

PSYD20H3: Current Topics in Developmental Psychology, Fall 2015

Instructor: *Diane Mangalindan*

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Office Hours: *By appointment*

Class Times and Location: *Tuesday, 7:00 – 9:00 PM, SW-316*

Course Description

This course provides a broad overview of theories and research in child development. Three general topics are covered: (a) Motor and cognitive development, (b) Social development, and (c) Environmental influence on child development. Each topic is covered in a three-week session. I may 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:	25% (5 x 5%)
Discussion:	10%
Debate:	20%
Proposal Poster & Presentation:	35% (30% & 5%, respectively)
Attendance & Participation:	10% (3% & 7%, respectively)
Total:	100%

Thought Papers: Students will write a total of six thought papers (1 page maximum) on the reading(s) of your choice every week (excluding debate weeks). Select an issue that struck you or that is particularly meaningful, and present a critical argument around it. You do not need to use outside sources, although you may do so if you wish. The task is to be able to present and develop a coherent argument on the reading (s). The top five highest marks would be counted towards your final mark.

Discussion: Students will be asked to be a discussant once for non-debate weeks. As a discussant, your task is to engage your peers in an active and thoughtful discussion on the readings. For instance, you can provide a set of discussion questions for each of the readings, or you can present your thought paper or other ideas regarding the assigned work. This is an opportunity to be innovative. The task is to engage your peers through games, group tasks, or any other creative activity. Discussant assignment will be drawn from a hat the week prior.

Debate Group Presentation: Students will participate in one group presentation 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 a sound argument supporting your side using existing literature (**BOTH** theoretical and empirical). Use of audio-visual material is vital. It is highly recommended that you check with the instructor a week prior to your presentation for additional help/resources.

Poster of Research Proposal: The final assignment will be a research proposal 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.

The proposal will be presented in a poster format. During poster sessions to be held in the last two weeks of classes, you will present a draft of your poster for five minutes. Your peers will then provide feedback on your poster. This is your opportunity to apply ideas provided by your peers in revising and improving the final version of your poster.

Attendance & Participation: A component of your final mark is based on class participation, which includes attendance, discussion contribution, and feedback provision. As a seminar course, it is critical that you come to class and actively participate. See Rubric for a breakdown.

General Notes:

- 1) **Late and Missed Assignments/Presentations:** All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late work **WILL NOT** be accepted, unless proper documentation is provided. If provided and accepted, you will then be given a week extension. Without proper documentation, your mark for the assignment is lowered one full grade (e.g., A → A-) for each day it is late. If you miss a day in which you are a presenter, 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). Depending on each case, your final mark may be reweighed accordingly.
- 2) Because writing makes up a large component of this course, below are helpful resources:
 - (a) **UTSC Writing Centre (AC210):** <http://ctl.utsc.utoronto.ca/twc/>
 - (b) **U of T Advice on Academic Writing:** <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice>
- 3) **Academic Integrity:** It is expected that all sources of ideas and information will be properly acknowledged. Please see <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize> for guidelines.
- 4) **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
Sept 8	Meet and greet. Class overview.
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Session 1: Motor and Cognitive Development	
Sept 15	Locomotor Development
Sept 22	Object Representation and Search
Sept 29	Equality in the World of Equals Debate topic 1: Infants are smarter than toddlers in object representation. Debate topic 2: Boys are better in spatial representation than girls.
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Session 2: Social Development	
Oct 6	Early Communication and Gestures
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Oct 13	No class (Reading week).
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Oct 20	Language and Emotion
Oct 27	To Talk or Not to Talk: Language and Communication Debate topic 1: Babies can talk. Debate topic 2: Girls are more emotional than boys.
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Session 3: Environmental Influence on Child Development	
Nov 3	Parents and Home Environment
Nov 10	Peers
Nov 17	Beyond the Family: Focus on Developmental Outcomes Debate topic 1: Daycares are not good to child development. Debate topic 2: Peer acceptance is necessary for every child.
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Nov 24	Poster sessions 1.
Dec 1	Poster sessions 2.

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