

## Psych 350H: Introduction to Child Psychology: Honors Course Syllabus

**Time and location:** Tu/Th, 11:15-12:30 PM, 206 Dickenson

**Course Instructor:**

Dr. Lisa Scott, Ph.D.  
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**Office hours:** By appointment, please email me and I will be happy to set up a time to meet.

**Required Text:**

Child and Adolescent Development: A Chronological Approach, Bukatko, Houghton Mifflin Company Publishers, © 2008. The textbook is available for purchase at the University bookstore.

**Supplementary Readings:**

Students will be required to read the following supplementary material. All supplementary readings will either be provided in class or available on the class web page:

- Cohen, G.L., Garcia, J., Apfel, N. & Master, A., (2006). Reducing the racial achievement gap: A social- psychological intervention. *Science*, 313, 1307-1310.
- Graham, S. (2006). Peer victimization in school: Exploring the ethnic context. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 15, 317-321.
- Scott, L.S., Pascalis, O., Nelson, C.A. (2007). A domain-general theory of the development of perceptual discrimination. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 16, 197-201.
- Spelke, E.S., & Kinzler, K.D. (2007). Core knowledge. *Developmental Science*, 10, 89-96.
- Steinberg, L. (2007). Risk taking in adolescence: New perspectives from brain and behavioral science. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 16, 55-59.

**Recommended Resources:** The following are NOT required for the course and students will NOT be expected to know the material in them. However, students who have a particular interest in the topics of these books may find them informative and useful supplements to this course.

- Hart, B. & Risley, T.R. *Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children* (This book describes a longitudinal study of different types (i.e. socioeconomic classes) of families to show how differences in early environmental experiences affect language development.)
- Kopp, C.B. *Baby Steps: The “Whys” of Your Childs Behavior in the First Two Years* (This is written for the general public and is a parenting guide for the first two years. It has some nice charts that show what infants look like developmentally at different ages)
- Kozol, J. *Savage Inequalities- Children in America's Schools* (Looks at neighborhoods and schools in poverty and compares them to more middle or upper class areas, focuses on the quality of life for children developing in these areas.)
- Kotlowitz, A. *There are no Children Here: The Story of Two Boys Growing up in the Other America*. Describes the lives of two boys living in a Chicago Housing Project.

- **Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Child Development.** This book describes the science behind early childhood development. It covers topics such as the nature nurture debate, cultural influences, the importance of early relationships, the development of self-regulation, the development of peer relationships, etc.

**Web sites:** The following web sites will be useful to you throughout the course. I will use SPARK (the new WebCT) to post grades, handouts, and assignments. I may have you find articles or books/do literature searches, the University Libraries web site will be useful for this purpose. Throughout the course we will be discussing current events and policies related to developmental psychology: the websites Tools for schools, and the Family Research Council will be useful for these purposes. The neuroscience for kids website is an excellent resource for basic neuroscience information, I will refer you to this website throughout the course. I may refer you to other web sites throughout the semester.

- **Spark:** <https://spark.oit.umass.edu/webct/logonDisplay.dowebct>
- University Libraries <http://www.library.umass.edu/>
- Tools for Schools <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/ToolsforSchools>
- Family Research Council <http://www.frc.org/insight>
- Neuroscience for kids <http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/neurok.html>
- Child Development Institute <http://childdevelopmentinfo.com/index.htm>
- Developmental Milestones <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/actearly/>
- Ethical Standards in Research <http://www.srca.org/ethicalstandards.html>
- Pbwiki <http://pbwiki.com/>

### **Course Goals:**

The primary goal of this course is to provide students with a comprehensive introduction to developmental psychology and to the scientific study of development. It is intended that this course may serve as a foundation for future courses in Child Psychology. Thus, a broad range of topics will be covered and no one topic will be covered in depth. We will cover the major domains of development - biological, cognitive, social, and emotional development - from the prenatal period chronologically, covering each age of the child in turn. This course is not designed to address “how to” rear children. In fact no one way is likely to be optimal for all circumstances. Instead the emphasis is on discovering the many different biological and experiential factors that influence behavior and its development..

