

Syllabus for the course Developmental Psychology

Fall 2013

PSY 238

ID 2637

Instructor: Yarova Olga; MA; AFP returning scholar
Office: AUCA; Psychology Department
Office hours: Tuesday 10.50 – 13.00
Pre-requisites: Intro to Psychology PSY101, 104 or PSY102 or PSY 105
Meeting times: Tuesday, 9.25 Thursday, 10.50
Credit hours: 6
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Language of teaching: English

I. Course overview

Human life starts with miracles – the miracle of life inside the mother’s belly, the miracle of new creature birth, the miracle of transformation from a silent and helpless baby to a self-aware, smart, nimble and talkative human being just in few years. What are the mechanisms behind such changes? Is it possible to foster the development and what are the risks? What are the main goals we should strive for on each stage of our development?

Developmental psychology 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 the various cultural contexts of development and rich diversity of individuals. I hope that this course will help you to understand better human psychology at different age, factors that influence our development and that you will be able to apply concepts and information you receive here not only in other courses, your professional careers but also in your personal life.

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;
- 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
Papalia Diane E. (2001). Human 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.
Berk Laura E. (2001). Development Through the Lifespan.

IV. Course Requirements

A. Attendance (20 points)

In this course you are expected to attend each class. And because the experience shows that your final grade is highly correlated with your attendance try not to miss classes. In the case when more than 6 classes were missed the Withdrawal from the course is recommended. In the case you are not able to come, please inform me about it before the class starts. I will also highly appreciate if you come to the class on time.

B. Participation (20 points)

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 and performed homework exercises. 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

C. Seminar Presentation (20 points)

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 topic that you have chosen at least one week before your presentation.

Grading criteria for material presentation are the following (4 points 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

Instead of a class presentation you can make a video project (20 points+ 10 bonus points).

For this project you can create a video on the topic of your presentation. You can videotape an interview, demonstration, or do a content analysis for this project. Here are several examples of ideas for such videos: "Reflexes of the newborn children", "Phenomenon of Peaget", "Types of child play", "Challenges of adolescence", "Gender stereotypes in cartoons" etc. Video project should last not more than 15 minutes.

D. Article discussion (20 points) .

In this course each of you will be responsible for leading the discussion of one article assigned for the seminar. You can come up with any idea for organizing the discussion – ask your

questions, organize group work, work in pairs, fill and discuss a quiz, debate etc. Your short summary and discussion should last not more than 20 minutes.

All students who come to the seminar should consider the following questions:

- What is the issue of most concern to the author?
- Why does the author think this issue is important?
- Explain research design used discussed in the article in case if this study was empirical.
- **What are the main findings of the study, or in the case of a nonempirical paper, what are the main points made by the author and what is the most critical evidence presented by the author in support of these points?**
- Do you agree with the arguments provided by the author? Why yes or why not? What do you think about the issues discussed in the articles and ways to resolve the problem?

Grading criteria:

- ✓ Ability to fit into the timeframes (5 points)
- ✓ Understanding of the main findings, research design of the article (5 points)
- ✓ Creativity in organizing a discussion (5 points)
- ✓ Ability to provoke the discussion (5 points)

E. Reaction papers on articles (x2) – 40 points. For academic writing classes you are expected to write one summary and one reaction paper on assigned articles. Please, undertake a critical approach to analyzing the main body of the article and demonstrate your ability to express your views on the questions under investigation.

F. Final course paper (70 points). The list of the exemplary topics is available on the e-course.

Step 1 (Due Sep. 24). Identification of the topic (1 page) -5 points. On this stage you are expected to identify developmental issue you are going to discuss in the final paper, different perspectives of the issue, your personal experience in the area, 3 references.

Step 2 (Due Oct. 31) - 20 points.

(1) **Detailed outline (2-3 pages)**

(2) at least 5 key references listed on a separate References page according to APA style. You must identify where each reference will be used in the proposed outline.

(3) a photocopied title page and Abstract of ONE key reference that you intend to use in your paper a 2-3 page, double-spaced summary and critique of the article.

Step 3 (Final paper due Dec. 12) - 45 points, 7-8 double-spaced pages.

