



Psychology 503.20

Early Cognitive Development

Fall 2013

Instructor:	Dr. Juanita Whalen	Lecture Location:	RDC 2302
Phone:	403-220-8970	Lecture Days/Time:	W 12:00-14:50
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Office Hours:	By appointment		

Course Description and Goals

The overall aim of this course is to familiarize students with theoretical and empirical advances in early cognitive development. In this course we will study development from infancy to middle childhood, focusing on basic developmental processes including perceptual, cognitive and language development. Students will acquire experience with selecting course readings, leading a seminar discussion, giving a seminar presentation and engaging in discussions of current research relevant to cognitive development.

Prerequisites

Psychology 200 & 201 or Psychology 205 – Principles of Psychology I & II
Psychology 312 - Experimental Design and Quantitative Methods for Psychology
Consent of the Department.

Required Text

There is no required text for this course. The instructor and students will assign articles and readings based on selected topics. See section below regarding course readings.

Course Readings

No readings will be assigned for the first class, and readings for the second class will be selected by the instructor. All subsequent readings will be selected by students as part of the article discussion requirement or part of the seminar presentation requirement. All assigned readings must be made available (by the presenter) at least one week before the class, either by posting to Blackboard or by distributing the readings during class time. If there are weeks when no students are scheduled to lead discussion or deliver a presentation, or if there are weeks when large portions of the class time have no scheduled presentations, we will choose a topic as a group and each bring a brief article to class to discuss.

Evaluation

Seminar presentation	35%	Dates to be chosen on first day of class
Research paper	35%	Due Wednesday, Dec 4 th , at start of class
Participation	30%	Weekly

Seminar presentation (35%):

Students will be responsible for delivering a seminar presentation on a selected topic. The presentation requires students to research a chosen topic, prepare a Power Point (or similar) presentation, select 1-2 class readings that form the foundation of the presentation, and guide the discussion following the presentation. Students are expected to give comprehensive treatment of the selected topic, which involves the use of several empirical articles in addition to those assigned to the class. Additional, non-empirical, sources (e.g., meta-analyses, critiques and book chapters) are welcomed as sources, but the focus of the presentation should remain on current empirical research. The presentation should be between 35-40 minutes long, with an additional 10-15 minutes for discussion. The amount of content covered in the presentation will vary by topic, but 4-5 empirical sources would be suitable for most topics. **ALL topics must be approved by the instructor** to ensure there is not unnecessary overlap across presentations. At least one week before the seminar date, the presenting student must provide the class (and the instructor) with a copy of 1-2 readings (10-20 pages in total, maximum). On the day of the presentation, each presenter should distribute a 3-4 page summary (single-spaced) of their presentation to all class members. This summary should include an outline, brief summary of the presentation highlights (key findings, important contributions, etc.), a list of recommended readings, and discussion questions.

Evaluation of the presentation is based on the student's identification of relevant reference material, an appraisal of the background reading the student has done, their critical and careful consideration of the topic, the quality of their written summary, and their stewardship of the class discussion. Additionally, seminar style should reflect careful organization, clear explanation, appropriate responses to questions, appropriate use of Power Point (or overheads, etc.), and effective delivery of the content to the target audience. Failure to present on the selected date will result in the student receiving a grade of 0% for the presentation.

Research paper (35%):

This paper can take the form of either a conceptual critique of a topic or a written outline for a research proposal. I recommend that students write the paper on the topic from their seminar presentation (or from the article discussion). If a student chooses to do a research proposal it should be an original contribution to the literature. The proposed research should be outlined in as much detail as possible (including proposed participants, procedure and analyses). If a student chooses to do a conceptual critique, they should still focus the analysis on current empirical research. The papers should be typed, using a 12-point font, have 1-inch margins, be double-spaced, and conform to current APA guidelines. Maximum length of the paper body is 10 pages (not including cover page, abstract, references, figures/tables, and appendices). Papers should be emailed to the instructor and are due on **Wednesday, December 4th, at the start of class**. Late papers will be penalized 10% per day, including weekends.

Participation (30%):

The grade for participation will be decided on the following criteria (each component is worth 10%):

- a) Submission of discussion questions each week. For each seminar presentation students are required to submit 2-3 discussion questions based on the readings the presenters have assigned. Each week students are required to submit discussion questions to Blackboard no later than 5:00 pm on the evening before class. If there are weeks when no presentations are scheduled, students are expected to post discussion questions based on the assigned reading(s) in the same fashion.

- b) Well-informed and meaningful contributions to the class discussions (e.g., asking questions of presenters, raising your posted discussion questions during article discussions, etc.).
- c) Regular contribution of feedback to seminar presenters, emailed to the instructor within 48 hours of the presentation (i.e., by Friday evening). Each student should provide feedback that addresses the presenter's ability to teach the class about the topic, including their use of relevant reference material, scope and organization of the content, presentation style, and ability to answer questions and lead discussion. Feedback can be provided in point form, and should not exceed 1 page (½ page would be fine in most cases).

Department of Psychology Grade Distribution Policy

The distribution of grades in Psychology courses (the percentage of A grades, B grades, etc.) will be similar to the distribution of grades in other courses in the Faculty of Arts. The Department monitors the grade distributions of 200-, 300-, and 400-level courses in the Faculty to ensure that the grade distributions in Psychology courses are comparable. Based on these reviews, students can expect that 1) up to 30% of grades in 200- and 300-level psychology courses will be "A" grades (A+, A, and A-), and 2) up to 40% of grades 400-level psychology courses will be "A" grades.