### **Course Format:**

The format of the course will be lecture, with some in-class activities and discussions. The course is organized into 5 topics: (1) Theory, Concepts, and Methodology, (2) Infancy, (3) Early Childhood, (4) Middle Childhood, and (5) Adolescence. There will be some overlap between the material covered in lecture and the material covered in the book. A large part of the lectures, however, will be used to supplement and elaborate upon material covered in the book. Therefore, students must complete the assigned readings as well as attend class in order to master the material covered in this course.

### **Course Requirements:**

Students are required to attend class, take notes, do assigned readings, and turn in all assignments. The required examinations and all written and group assignments must be submitted in order to receive a passing grade in the course. In most cases, you are given at least 1 week to complete assignments and exams, thus the only legitimate excuses for not doing so include a death in the immediate family, or an illness. Please see the policies section below for a detailed description of how I handle late assignments and exams.

### **Credits and Workload Expectations:**

For undergraduate courses, 1 credit is defined as equivalent to an average of 3 hours of learning effort per week (over a full term) necessary for an average student to achieve an average grade in the course. For example, a student taking a 4 credit course that meets for 4 hours a week should expect to spend at least an additional 8 hours a week on coursework outside the classroom. This course is a 4 credit course, but meets only 3 hours a week, therefore there will be out-of-class assignments to fulfill the credit load.

### **Course Schedule**

<b><u>Week</u></b>	<b><u>Topic</u></b>	<b><u>Reading</u></b>
1	Sept 4 <b>Themes and Theories:</b> -Introduction/Overview of Course -What is Development? -Five Major Themes in Developmental Psychology	Chapter 1 (pp.1-10)
	Sept 6 <b>Themes and Theories:</b> -Review 5 Major Themes -Historical Perspectives -Theories of Development	Chapter 1 (pp. 11-38)
2	Sept 11 <b>Studying Child Development:</b> -Research Methods *Article Review/Summary Assigned	Chapter 2 (pp 39-55)
	Sept 13 <b>Studying Child Development:</b> -Special Issues in Developmental Research	Chapter 2 (pp. 55-67)
3	Sept 18 <b>Genetics and Heredity:</b> -Principles -Abnormalities -Genetic Counseling -Behavioral Genetics  <b>DUE: Article Review/Summary Due</b>	Chapter 3 (pp. 69-108)
	<hr/> Sept 20 <b>Prenatal Period and Birth:</b> -Stages of Prenatal Development -Environmental Factors Influencing Development *Group Wiki Project Assigned	Chapter 4 (pp. 109-134)

4	Sept 25	<b>Prenatal Period and Birth:</b> -Birth and the Perinatal Environment	Chapter 4 (pp. 134-148)
	Sept 27	<b>Physical Development:</b> -Brain Development	Chapter 5 (pp. 149-158)
5	Oct. 2	<b>DUE: Group Wiki Presentations</b>	
	Oct. 4	<b>In Class Review</b> *Take Home Exam I Assigned	
6	Oct. 9	<b>NO CLASS MONDAY SCHEDULE</b>	
	Oct 11	<b>Infancy: Physical Development</b> -Motor Skill Development -Sleep -Basic Learning Processing -Sensory Capacities <b>DUE: Take Home Exam 1</b>	Chapter 5 (pp. 159-187)
7	Oct. 16	<b>Infancy: Perception, Cognition and Language</b> -Introduction to Perception -Perceptual Narrowing and Face Processing *In Class Debate Assigned	Chapter 6 (188-200; Perceptual Narrowing Article)
	Oct. 18	<b>Infancy: Perception, Cognition and Language</b> -Cognition -Language	Chapter 6 (200-235; Core Knowledge Article)
8	Oct. 23	<b>Infancy: Social and Emotional Development</b> -Emotion & Temperament -Attachment -Self and Others	Chapter 7
	Oct. 25	<b>Infancy: The Effects of Early Experience</b> <b>DUE: In Class Debate Group 1</b> *Design a Toy Assigned	
9	Oct. 30	<b>Early Childhood: Physical, Cognitive &amp; Language Development</b> -Physical Development -Perception	Chapter 8 (269-278)

