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 must occur before the scheduled exam or during final day (exceptions are students on official university business). Makeup on the final exam day will be entirely short answer/essay exams. The final exam is comprehensive.

3. Written assignments -- Students are required to complete one of the following options for 100 points:

   a) a research paper of 4-6 pages. The paper must have three professional research articles as references. The paper should address a topic related to lifespan psychology and should include a brief introduction of the topic, research summaries of the three articles, and an application of the topic. Students will use APA style, and will avoid plagiarizing. Plagiarizing results in a grade of 0 (zero) for the paper. See attached. NO PAPER WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 5 PM ON JULY 6.

   OR

   b) 3 shorter assignments. Papers are due on dates written on Topic Outline. Late papers are 5 points off per day late, starting at class time. See attached for assignments.

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:

#### Chapters:

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>6/05-06</td>
<td>Chap 1 Understanding LS Human Devt, Research Methods</td>
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<td>6/07</td>
<td>Chaps 2,3 Theories of Human Devt, Genetics</td>
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<td>6/08-09</td>
<td>Chaps 3-7 Genetics, Environmental Influences, Physical Devt, Perception, Cognition</td>
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<td>6/12</td>
<td>TEST 1: Chaps 1-6, lecture and text</td>
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<td>(NOTE: <em>Cognition</em> will NOT be on this exam)</td>
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<td>6/13</td>
<td>Chap 7 Cognition and Language</td>
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<td>6/14-15</td>
<td>Chap 7, 8, 9 Cognition and Language, Learning and Info Processing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Intelligence and Creativity</td>
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<td>Research paper topic due Thurs, 6/15 OR Assignment A due Thurs, 6/15</td>
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<td>6/16-19</td>
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<td>6/21</td>
<td>TEST 2: Chaps 7-10, lecture and text</td>
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<td>6/22</td>
<td>Chap 11 Gender Roles and Sexuality</td>
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<td>Research paper tentative bibliography due, OR Assignment B due Thurs 6/22</td>
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<td>Chaps 13, 14, 15, 12 Attachment, Family, Achievement, Morality</td>
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<td>6/28</td>
<td>Chap 16 Psychological Disorders throughout the Lifespan</td>
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<td>6/29</td>
<td>TEST 3; Chaps 11, 13-15, lecture/text</td>
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<td>6/30 - 7/03</td>
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<td>7/05-06</td>
<td>Chap 17 Death and Dying</td>
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<td>Assignment C due OR Research Paper due: Wed 7/05</td>
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<td>7/07</td>
<td>FINAL EXAM: Chaps 12, 16-17, epilogue, lecture/text; some comprehensive questions</td>
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ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment A (worth 25 points; choose from 1(a-c), 2 or 3):

1. Read excerpts from original writings of theorists (e.g., Freud, Piaget) from books or websites. Web suggestions are:
   - http://www.psychwww.com (books heading);
   - http://plaza.interport.net/nypsan (Freud);
   - http://www.unige.ch/piaget/ (Piaget, sourcelist only), http://uts.cc.utexas.edu/~kensicki/watson.html (Watson);
   - http://www.ship.edu/~library/instruction/udaygilli.htm (Carol Gilligan, moral devt),
   Article suggestions are:

1a. Briefly tell what you have learned from your reading (can be biographical info, application of theory, more info on theory, etc.; should be about one page long). Also give source (book bib or web address).

1b. Why do you think there are websites for theorists who are dead or who are no longer making contributions to the field of psychology? Are they purely historical sites or do the theorists continue to make a contribution to current thinking? Explain. NOTE: you might have to check other websites if your chosen theorist is still active or if you read book excerpts or articles!

1c. What links do you see between biographical information available about the theorist and his or her work?

NOTE: DO NOT PLAGIARIZE!

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2. Use Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model to examine a current social issue (e.g., violence in schools, substance abuse, school drop out). Tell how factors at different levels of analysis (e.g., individual level, Microsystems, etc.) contribute to the problem. Also propose solutions for each contributing factor that you list. Do you think that the chosen level from which we conceptualize a problem will influence how we attempt to solve the problem? Explain your answer.

