

Syllabus for the course Developmental Psychology

**PSY 236
ID 01563**

Instructor: Yarova Olga; MA; AFP returning scholar
Office: AUCA; Psychology Department
Consultations: by appointment
Pre-requisites: Intro to Psychology PSY101, 104 or PSY102 or PSY 105
Meeting times: Monday, Tuesday, 15.35
Credit hours: 3
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Language of teaching: English
Course status: elective

I. Course overview

This course provides an introduction to the milestones of human development from conception to death. It addresses the issues of physical, cognitive, and social growth of people with special attention to various cultural contexts of development and the rich diversity of individuals. Students are expected to integrate their personal experiences, knowledge of psychology, and their observations of human development with the content of this course. In addition, students will be involved in group projects to apply theoretical knowledge in practice, develop own research skills, the skills of teamwork and to receive more information on the most relevant topics in developmental psychology.

II Objectives of the course

The key objectives for the students are the following:

- Learn about main cognitive, physical and psycho emotional changes during all stages of human development;
- Understand the role of socio cultural context, parenting styles, education, developmental disorders in child's well-being;
- Summarize theories and perspectives related to intelligence, attachment and emotional development;
- Describe the influence of gender, poverty, culture and ethnicity throughout life, but particularly during childhood and adolescence;
- Develop critical skills, which enable student to analyze information and evaluate its validity and rationality;
- Improve skills to summarize, synthesize material, to point out the main arguments of the readings and evaluate them and finally to ask relevant questions;

III. Course readings:

Santrock, J. (1999) Life-Span Development
Travers, J. (1996) Human Development Across the Life-Span
Bee, H. & Boyd, D. (2002). Lifespan development, Third Edition. Allyn and Bacon: Boston.
Feldman, R.S. (1997). Development Across the Life Span, Prentice-Hall, Inc.
Siegler, R. (1996) Children's Thinking.
Papalia Diane E. (2001). Human Development.
Berk Laura E. (2001). Development Through the Lifespan.

IV. Course Requirements

A. Attendance (10%)

Attendance for this class is mandatory. In the beginning of each class, I'll check attendance. I will regard a person as being present in class if she/he is late or misses the classroom for more than 15 minutes. It is mandatory to attend all the classes. If you miss the classes without documentation about the reason of your absence, it will negatively affect your grade. If you miss more than 8 classes you automatically receive X.

B. Participation (10%)

An important requirement is your active participation in class discussions. Strong participation can be built only on the bases of devoted preparation for the class. Please, be prepared for each class having read the required reading assignments as your 'to the point' participation would significantly increase your final grade. Basically, for each seminar you should be able to:

- Understand the main concepts and key terms of the topic
- Understand the main ideas of additional readings
- Relate the main points to your own experience
- Come up with own examples of the concepts discussed during lecture

B. Seminar Presentation (10%)

For this assignment you are expected to make a presentation on a very narrow issue relevant to the topic that you have chosen during the first class of the course. In the case when student's presentation covers a lot of different issues and duplicates any information discussed during the lecture, the presenter automatically receives 0 points. In order to avoid such situation please, inform me about the issue that you have chosen at least one week before your presentation.

Grading criteria for material presentation are the following (2 point each):

- Interesting, relevant and maximal exposition of the topic
- Visual aids appropriate for the presentation (power point, handouts, video)
- Delivery within an assigned time (15 minutes)
- Ability to provoke active critical discussion by addressing min 2 questions to the audience
- Ability to answer relevant questions

C. 3 unexpected quizzes (10%) will be given during this course (15 minutes at the first part of class). Each of them will cover the information surveyed from the textbooks, additional readings and lectures. Quizzes will be given in multiple choice, true/false and short essay questions. Each quiz will be worth 3.3 % points.

D. Developmental group project (20%)

This project should be conducted by small groups of 2-3 people. For the project each group will research scientific literature on particular chosen form suggested list topic, design and conduct own study.