Part of the paper	Length	Description
Introduction	1 pages	Clearly identified topic, perspectives to the issue, connection to developmental psychology course
Discussion	4-5 pages	Description of the research findings on explored issues, your personal experience, evaluations, reactions to the literature and issue you write about
Conclusions	1 page	Your conclusion and main findings about the issue
References (minimum 5 sources)	1 page	References in APA style

References in the text: the name of the author and the year of publication are inserted in the text in the following way:

-one work by one author. For instance:

1. Walker (2003, p. 233) mentioned about self-presentation....
2. in the recent study about self-presentation (Walker, 2003, p. 233)....

-one work by multiple authors. For instance:

1. Wassertein, Zappula, Rosen, Gerstman and Rock (1994, p. 41) found...
2. Wassertein et al. (1994, p. 41) found...

Reference list (at the end of the paper): there should be a correspondence between references presented in the text and references provided in the reference list. Particularly, if you mention the author in the text, his/her name should also be given in the reference list. All the references should be presented in the alphabetical order. References should be done in the following way:

-Periodicals (journals, magazines, newsletters, etc)

Authors, name(s), year of publication, title of the article, title of the periodical (italicized), number of periodical, page(s). For instance: Goodenough, D. R. (1976). The role of individual differences in field dependence as a factor in learning and memory. *Psychological Bulletin*, 83, 675-694.

-Books, reports

Author's name, year of publication, title of work, location, and publisher. For instance Paio, A. (1971). *Imagery and verbal processing*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

-On-line documents

Author's name, year of publication, month, day, year of retrieval. For instance:

Tan, G., & Lewandowsky, S. (1996). A comparison of operator trust in humans versus machines. Paper presented at the CybErg 96 virtual conference. Retrieved May 16, 2003, from <http://www.curtin.edu.au>

Paper requirements:

Criterion	Description	Number of points
Understanding of the theoretical background	Clear analysis of sources, ability to integrate information Availability of references to at least 8 scientific resources (articles from databases, books)	15 points
Personal reactions and interpretations	Ability to relate personal experience to theory, ability to critically evaluate other research	15 points
Conclusions	Ability to combine evidence and draw conclusions from the literature and personal experience	5 points
Grammar and APA style		10 points

G. Midterm and Final exam (40 points + 40 points) tests your understanding of the materials discussed during the classes. Exam will consist of multiple-choice and 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 (max 260 points)

Attendance (20 points)
Participation (20 points)
Seminar presentation (20 points)
Reaction papers (30 points)
Article discussion (20 points)
Final project (70 points)
Midterm exam (40 points)
Final in-class exam (40 points)

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 %

VI. Advices and requests 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.
- **Avoid going out after the class started.**
- **Keep your cell phones and lap tops off.**
- **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; otherwise the points for late projects will be reduced.
- Please, **keep the track of your points** and grade in this course, so later on you will not be surprised with your final grade.

II. Course outline

Date	Topic	Seminar Presentation
Sen. 3	Course introduction	
Sen. 5 (lecture), 10 (seminar)	The Study of Human Development, Theory and Research	
Sen. 12 (lecture), 23 (seminar)	Prenatal development	
Sen. 17(lecture), 19 (seminar)	Birth and the newborn child	
Sen. 24 (lecture), 26 (seminar)	Physical development in infancy	
Oct. 1 (lecture), 3 (seminar)	Physical development in Childhood and Puberty	
Oct. 8 (lecture), 10 (seminar)	Cognitive development approaches	
Oct. 17 (lecture)	The development of intelligence	
Oct. 22	Midterm exam	
Oct. 24 (lecture) 29 (seminar)	Language development	
Oct. 31 (lecture) Nov. 5 (seminar)	The self and identity	
Nov. 7(lecture) Nov. 12 (seminar)	Moral development	
Nov. 14 (lecture), 19 (seminar)	Socialization: the impact of family	
Nov. 21(lecture), 26 (seminar)	Early Adulthood	
Nov. 28 (no class) Dec. 3 (lecture) Dec 5 (seminar)	Middle Adulthood	
Dec. 10 (lecture + seminar)	Late Adulthood	
Dec. 12	Presentations of final projects	
Dec. 17	Final Exam	

