I do know how to add. Consider the extra 2 points a gift. 😊

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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 via Canvas*).

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

M	4/2	Introduction to Infant Development	Reading: none
W	4/4	Research Strategies	Reading: Ch 1. Infancy: Infancy, Family & Society (Fogel)
F	4/6	Assignment: Send top 3 policy initiative choices to eloi@uoregon.edu	

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

M	4/9	Biology & Environment	Reading: Ch 2, Infants and Children (Berk & Meyer) pgs. 81-89; Supplemental Reading: 1 & 2
W	4/11	Genetic Foundations	Reading: Ch 2, Infants and Children (Berk & Meyer) pgs. 51-67; Supplemental Reading: 3, 4, 5 & 6
Guest Lecture: Shelly Bosworth, MS, CGC; Board Certified Genetic Counselor			

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**Week 3: Prenatal Development and Teratogens**

M	4/16	The Many Ecologies of Infancy	Reading: Ch 2, Infants and Children (Berk & Meyer) pgs. 67-81
W	4/18	Prenatal Development and Teratogens	Reading: Ch 3, Infants and Children (Berk & Meyer) Supplemental Reading: 7

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**Week 4: Birth of the Newborn**

M	4/23	Birth & the Newborn	Reading: Ch 4, Infants and Children (Berk & Meyer)
W	4/25	Brain, Body, Motor & Perception Development	Reading: Ch. 5, Infants and Children (Berk & Meyer)

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**Week 5: Cognitive Development**

M	4/30	EXAM 1: CHAPTERS 1, 2, 3, 4 (covers material from readings, lectures, assignments & video)	
W	5/2	Cognitive Development	Reading: Ch. 7 (Bornstein) Supplemental Reading: 8
F	5/5	Assignment: Deadline for Observation topic choice & schedule site	

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**Week 6: Language and Emotional Development**

M	5/7	Language Development	Reading: Ch 9 (Bornstein)
W	5/9	Emotional Development	Reading: Ch 7, pgs. 244-261 Infants and Children (Berk & Meyer)

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**Week 7: Attachment**

M	5/14	Attachment	Reading: Ch 7, pgs. 261-283 Infants and Children (Berk & Meyer)
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W	5/16	Attachment continued	Supplemental Readings: 9 & 10
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<b>Week 8: Maltreatment and Intervention</b>			
M	5/21	Infant Maltreatment	Reading: TBD
		Guest Lecture: Elisabeth Bouressa Heskett, MD	
W	5/23	Infant Intervention	Reading: TBD
		Guest Lecture: Elizabeth Loi, MA	
F	5/25	Observation Paper Draft Due	Assignment: Observation Paper Draft
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<b>Week 9:</b>			
M	5/28	Memorial Day – No Class	
W	5/30	Exam Two (covers material from readings, lectures, assignments & video)	
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<b>Week 10: Conclusions</b>			
M	6/4	Policy Debate Presentations	Reading: TBD Assignment: Powerpoint Presentation Due
W	6/6	Policy Debate Presentations Continued And Wrap UP	Reading: TBD
F	6/8		Assignment: Policy Paper Due
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<b>Final Exam Week: Monday, June 11: Observation paper to be submitted to canvas by 5 PM</b>			
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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>

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)]