PSYC 4684 002
Developmental Psychology
Spring, 1999
2:00 - 2:50 MWF
HLMS 199

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Office Hours: Tues 1-4, Wed 10-11:30, or by appt.

Website for class: Link from http://psych-www.colorado.edu


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Welcome to Developmental Psychology!

Developmental psychology is the study of the various stages of life and the psychosocial challenges identified with each stage. This course is intended to provide an overview of the basic knowledge, theories, and research methods in human development. You will learn the answers to these and other questions:

- Does daycare in infancy negatively affect a child’s attachment to parents?
- Does cognitive and memory ability decrease as we age?
- At what age is our brain our adult size?
- Does second hand smoke affect a developing fetus?
- Is there really a “mid-life” crisis?
- How does logic and thought develop?
- Can someone learn to speak if they are raised without human contact?
- In what ways are infants “prewired” for language?
- Why don’t we have memories of our early childhood?
- Can we make our children smarter by reading to them?
- How much influence does society have on our perceptions of ourselves as male or female?
- What influences sexual behavior and sexual orientation?
- Is there a best way to parent a child?
- Can infants be depressed?
- Is ADD/ADHD over-diagnosed in kids?
- What causes dementia? Does everyone go “senile?”
- How do we approach death?
REQUIREMENTS

1. Students are expected to read the assigned chapters.

2. Four exams will be given, each worth 100 points. Exams will have an objective part of matching and/or multiple choice, and an essay section of short and/or long essays. **Makeup exams will only be given in extreme cases, and will occur during finals week (exceptions are students on official university business).** The final exam is comprehensive.

3. Written assignments -- Students are required to complete 4 short papers that apply concepts in class to personal experience. Each paper is worth 25 points. More on these papers will be discussed in class.

OTHER INFORMATION

Attendance is not required and will not DIRECTLY affect student grades. However, lecture material will be covered on exams, so students are encouraged to develop regular attendance habits. In addition, there is a positive relationship between attendance and grades, so it is to the student's benefit to attend. Students who wish to read newspapers, sleep, or have private conversations should not come to class.

Although the course format will be mostly lecture-oriented, there will be some class exercises and some discussion when time allows. Students are encouraged to ask questions both during and after class.

In order to assist each individual to perform to his/her potential, it is important for a student to inform the professor of any conditions which may require some modification of seating, testing, or other class requirements/practices.

GRADING

A course grade will be assigned to each student according to the student’s percentage (93-90-87-83-80-77-73-70-67-63-60) of the total course points (500).
TOPICS AND SCHEDULE:
Week beginning:

1/11  Chap 1  Understanding LS Human Devt, Research Methods

1/18  Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, Jan 18
       Chaps 1, 2  Theories of Human Devt

1/25  Chaps 2, 3-6  Genetics, Environmental Influences, Physical Devt, Perception

2/01  Chaps 3-6
       TEST 1: Friday, 2/05, Chaps 1-6, lecture and text

2/08  Chap 7, 8  Cognition and Language, Learning and Info Processing

2/15  Chap 8, 9  Intelligence and Creativity
       First written assignment due Friday, 2/19

2/22  Chaps 9, 10  Self-Concept and Personality

3/01  Chap 10
       TEST 2: Friday, 3/05, Chaps 7-10, lecture and text

3/08  Chap 11  Gender Roles and Sexuality

3/15  Chap 13  Attachment and Social Relationships
       Second written assignment due Friday, 3/19

3/22  Spring Break, no classes

3/29  Chap 13, 14  The Family
       Third written assignment due Friday, 4/02

4/05  Chap 14, 15  Achievement

4/12  Chap 12  Social Cognition and Moral Development
       TEST 3: Wed, 4/14, Chaps 11, 13-15, lecture/text

4/19  Chap 16  Psychological Disorders Throughout the LS
       Fourth written assignment due Friday, 4/23

4/26  Chap 17  The Final Challenge: Death and Dying

5/03  Chap 17
       (last class meeting is Monday, May 3)

5/06-5/12 Finals week  FINAL EXAM:  Friday, May 7, 3:30 - 6:30 pm