

PSYD20H3Y: Current Topics in Developmental Psychology Summer 2011

Instructor: *Diane Mangalindan*

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Office Hours: *by appointment*

Class Times and Location: *Thursday, 3:00 – 5:00 PM, MW-120*

Course Description

This course provides a broad and comprehensive overview of theories and research in child development. Three general topics are covered: (a) Motor and perceptual development, (b) Social development, and (c) Environmental influence on child development. Each topic is covered in a three-week session. I will hold a brief lecture on the topic at the beginning of each session, but the course is generally a seminar format, where class discussions are held on the weekly topics. Each week, students read a series of papers and/or empirical reports, and discuss these readings in class. Students are responsible for holding these discussions. At the end of each session, class debates are led by groups of students. Readings are provided on the class website.

Course Requirements

Thought Papers: 15% (3 x 5%)

Debate: 25%

Proposal: 30%

Poster: 10%

Discussion & Participation: 20%

Total: 100%

Thought Papers and Discussion: Students will write a total of three thought papers (1 to 2 pages) on the reading(s) of your choice (these should be different from your selected debate topic). Select an issue that struck you or that is particularly meaningful, and present an argument around it. You do not need to use outside sources, although you may do so if you wish.

One of these thought papers will then be presented to the class. The task is to present your ideas to your peers, as well as to engage them in discussion afterward. You can provide a set of discussion questions to present to the class. This is an opportunity to be creative. You can engage your peers through games, group tasks, or any other creative activity.

Debate Group Presentation: Students will participate in one group presentation, with one or two classmates during the debate weeks. Each group will select a debate topic and its preferred side (content of each presentation will be built from the readings provided for that week). Each group will present its case for 20 minutes and debate for 10 minutes. The task is to present and defend your side using existing literature. Use of audio-visual material is greatly encouraged.

Please check with the instructor a week prior to your presentation for additional help and resources.

Research Proposal: The final paper will be a research proposal (10 to 12 pages) that suggests a future study on any of the topics learned during the term. The task is to generate a new research question and design a study to address this question. Based on existing literature, you will provide a discussion of your expected findings.

Poster: A poster or summary of your research proposal will be presented in class. Your peers will provide feedback on your poster. This is your opportunity to apply ideas provided by your peers in revising and improving your final paper.

Participation: A component of your final mark is based on class participation, which includes attendance, discussion contribution, and feedback provision. Because this course is a weekly seminar, it is critical that you both come to class and that you actively participate.

General Notes:

Late and Missed Assignments/Presentations: All papers are due at the beginning of class. Late papers WILL NOT be accepted, unless proper documentation is provided. You will then be given a week extension. For the remaining papers, your mark is lowered one full grade (e.g., A- → B+) for each day it is late. If you miss a day in which you are a presenter or discussant, you need to provide proper documentation. Because a presentation schedule will be already prepared, there will be no opportunity to make up for missed presentations (unless a spot becomes available). In this case, your final paper will be reweighed accordingly.

Academic Writing: Writing makes up a large component of this course. For a refresher on specific topics and/or questions regarding writing, please make use of the following resources:

UTSC Writing Centre (AC210): <http://ctl.utsc.utoronto.ca/twc/>

U of T Advice on Academic Writing: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice>

Academic Integrity: Please see <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize> for guidelines on how not to plagiarize. It is expected that all sources of ideas and information will be properly acknowledged.

AccessAbility: Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the AccessAbility Services office as soon as possible. The UTSC AccessAbility Services staff (SW302) is available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate accommodations. Contact by phone (416.287.7560) or email (ability@utsc.utoronto.ca).

Course Outline

Date	Topic
May 12	Meet and greet. Class overview.
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Session 1: Motor and Perceptual Development	
May 19	Posture and locomotion
May 26	Spatial orientation and search
June 2	Object representation and landmark use Debate topic 1: Infants are smarter than toddlers in object representation. Debate topic 2: Landmark use does not exist in infancy.
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Session 2: Social Development	
June 9	Gender development: Gender knowledge and gendered behaviour
June 16	Imitation
June 23	Aggression and Prosocial Behaviour Debate topic 1: Boys are more aggressive than girls. Debate topic 2: Girls are more prosocial than boys.
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June 30	No class (reading week).
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Session 3: Environmental Influence on Child Development	
July 4	Parenting and socialization
July 11	Peers and play
July 18	Media influence on developmental outcomes Debate topic 1: Exposure to aggressive media leads to aggressive children. Debate topic 2: Television viewing has negative developmental outcomes.
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July 25	Poster sessions.
August 4	No class.

Note: The above schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.