Department of Psychology Criteria for Letter Grades

Psychology professors use the following criteria when assigning letter grades:

A+ grade: *Exceptional Performance.* An A+ grade indicates near perfect performance on multiple choice and short answer exams. For research papers/essays/course projects/presentations, an A+ grade is awarded for exceptional work deserving of special recognition and is therefore not a common grade.

A, A- Range: *Excellent Performance.* Superior understanding of course material. Written work is very strong in terms of critical and original thinking, content, organization, and the expression of ideas, and demonstrates student's thorough knowledge of subject matter.

B Range: *Good Performance.* Above average understanding of course material. Written work shows evidence of critical thinking and attention to organization and editing but could be improved in form and/or content.

C Range: *Satisfactory Performance.* Adequate understanding of course material. Knowledge of basic concepts and terminology is demonstrated. Written work is satisfactory and meets essential requirements but could be improved significantly in form and content. Note: All prerequisites for courses offered by the Faculty of Arts must be met with a minimum grade of C-.

D range: *Marginally meets standards.* Minimal understanding of subject matter. Written work is marginally acceptable and meets basic requirements but requires substantial improvements in form and content. Student has not mastered course material at a level sufficient for advancement into more senior courses in the same or related subjects.

F grade: *Course standards not met.* Inadequate understanding of subject matter. Written work does not meet basic requirements. Student has not demonstrated knowledge of course material at a level sufficient for course credit.

Grading Scale

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. In this course there will be no rounding up of final grades.

Tentative Lecture Schedule

Date	Topic	Presenter	Readings
M Sep 9	Lectures begin.		
W Sep 11	Course overview & Planning Current Issues in Cognitive Development	J Whalen	
W Sep 18	Theories of Cognitive Development	J Whalen	Piaget, Vygotsky, Information Processing
F Sep 20	Last day to drop full courses (Multi-term) and Fall Term half courses.		
M Sep 23	Last day to add or swap full courses (Multi-term) and Fall Term half courses.		
W Sep 25	Perception- the physical world		
W Oct 2	Concepts & categories		
F Sep 27	Fee payment deadline for Fall Term full and half courses.		
W Oct 9	Infant social cognition		
M Oct 14	Thanksgiving Day, University closed. No lectures.		
W Oct 16	Memory development		
W Oct 23	Thinking & reasoning		
W Oct 30	Metacognition & Executive functioning		
W Nov 6	Early social cognition		
Nov 9-12	Reading Days. No lectures.		
W Nov 13	Later social cognition		
W Nov 20	Early language development		
W Nov 27	Later language development		
W Dec 4	Pretense & Play		
W Dec 4	Final paper due @ start of class. Fall Term Lectures End.		
Dec 9-19	Fall Term Exam Period.		

Reappraisal of Grades

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (e.g., term paper, essay, test) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within 15 days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class; no reappraisal of term work is permitted after the 15 days. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next 15 days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same. If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within 15 days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances that warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 403-220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of this course.

Absence From A Test/Exam

Makeup tests/exams are NOT an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). A completed Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm absence from a test/exam for health reasons; the student will be required to pay any cost associated with this Statement. Students who miss a test/exam have 48 hours to contact the instructor and to schedule a makeup test/exam. Students who do not schedule a makeup test/exam with the instructor within this 48-hour period forfeit the right to a makeup test/exam. At the instructor's discretion, a makeup test/exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled test/exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup test/exam must be written within 2 weeks of the missed test/exam.

Travel During Exams

Consistent with University regulations, students are expected to be available to write scheduled exams at any time during the official December and April examination periods. Requests to write a make-up exam because of conflicting travel plans (e.g., flight bookings) will NOT be considered except under exceptional circumstances. Students are advised to wait until the final examination schedule is posted before making any travel arrangements.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act

The FOIP legislation disallows the practice of having student's retrieve tests and assignments from a public place. Therefore, tests and assignments may be returned to students during class/lab, or during office hours, or via the Department Office (Admin 275), or will be made available only for viewing during exam review sessions scheduled by the Department. Tests and assignments will be shredded after one year. Instructors should take care to not link students' names with their grades, UCIDs, or other FOIP-sensitive information.

Evacuation Assembly Point

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>
Please check this website and note the nearest assembly point for this course.

Learning support

RDC offers several learning support services: course-based peer tutoring, the Math Learning Centre, the Writing Skills Centre, and help with general learning strategies (e.g., time management, study skills, exam preparation and writing). RDC also offers services for students with disabilities. To access any of these services, visit the Learning Support desk in the Library, call (403) 357-3629, or email either help_learn@rdc.ab.ca or disabilityservices@rdc.ab.ca.

Student Organizations

Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS). They are located in Administration 170 and may be contacted at 403-220-5567.

Student Union VP Academic:	Phone: 403-220-3911	suypaca@ucalgary.ca
Student Union Faculty Rep.:	Phone: 403-220-3913	socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca

Student Ombudsman's Office

The Office of the Student Ombuds provides independent, impartial and confidential support for students who require assistance and advice in addressing issues and concerns related to their academic careers. The office can be reached at 403-220-6420 or ombuds@ucalgary.ca (<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>).

Important Dates

The last day to drop this course with no "W" notation and **still receive a tuition fee refund is September 20, 2013**. Last day for registration/change of registration is **September 23, 2013**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **December 6, 2013**.D