	Nov. 1	<b>Early Childhood: Physical, Cognitive &amp; Language Development</b> -Cognition -Language <b>DUE: In Class Debate Group 2</b>	Chapter 8 (278-307)
10	Nov. 6	<b>Early Childhood: Social and Emotional Development</b> -Emotional Development -Self & Self Regulation -Moral Development -Gender Roles	Chapter 9
	Nov. 8	<b>Early Childhood: Contexts of Development</b> -The Family -Peer Relationships -Child Care <b>DUE: In Class Debate Group 3</b>	Chapter 10 (340-370)
11	Nov. 13	<b>Early Childhood: Guest Lecturer Dr. Heather Kirkorian</b> -Effects of Media on Development	Chapter 10 (370-375)
	Nov. 15	<b>In Class Review</b> <b>DUE: Design a Toy</b>  <i>*Take Home Exam II Assigned</i>	
12	Nov. 20	<b>Middle Childhood:</b> -Cognitive Development <b>DUE: Take Home Exam II</b>	Chapter 11; (pages 383-413; Racial achievement gap article)
	Nov. 22	NO CLASS THANKSGIVING BREAK	
13	Nov. 27	<b>Middle Childhood: Social and Emotional Development</b> -Emotional Development -Self & Self Regulation -Gender Roles	Chapter 12 (pages 415-428; 440-447)
	Nov. 29	<hr/> <b>Middle Childhood: Contexts of Development</b>	Chapter 13; Peer

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	Nov. 29	<b>Middle Childhood: Contexts of Development</b> -Family -Peers -School	Chapter 13; Peer victimization article
14	Dec. 4	<b>Adolescence: Physical and Cognitive Development: Guest Lecturer Dr. Matt Davidson</b> -Physical Development -Cognitive Development	Chapter 14 (pages 496- 507)
	Dec. 6	<b>Adolescence: Social and Emotional Development</b> -Emotional Development -Self & Self Regulation -Moral Development -Gender Roles	Chapter 15; Risk Taking Article
15	Dec. 11	<b>Adolescence: Contexts</b> <i>Due: In Class Debate Group 4</i>	Chapter 16
	Dec. 13	Final Review and Semester Wrap-Up <b>DUE: Timeline Paper</b> <i>*Take Home Exam III Assigned</i>	
	Date of Final Exam	<i>Due: Take Home Exam III</i>	

**Course Assignments and Evaluation**

Your grade for the course will be determined by a combination of exams, in-class and homework assignments, and a course paper.

Final course grades will be based on the following:

<b>Exam / Assignment</b>	<b>Percentage of Final Grade</b>
Take Home Exam I	15%
Take Home Exam II	15%
Take Home Exam III	15%
Article Review	10%
Wiki Project	15%
Design a Toy Project	10%
Time Line Paper	15%
In Class Debate	5%
Total	100%

### **Exams**

There will be three take-home exams throughout the semester. You are encouraged to consult all course materials for these exams. You may discuss the questions with other people in the course, however I ask that you write your answers on your own. Each exam will cover the material discussed in lecture as well as assigned readings from the book and other sources. All of the exams will consist of true/false, multiple choice, matching, and short/long answer. These exams will not be cumulative.

### **Article Review**

For this assignment, you will be required to find a news article (popular press) based on research conducted with children. You will then find the original journal article (that the popular press article is based on- not information provided by a foundation or group, but an actual published article) read the article. I would like you to turn in a 4-5 page paper describing the research and discussing whether or not the popular press article accurately reflects the methods, findings, and conclusions of the journal article. Some places to start:

Washington Post:	<a href="http://www.washingtonpost.com/">http://www.washingtonpost.com/</a>
CNN	<a href="http://www.cnn.com/">http://www.cnn.com/</a>
US News and World Report:	<a href="http://www.usnews.com/usnews/home.htm">http://www.usnews.com/usnews/home.htm</a>
Newsweek:	<a href="http://www.msnbc.com/news/NW-front_Front.asp">http://www.msnbc.com/news/NW-front_Front.asp</a>
Time:	<a href="http://www.time.com/time/">http://www.time.com/time/</a>

