

Psychology 6220, Developmental Psychology – Syllabus, Fall 2008

MW, Periods 5-6 (12:30 - 1:45), Psychology 243

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The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

General Course Information

Course Description

The purpose of the graduate survey course in Developmental Psychology is to provide an overview of the major theories, research methods, and empirical findings in developmental psychology. We will examine the conceptual underpinnings of taking a developmental approach to understanding behavior in any area of psychology. No background in developmental psychology is required, but familiarity with psychological concepts, research methods, and statistical interpretation is assumed (and necessary for reading of the primary literature).

Required Texts

Theories of Developmental Psychology. Patricia H. Miller (2002). Worth Publishers, 4th edition.

How Children Develop (2006). Robert S. Siegler, Judy S. DeLoache, Nancy Eisenberg. 2nd ed.

Other readings will be available on webct for you to download and print, or read online.

Requirements

Students are expected to attend all classes, read all assigned materials and complete all assignments *prior* to class. Bring all current readings with you to class (you don't have to bring the Siegler text, but do bring the Miller text when we are discussing it). Thorough and timely completion of all assignments is expected. Late assignments will not be accepted. Class participation (including attendance and quality of participation) is 10% of your grade.

Exams

Two exams (Oct. 1 and Nov. 19) will assess your knowledge of and critical thinking about the core material from the course. These exams will employ short-answer and essay questions. Each is worth 25% of your grade.

Final project

You will complete a capstone project that will further your research career by potentially leading to a publication or fellowship, or at least providing experience with giving a research-related talk. You have several options for this project; further guidelines will be handed out later. This project is worth 40% of your grade.

- Option 1: A **review paper**, modeled on articles in *Developmental Review*, which potentially could be submitted for publication. You are encouraged to select a topic that is related to your thesis, dissertation, or other research project. This paper is due Monday, Dec. 15 at 12:00pm (the time scheduled for final exams for this course).
- Option 2: A **grant proposal** for a predoctoral or postdoctoral fellowship (NIH, Spencer Foundation, etc). This option gives you experience in writing a short research grant proposal. The topic will need to be developmental in some regard. This also would be due Monday, Dec. 15 at 12pm
- Option 3: Make an in-class presentation, with powerpoint, on the state-of-the-art for a particular developmental research topic. This 20-30 minute presentation will give you experience with making an oral professional research presentation, provide a start towards a review paper, and/or contribute to the introductory section of your thesis or dissertation. These presentations will take place the week of Dec. 1.

Grading

Exam 1: 25%

Exam 2: 25%

Project: 40%

Participation: 10%

Course Policies

- Attendance and preparation for class are expected, including completing all reading assignments before coming to class. This is important because lectures, discussions, and activities assume you are already familiar with the material. You are responsible for all information presented in class, including schedule changes.
- A grade of “incomplete” is not an option except under rare circumstances, and must be approved by the instructor.
- All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.
- Please see me if you are having difficulty with the class. I am happy to meet with students at any time. The earlier you see me with a problem, the better chance we have of working out a solution. When you see me, please use regular email (jfrick@uga.edu or janetfrick@gmail.com), rather than webct email. I check regular email fairly compulsively, but only check webct once a day or so, so you'll get a quicker answer via regular email. (The exception is if you are turning in an assignment electronically – in that case ONLY use webct).