PSY 213 – Introduction to Child Development
Course Syllabus

Instructor: Lauren J. Myers, M.S.
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Office phone: 865-7394
E-mail: ljm229 [at] psu [dot] edu  (*NOTE: please use this e-mail address when contacting me, instead of e-mailing me through ANGEL. I check my inbox more frequently than I check ANGEL mail.)

Please feel free to talk to me before or after class, or by appointment. I will try to help you the best I can.

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:15-3:15 (right after class) or by appointment
Course webpage: [http://www.personal.psu.edu/users/l/j/ljm229/213home.htm](http://www.personal.psu.edu/users/l/j/ljm229/213home.htm)
Semester: Summer 2005, Wednesday June 29 – Wednesday August 10
Final exam: Fri Aug 12
Time: MTWRF 12:45pm – 2:00pm
Location: 151 Willard

The textbook is required for this course. It is available at the PSU Bookstore and various other bookstores in town.

COURSE DESCRIPTION (taken from the University’s course description)

Introduction to Child Development provides an overview of developmental principles; physical growth, linguistic, intellectual, emotional, and social development from infancy to maturity.

PREREQUISITE: PSY 002

If you have not completed this requirement please see the instructor.

INTRODUCTION

Psychology 213 is designed as a survey course of the area of Child Development. We will explore the fundamental theories, principles and current research in the field, with a focus on child development through adolescence. The topics we will cover include the changes that take place in the way children think about their social and physical world, changes in children's emotional life, and changes in how they relate to others --- their parents, their siblings, their friends and peers. We will also explore how these changes come about (e.g., issues of nature and nurture, and discrete versus continuous development). What is the environment that influences children, and what role do children play in determining how they are influenced by the environment? These are the forces that contribute to making each individual unique from every other individual.
COURSE OBJECTIVES

Knowledge: Gain knowledge about the process of development and terms, concepts, and frameworks used by psychologists to explain that process. You will learn to look at familiar topics, such as parenting or television, through a developmental psychologist's eyes, and you will also be introduced to topics you may never have considered before.

Application: This course should be a useful course. No matter what your professional goals, a fundamental knowledge of children's development should be helpful. Almost all of you at some point will find yourself in a position to make decisions that may affect your own or other people's children. In this course, you will learn to apply that knowledge to understanding your own development and also enhance the development of children as parents, professionals, family members, educators, caretakers, policy makers, etc.

Critical thinking: Science and research are evolving disciplines, and there are still many questions and debates in the field of developmental psychology. Thus, you should learn to think critically about material presented to you. Does this jive with your experience? Have you personally observed instances of the phenomena we discuss? To what extent do these principles of development apply universally, or in what ways might the concepts we discuss vary across different cultures?

Preparation: In class, I will not only lecture, but I will encourage your active participation in discussing practical significance, integration with previously learned concepts, etc. Thus, reading, studying, and thinking about the material in the text in advance will prepare us for the most fulfilling, productive classroom learning experience.

Active Learning: Throughout the course we will emphasize mastering the material presented, both on the theoretical and practical levels. I believe that effective learning is an active process, and that both the instructor and the students need to fulfill certain responsibilities. In my experience, students learn most effectively by coming to class prepared and by practicing and applying knowledge in daily life.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In-Class Activities

Periodically, and without notice, in-class activities will be given to facilitate classroom discussion and critical thinking about the material presented. Because the in-class environment cannot be recreated at a later time, make-up assignments for in-class activities will not be given. However, points accumulated in your Bonus Bank can be credited toward any missed in-class activities (see the Bonus Bank section for details).

Critical Thinking Assignments

Each week, I have chosen several articles focused on the topic for the week, which serve to extend the material in lecture and the textbook. These articles cover a variety of topics, and I encourage you to look over the topics at the beginning of the class so that you can choose the topics you find interesting. Three times during the 6-week semester, you should write a short reaction paper (2-3 pages, typed, double-spaced) on an article designated to go along with that week’s topic. These assignments are designed to foster critical thinking and integration of the class material to date. That is, I am not looking for an entire paper that summarizes what you have read; rather I am looking for evidence that you have thought about, critiqued, and integrated
the topic into the material we have discussed in lecture & read in the textbook. A rubric will be given with each article specifying what particulars are needed for each assignment, as the needs of each assignment may vary. **You will be responsible for completing 2 critical thinking assignments throughout the semester.** For each of the 6 weeks, two possible assignments are given, making a total of 12 interesting, diverse topics from which you may choose.

