Developmental Psychology: Infants, Toddlers, and Adolescents
Psychology 161

Instructor: Lindsay Bennigson Jernigan (lbennigs@uvm.edu)
Home: 244-9958
Work: 656-3340 (M,T,W) Office hours by appointment

Course Hours: Tuesdays 5-7:45, Lafayette 200

Required Readings: Infants, Children and Adolescents, Fifth Edition, by Laura E. Berk
Additional readings as assigned

Course Description: This course will focus on child development from conception through adolescence. We will discuss different theories of child development, and we will track the process of physical, cognitive, social and emotional development through childhood. Class time will be used to reiterate key points from the readings and expand on that information, discuss the topics, and bring material to life through exercises, discussion, and videos.

Course Requirements:
1) Readings
2) Participation in class discussion and exercises
3) Debate presentation: Students will be teamed up to participate in one of five debates. You will be given one article in support of your position, and you will need to find at least one additional article. Your task is to present your stance to the class, convincingly and coherently, in a 15 minute presentation. You are encouraged to use visual aids such as handouts, posters, overheads, or Power Point, and you can be as creative as you like! The idea is to stimulate energetic discussion about some hot topics in the field of child development.
4) Mid-term and Final Exam: There will be a mid-term and a non-cumulative final. Exams will consist of a combination of multiple choice questions, short-answer questions, and essay questions. If you need to arrange for testing accommodations, please see me sooner rather than later!
5) Observation Paper: The purpose of this 3-5 page paper is to give you chance to pull together and apply what you have learned throughout the semester. You will be asked to do a one hour observation of a child of your choice, between the ages of 0 and 12. The observation should be done in a natural setting (i.e.: the child's home, school, child care, playground, etc.), and you should be as unobtrusive as possible. You will write down your observations throughout the hour, and then turn them into a 3-5 page written report. How to proceed:
   • Identify a subject, and obtain permission to observe the child from the care giver (if the child is young), and/or from the child (if the child is older).
• Assure confidentiality, and explain that you are not looking for abnormal behavior -- you are observing normal behaviors as part of a child development class.

• Before you do the observation, review the appropriate sections in your text to guide your observations, depending on the age of the child. You can pay attention to: language, cognition, social interactions, play styles, motor abilities, socialization, emotional development, gender roles, sibling interactions, parent-child interactions, etc. etc.

• Observe the child and take good, detailed notes! Examples of things to note: What activities does the child engage in? What objects are used? How are they used? What is the quality of the child's social interactions? Does the child initiate contact with others? Is the child playing? What form of play is it? What kind of language does the child use? How does the child respond to separation from caregivers? What stage of cognitive development does the child seem to be in (i.e.: what cognitive task must be accomplished to play Hide-and-Seek)? These are only examples, and the list here is endless!

• Read and organize your notes. Begin your report with the following heading:

   Subject: Pseudonym          Date:
   Age:      Time:  
   Sex:     Setting:

Then give a brief description of the setting, the child, and the other people in the child's environment. Next you will move into the meat of your paper: sharing your observations, and interpreting them through the lens of a developmental psychologist. The most common error in the writing of this paper is to rattle off observations without interpreting these observations with specific class material. So, you don't just want to write, "the child used one word sentences to get what she wanted." You want to write, "the child used one word sentences to get what she wanted. This form of communication is known as a holophrase, and is reflective of normal development for a child between the ages of… (etc.)" The second most common error in the writing of this paper is to make the interpretations without sharing the observations. So, you don't want to write, "this child has obtained gender constancy." You want to write, "this child continued to call himself a boy even when he was playing dress up and was wearing a skirt. This suggests that he has obtained gender constancy; he knows that he remains a boy even when breaking the traditional gender rules." You can draw on material from the text and any of the readings to make your interpretations.

Grades: You can earn a total of 100 points throughout this course. Your grade will be based on the number of points you earn  (i.e.: 88 points = 88 % = B+)

   Attendance & participation - 10 points
   Debate - 15 points  
   Observation Paper - 25 points  
   Exam 1 - 25 points  
   Exam 2 - 25 points
Course Schedule

8/30  -  Introduction to the course and each other
        -  Ch. 1, pp. 1-15; 31-48

9/6   -  Ch. 1, pp. 15-30: Theories of child development
        -  Ch.2: Biological and Environmental Foundations
        -  Article: What Makes You Who You Are?

9/13  -  Ch.3: Prenatal Development
        -  Ch.4: Birth and the Newborn Baby

9/20  -  Ch.5: Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood
        -  Article: Scars That Won’t Heal: The Neurobiology of Child Abuse

9/27  -  Ch.6: Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood
        -  Article: Family, Poverty, Welfare Reform, and Child Development
        -  Debate #1: Impact of Maternal Employment on Infant Development?

10/4  -  Ch.7: Emotional and Social Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood
        -  Article: How Many Fathers are Best for a Child?
        -  Debate #2: Are Step-Families Inherently Problematic for Children?

10/11 -  Mid-Term

10/18 -  Ch.8: Physical Development in Early Childhood
        -  Ch.9: Cognitive Development in Early Childhood
        -  Debate #3: Is T.V. Viewing Harmful for Children?

10/25 -  Ch.10: Emotional and Social Development in Early Childhood
        -  Article: The Quest for a Superkid
        -  Debate #4: Does Divorce Create Long-Term Negative Effects for Kids?

11/1  -  Ch.11: Physical Development in Middle Childhood
        -  Ch.12: Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood

11/8  -  Ch.13: Emotional and Social Development in Middle Childhood
        -  Article: Gender and Group Process
        -  Article: Girls Just Want to be Mean

11/15 -  Ch.14: Physical Development in Adolescence
        -  Debate #5: Is Abstinence Education the Best Sex Education?

11/22 -  Ch.15: Cognitive Development in Adolescence
        -  Article: Getting Stupid
11/29  -  Ch.16: Emotional and Social Development in Adolescence

12/6   -  Final Class: Catch-up and Review
        -  **Observation Paper Due** (You can turn it in as early as you want!!)
## Sign-Up for Debate Presentations

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Debate # 4
10/25/05 Does Divorce Create Long-Term Negative Effects for Children?

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Debate # 5
11/15/05 Is Abstinence Education the Best Sex Education?

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2. ____________________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________________
4. ____________________________________________________
5. ____________________________________________________