Suggested Topics:

1. The development of Self-concept in childhood and adolescents (interview)
2. Content analysis of popular magazines for teenagers
3. Gender differences in play and friendship of preschool children (observational study)

4. Physical, social and cognitive readiness of preschool children for school (Interviews with school psychologists)
5. The impact of retirement on adults (consider age, gender differences).
6. Consider why children commit violent acts and what influences them. Consider what kinds of interventions may reduce violent crimes committed by young people.
7. The development of intimate relationships (interviews with married couples)

Steps and deadlines for the project:

- 8 February** – submit names of your group members, topic, and research design of your project;
1 March – submit list of articles for your literature review and description of your research design
20 April – submit individual report
27 April – group presentations of projects

More detailed guidelines for the Developmental group project will be provided later

E. Midterm and Final exam (20% + 20%) tests your understanding of the materials discussed during the classes. Exam will consist of multiple-choice, true/false and short-essay questions. Questions will be taken from reading assignments and class lectures. The final exam is not going to be cumulative: it will cover only the second part of the course.

V. Grading

- Attendance (10%)
- Class participation (10%)
- Seminar presentation (10%)
- 3 Unexpected quizzes (10%)
- Developmental group project (20%)
- Midterm exam (20%)
- Final in-class exam (20%)

A	96-100%	B-	76-80 %	D+	56-60 %
A-	91-95 %	C+	71-75 %	D	51-55 %
B+	86-90 %	C	66-70 %	D-	46-50 %
B	81-85 %	C-	61-65 %	F	0-45 %

Grade “X” will be administered in cases when students miss 8 classes without a satisfactory and well – witnessed reasons.

VI. Advice for the course:

- **Avoid plagiarism**, carefully read the policy on plagiarism that will be posted on the website of the course. This policy document says: “Papers may appear to be plagiarized if students: occasionally use the words of another scholar without quotation marks and proper reference, with the result that it appears that the words are the student’s own; occasionally use the ideas of another scholar without proper reference; inadequately paraphrase the words or ideas of another scholar; or fail to include the bibliographic citation for all sources used in the process of completing the assignment”. In the case of plagiarizing the paper automatically receives F.

- **Review the course requirements** carefully. This syllabus provides information about the structure, content, organization, and requirements of the course but may change slightly to accommodate unforeseen events. Read it carefully and ask questions if you are confused by any part of it.
- Mark important dates and assignments in your calendars. Late assignments will only be allowed under extraordinary circumstances. **I will not accept late assignments.**
- Please, **keep the track of your points** and grade in this course, so later on you will not be surprised with your final grade.

VII. Tentative course outline

Date	Topic	Seminar Presentation
Jan. 11	Course introduction	
Jan 12 (lecture), Jan 18 (seminar)	The Study of Human Development, Theory and Research	
Jan 19 (lecture), 25 (seminar)	Prenatal development	
Jan 26 (lecture), Feb 1 (seminar)	Birth and the newborn child	
Feb 2 (lecture), 8 (seminar)	Physical development in infancy	
Feb. 9 (lecture), 15 (seminar)	Physical development in Childhood and Puberty	
Feb. 16 (lecture), 22 (seminar)	Cognitive development approaches	
Feb.23 (no class), Mar. 1(seminar)	Information processing	
Mar. 2 (lecture) Mar. 8 (seminar)	Language development	
Mar 9	Midterm exam	
March 15-19	Break	
Mar. 22 (no class) Mar. 25 (seminar)	The self and identity	
Mar. 29 (seminar)	Moral development	
Apr. 1 (lecture), 5(seminar)	Socialization: the impact of family, school, peers and culture	
Apr. 8 (lecture), 12 (seminar)	Early Adulthood	
Apr. 15 (lecture), 19 (seminar),	Middle Adulthood	
Apr. 22 (lecture), 26 (seminar)	Late Adulthood	
Apr.29	Presentations of group projects	
May 4	Final Exam	