**Assignments will be due each week on Fridays. The exception is that for the last week, critical thinking assignments will be due on Wednesday August 10 (the last day the class meets, which is dedicated to a cumulative review). Late assignments will not be accepted.**

**Quizzes**

To further enhance learning, a 20-30 question quiz will be given each week for 60 minutes, on Wednesdays. There will be 4 quizzes total, and the quizzes will not be cumulative. Therefore, each quiz will cover less material, but will be more in-depth, and each individual quiz counts less toward the final grade. The quiz schedule is included with the class schedule on the last page of the syllabus. The questions for each quiz are generated from in-class lecture and discussion, and the text. All quizzes averaged together will comprise approximately 40% of the final grade and points accumulated in your Bonus Bank can be credited toward points missed on the quizzes (see the Bonus Bank section for details).

**Final exam**

In addition, a multiple-choice, cumulative, final examination covering all class material will be given on the final exam day (**Friday, August 12**). It will consist of 40-60 questions. The final exam is worth 20% of the final grade, and points accumulated in your Bonus Bank can be credited toward points missed on the final exam (see Bonus Bank section for details).

**Attendance & Participation**

Attendance, participation, involvement, and discussion are crucial in this course. As such, in addition to the points accrued by in-class activities, 50 points (approximately 5%) of your grade will be determined by the following rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of absences</th>
<th>Negative contributor (e.g., arrives late, sleeps, disrupts other students, talks to neighbors about topics irrelevant to the class, disrespectful to classmates or instructor)</th>
<th>Neutral contributor (e.g., not disruptive but does not participate much, attentive but does not volunteer for activities, questions or discussion)</th>
<th>Positive contributor (e.g., active &amp; engaged in class, asks &amp; answers questions, offers thoughtful comments or observations relevant to class material)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>7+</td>
<td>10 or lower</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
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</tbody>
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BONUS BANK (20 points maximum per individual)

Periodically, and without notice, a sample quiz question will be presented at the end of the class. The purpose of these questions is to challenge and test your understanding of the material just presented during the class meeting. If you choose to do so, you will have the opportunity to answer the question and turn it in to accumulate points in your Bonus Bank. To answer the question you may use your notes or your book, but you may not use your peers in the class as sources of information. Each question answered correctly will credit your Bonus Bank account 1 point.

There will be various other Bonus Bank opportunities presented throughout the semester as well. Stay tuned!

At the end of the term, the Bonus Bank points will be applied to in-class activities, quizzes and/or the final exam, whichever is in your best interest.

MAKE-UP POLICY

Make-up exams for legitimate excuses (university-approved events, family emergencies and illnesses) should be requested BEFORE the scheduled exam. If an illness or emergency occurs on the day of a scheduled exam, please make every effort to call or e-mail before the exam is to take place. Make-up exams may be in multiple-choice or essay format (instructor’s choice). Make-up exams will not be administered more than a week after the scheduled exam. If you have an exceptional situation, please see me.

GRADING POLICY

The grade you earn in this course is based on following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Assessments</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
<th>Your Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-class activities</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Assignments (2)</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz 1: Wed July 6</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Quiz 2: Fri July 15</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Quiz 3: Thurs July 28</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Quiz 4: Tues Aug 9</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam: Fri Aug 12</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>950</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 4 -
Final Grade | Percent
---|---
A | 94-100
A- | 90-93
B+ | 87-89
B | 83-86
B- | 80-82
C+ | 77-79
C | 70-76
D | 60-69
F | <59

**ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY**

Academic honesty is expected of all students. It is the ethical behavior that includes producing their own work and not representing others’ work as their own, either by plagiarism, by cheating, or by helping others to do so.

Plagiarism is the failure to give credit for the use of material from outside sources. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- using data, quotations, or paraphrases from other sources without adequate documentation
- submitting others’ work as your own
- exhibiting other behaviors generally considered unethical

Cheating means obtaining answers/material from an outside source without authorization. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- plagiarizing in all forms
- using notes/books without authorization
- copying
- altering graded work
- falsifying data
- exhibiting other behaviors generally considered unethical

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please contact me as soon as possible. If you have such an impairment (e.g., hearing or visual problems, learning disabilities) that could reasonably be considered to affect your performance in this class, you need to inform me if you wish for me and/or the college to assist you with reasonable learning accommodations. You may also apply for services with the Office of Learning Support Services.