**Wiki Project** During Pregnancy, the mother's womb provides the baby's first environment and it affects development in many ways. Substances called teratogens can affect the developing embryo or fetus. The word teratogen comes from two Greek roots- "teras" meaning monster, and "gen" meaning source or origin. Thus, the word teratogen literally means "source of monsters." Many expecting mothers, including teenage mothers do not understand the influences different teratogens may have on the developing fetus. For this project, you will break into groups of 4-5 people and design an informative wiki on the web for expecting mothers describing the effects of 1 specific teratogen. This page must be comprehensive, based on empirical evidence, and all information your post must be cited in APA format at the end. You and your group will present and describe your wiki and teratogen to the class in a 15-minute presentation. Some examples of teratogens include (but are not limited to): antibiotics (such as tetracycline and streptomycin), some anticoagulants (such as warfarin), and anticonvulsants (such as

dilantin), tobacco, alcohol, cocaine, marijuana, methamphetamine, lead, diseases such as rubella, measles, AIDS.

### **Design a Toy Project**

Often when you go to buy a toy at the store the toy has written on it an age range. Where do these age ranges come from? Are there certain toys that promote development? Some would say yes. Some toys are created with very specific developmental goals in mind. Your task is to break into groups of 3-4 people and propose a new toy. In two type-written, pages please describe your toy, explain the age for which it is targeted, and describe the skills and abilities playing with your toy will promote. Please present you toy in poster format for the class to look at. You will create a diagram of the toy, including the box it will be sold in and the information, which will be printed on the outside of the box. Grading will not be based on your ability to draw or build, it will be based on your ideas and writing. You will turn in your proposal and present this toy to the class in a poster presentation.

**In Class Debate.** For this activity you will be assigned to either the pro or co side of one of 4 scheduled debates on a controversial issue related to child development. You and 2-3 teammates will be asked to orally summarize the major arguments supporting your position and to defend it. Additionally, within a week after the debate you will provide a 2-3 page written summary of the major points raised during the debate and your personal position on the matter. You will only complete a the written assignment for the debate you competed in.

Debate Topics:

Group 1: Sufficient Evidence exists in support of the Mozart effect and therefore public policies should promote the use of music in the rearing of children.

Group 2: The testimony of children below the age of six should not be used in a court of law without additional corroboration by eyewitnesses.

Group 3: The proper place for infants is in the home with the primary caregiver rather than in daycare.

Group 4: Adolescent use of the Internet should be monitored and controlled.

**Course Paper** This paper will be an examination of a person's life in terms of the materials covered in the course. This paper should written chronologically and address all of the major themes covered throughout the course. This paper can be based on your own life, your child's life, a friend's or siblings life, or even the life of a fictional character. If you prefer, you can describe more than one person for the purpose of comparing and contrasting. This paper is due the last day of class and will be approximately 12-15 pages. I would like you to also include a pictorial timeline of your paper and the major events/times covered in your paper (not included in the page limit).

## **Course Policies**

### **Attendance:**

- 1) Class attendance is a requirement of this course
  - a. Missing Class: Everyone gets sick once in a while and it is not expected (or desired) that students come to class while sick. Therefore, students will be provided with the materials, and given the opportunity to make up work for a maximum of 2 missed class periods. If the student has an extended illness, a doctor's note will be required. The following policies apply to materials activities missed when the student is absent from class on the first two occasions only:
    - i. **Class outlines, handouts:** The class outlines and handouts will be made available

via email or on the web.

- ii. **Lecture notes:** Students who miss class should arrange to get the lecture notes from another student. I will provide any handouts to students who miss 1 or 2 classes, however, there may be information not covered in these notes, which was covered in class so please check with other students for class notes.
- b. Class will not meet if the University is closed for any reason (including bad weather and holidays).
- c. If you anticipate missing a class due to a religious holidays or obligations please let me know at least two weeks in advance of this holiday so arrangements can be made to accommodate this absence.

### **Late-Assignments/Exams:**

All assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class, unless otherwise specified. If you are unable to turn in an assignment, you must contact the instructor *before* the assignment is due. This must be done by *email*. Extensions for late assignments will *not* be granted. An assignment will be considered late if not turned in on the due date. **20% of the grade for the assignment will be deducted for each class period the assignment is late.** Late assignments should be turned in at the beginning of the class period.