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3. YOU NEED ACCESS TO AT LEAST TWO CHILDREN OF DIFFERENT AGES FOR THIS CHOICE. Develop a test of two of Piaget’s concepts (e.g., egocentrism, conservation). Explain your method of testing (including materials which are age-appropriate for your subjects), test the concepts on at least two children of different ages, and write a report of your findings (include children’s ages). What experimental factors did you fail to consider before you tested the two children? (In other words, what went wrong?) Do your findings support what Piaget would predict? Why or why not? Why is it important to use a large sample when conducting research of this kind?
Assignment B (worth 25 points; choose either 4a-c or 5a-c):

4a. Discuss how you are similar and different from your siblings (talk about one psychological characteristic and one physical characteristic for each (similarity and difference))*. Speculate about the source of those similarities and differences in terms of genetic and environmental factors. Include shared and nonshared environments.

4b. Give an explanation for the finding that shared family environment actually contributes more to differences than to similarities among siblings.

4c. Talk about an event in your family that was interpreted one way by you, and another way by a sibling (or use friends if you have no siblings). Speculate how these different interpretations (in d) might lead to different developmental outcomes.

*If you are an only child, compare yourself to one or both of your parents. If you are adopted, do the exercise, but explain your biological relationship to your sibling or parent.

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5a. Discuss your earliest childhood memory. Include your age at the time of the occurrence and the content of these memories.

What do you actually recall (feelings, the actual experience)? Do you think you remember because the events have been retold, captured in pictures or on video, or in some other way have been relayed to you?

5b. According to lecture and text, do you think it is possible for you to remember such a young memory? Explain your answer. What are the general research findings (from lecture and text) about early age and memory?

5c. Look at the website: http://www.exploratorium.edu/memory/earlymemory/index.html for a sampling of early memories of different people. What sorts of events do we seem to remember? Which senses are most prominent? What sorts of emotions are involved?

Assignment C (worth 50 points):

1. Imagine that you are writing an autobiography of your life. Write titles and a brief synopsis of three of the chapters so far (make each of the three chapters about a page long). Include your age at the time, what was going on, who was involved, what you were feeling, what the significance of the event or chapter has on your life now, and how it has influenced your development overall.

2. For one of the chapters above, analyze yourself in terms of cognitive, social (family and friends), and personality development. Be thorough here. Include information from the notes and the textbook. This section should take 2-3 pages.

3. What are the titles of three future chapters? Include a 1-2 sentence description of what happens in each of those chapters.

NOTE: If your past makes this a difficult assignment and you would rather do an alternative assignment, consider doing the research paper, or consult with Dr. Martichuski by June 21.
Your paper should:

-- be 4-6 pages long

-- be in APA format (double-spaced, 1" margins all around, left-justify, 12-point font, APA citations and references (see attached))

-- represent your own work (Avoid plagiarism, see handout)

-- have at least 3 professional psychological research articles as references (NOT magazine articles or information from the internet)

-- address a topic related to lifespan psychology

The content of the paper should include:

INTRO - a brief introduction of the topic (introduce topic, give definitions, examples where appropriate; tell where you are going with the paper), (worth 5 points)

RESEARCH SUMMARIES - research summaries of the three articles (give detailed summaries including major research findings for your topic; also include a summary of one methodology)
A summary should include:
1. why did the author(s) do this study? What are the research finding that lead them to their hypothesis? what is the theory? What is the hypothesis/hypotheses? (some of this you may have addressed earlier)
2. Briefly tell what happened to participants in the study from beginning to end.
3. Was they hypothesis you stated above supported with their research? Explain the findings (briefly).
4. What new information or application do we have now given the results of this study (i.e., how can we use this information in the real world?)

Your summaries do not have to mention every variable studied. If you are only interested in gender differences, for example, you do not also have to talk about other differences discussed in the paper (Summaries are worth 50 points).

CONCLUSION - use information from your three articles, and the textbook to draw a conclusion. (worth 10 points; use of text worth 10 points)

PREDICTION/APPLICATION - an application of the topic to your future job, a prediction if you were going to do research, etc. This section should be at least half a page long. Be specific in your application. (worth 15 points)

OVERALL - including APA style, grammatical errors, readability, organization of paper, margins, font, 3 journal articles, 4-6 pages long) (worth 10 points).