### **Challenging Grades:**

Occasionally, a student disagrees with a grade they received on a paper or with certain points taken off on an exam. I welcome disagreements when it means that a student is thinking more deeply about a topic, or the student can appropriately justify their claim. Therefore, challenges to grades will be considered, but only when the student puts their reasons for challenging the grade in writing. Thus, a student who wants to challenge a grade should carefully explain their reason(s) in detail on paper, and turn into us the original paper or exam and their type-written justification by the next class period. Challenges to grades will not be accepted after the next class period following the return of the exam or paper. I will consider the reasons carefully, and then provide in writing, my reasons for adjusting or not adjusting the grade.

### **Incompletes:**

A grade of “incomplete” will be granted at my discretion only under the most unusual and incapacitating circumstances. If you feel that you are in danger of failing the course for any reason, please come and see me as soon as possible. Any student seeking an incomplete must (1) request the “incomplete” in writing prior to the last week of class, (2) provide appropriate documentation of the illness or circumstances, and (3) make specific arrangements with me to complete the required coursework. Students who have completed less than 50% of the course work will not be granted an incomplete. Students who missed more than 50% of the coursework for medical reasons should apply for a medical withdrawal. Students will have one semester to complete any missed exams/assignments to convert the incomplete into a letter grade. Failure to complete the required work within this time frame will result in a “F” for the course.

### **Class Room Behavior Policies:**

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide

classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to me with each student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

### **Individuals with Disabilities:**

I encourage students with disabilities or special needs to discuss with me whatever arrangements may be needed to facilitate their work in the course. Students with special needs should contact me during the first week of class to discuss any special arrangements. Information about Disability Services at the University of Massachusetts can be found at: <http://www.umass.edu/disability/index.htm>. Disability Services is located in 231 Whitmore, phone # (413)-545-0892.

### **Human Subjects:**

No human subjects credits will be used in this course.

### **Academic Dishonesty:**

#### **UMASS Policy on Academic Dishonesty**

**All students are expected to adhere scrupulously to the University policy concerning academic honesty. Please see: [http://www.umass.edu/dean\\_students/code\\_conduct/acad\\_honest.htm](http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/code_conduct/acad_honest.htm) for the full University policy on academic dishonesty. You are accountable for the information on this web page. Below are several examples of academic dishonesty I have chosen to highlight:**

*Cheating* - intentional use, and/or attempted use of trickery, artifice, deception, breach of confidence, fraud and/or misrepresentation of one's academic work.

*Fabrication* - intentional and unauthorized falsification and/or invention of any information or citation in any academic exercise.

*Plagiarism* - knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own work in any academic exercise. This includes submitting without citation, in whole or in part, prewritten term papers of another or the research of another, including but not limited to commercial vendors who sell or distribute such materials (see more below).

*Facilitating dishonesty* - knowingly helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty, including substituting for another in an examination, or allowing others to represent as their own one's papers, reports, or academic works.

### **More on Plagiarism:**

In this course PLAGIARISM ON ANY ASSIGNMENT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. Collaboration with other students, with respect to sharing ideas, is encouraged. Students, however, must do all of their own writing. **I will occasionally run papers through plagiarism detection software.** With respect to written assignments, the follow apply:

- 1) Students must NOT duplicate passages from any source including (but not limited to) the text book, assigned readings, websites, or another students work without putting the passages in quotes and providing an appropriate reference. This includes copying a passage word-for-word, or substantially copying a passage or sentence while changing only a word or two here and there. **Any writing assignment plagiarized in this way will automatically receive a zero, with no possibility of making it up.**
- 2) Excessive use of quoted passages will NOT be tolerated, even when the appropriate references are provided. Students are expected to formulate and express their own ideas, inferences, and conclusions. This is an essential part of the learning process. Thus passages placed in quotations should be kept at a minimum and used only for compelling reasons. **Any writing assignment, which contains excessive quotations, will be returned to the student to be re-written; the assignment will be considered late until it is turned back in, and policies regarding grade reductions for late assignments will apply.**
- 3) Students may discuss the essay questions and their ideas for the answers *prior to any writing*, but students must NOT share with one another their completed, written assignments. **If you share your completed work with another student, and that student plagiarizes all or part of your work in their own assignment, you will both receive a zero for that assignment or exam.**

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\*\*\*THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT THE INSTRUCTORS DESCRETION\*\*\*