Seminar in Developmental Psychology (PSY 452)
Fall 2007, Fridays 9-11:50 am, DeGarmo 48
Welcome to our course!

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Course Overview and Objectives
The focus of this seminar is the examination of development during infancy and childhood, including biological, cognitive, social, and emotional aspects. In particular, we will focus on theories, research, and applications for everyday interactions and contexts to garner an appreciation and understanding of normative and non-normative patterns of development. The goals of this course are (1) to understand the mechanisms that shape development during infancy and childhood and (2) to articulate, critique, and defend theoretical, empirical, and applied positions concerning the nature of development. Course objectives will be assessed through participation in and leadership of class discussions and completion of written reaction papers and a research proposal.

This course is designed to help fulfill certain objectives for the School Psychology doctoral program (e.g., learning basic psychological principles, understanding cultural and individual differences), as well as certain standards for the Specialist program (i.e., Standard 2.3: Learning and Instruction, Standard 2.4: Socialization and Development of Life Skills, Standard 2.5: Student Diversity in Development and Learning, Standard 2.7: Prevention, Crisis Intervention, and Mental Health, and Standard 2.8: Home/School/Community Collaboration).

For each topic, part of class time will be devoted to presentation of background information, and part will be devoted to discussion of readings and their implications. Because active participation is crucial to the success of the class, it is imperative that everyone completes the assigned readings and writes cogent reaction papers in preparation for discussion. It is also critical that everyone is an active participant in our discussions during class. As described below, either a student or I will take responsibility for providing background details and leading discussions during class time.

Required Readings
Text readings are listed by chapter in the syllabus. (text available at campus bookstores)
References for additional assigned readings are listed in the syllabus (readings available electronically)

Course Requirements
Grades will be based on preparedness, participation, and professionalism, according to the following requirements:

1. Class participation. You are expected to read the required readings for each session and to attend and contribute to class through questions and discussion. Regular participation is essential for our learning together as a community of scholars. Class participation will be worth 25% of the course grade.

2. Reaction papers. You will write and submit a 1-page (double spaced) reaction paper motivated by the readings for each week (except the first class meeting). In your reflection papers, you should include a critical analysis and evaluation of the readings, an integration and synthesis of the findings, and/or a discussion of the implications of the work. The papers are not meant to be summaries or opinion pieces, but rather reflections based on critical reading and thinking. Papers must be posted in WebCT by 8 am each Thursday before class (attached as Word documents to your discussion posting). All students are responsible for reading the reflection papers prior to class so that their central ideas can serve as a basis for class discussion. There are two exceptions to this general pattern. (1) The first week’s assignment is to post a “Getting to Know You” summary in WebCT, including your name, year and area at ISU, something interesting about yourself, one personal goal for this course (e.g., what you hope to learn, how you hope to approach learning in the class), your plans after ISU, and a picture of yourself by Monday of the second week. (2) The last reflection paper (due in paper format at class on December 10) should summarize the most important topics,
details, or ideas you learned in this class and how that knowledge may impact your future endeavors. In total, the reaction papers, GTKY post, and reflection paper will result in 20% of the course grade.

3. **Discussion leadership.** You will be responsible for leading the discussion for two class meetings. Each discussion leadership day will be worth 15% of your course grade. The particular topics and readings discussed will be those listed in the syllabus, but you will be expected to have additional expertise in that area (i.e., have read additional articles), and will be able to lead the discussion in a thoughtful manner. You will provide 4-6 discussion questions based on the assigned readings and an annotated bibliography that summarizes 2 additional articles on the topic. Discussion questions should deal with general issues rather than specific points about the readings outlined in the syllabus. In addition to clarifying the main ideas, your questions should help us analyze, synthesize, evaluate, interpret, and apply the topics addressed in the readings. Each annotation should include the complete reference (in APA style) and one paragraph summarizing the main aspects of the article. The annotated bibliography and discussion questions must be posted in WebCT by 6 pm on the Thursday before class. All students are responsible for reading the article summaries and discussion questions before class to be prepared for our discussion. You must come see me (in person) at least 10 days before your discussion day so that I can help you find and understand appropriate outside readings and integrate key details. Please bring preliminary reading ideas and discussion topics to that meeting.

4. **Research proposal.** You will write a research proposal on an aspect of development that is of interest to you. Research proposals should focus on theoretical and empirical issues addressed in this course. The NRSA-style grant proposal will be worth 20% of the course grade. This proposal should be 10 double-spaced pages in length and should include a literature review (i.e., background and significance) outlining the problems and issues in the area (persuasively asserting that your project will fill an important “gap”), a method section outlining 1 or 2 specific experiment(s) that would logically follow from the issues and problems reviewed, and a brief description of the analysis plan, predicted results, and conclusions resulting from your proposal. You will be expected to turn in a brief summary of your proposal (2 pages, typed with double spacing), outlining theoretical background and experiment ideas, by class time the 6th week of the semester. This summary will be worth 5% of the final grade. In addition, you will meet with me individually (in person) by class time the 7th week to discuss your plans for your proposal. I am happy to meet with you during your writing and editing process to discuss ideas and help make sure you are on the right track with the project. The research proposal is due by class time the last week of classes.

**Policies**

**Late Assignments.** Late assignments will be graded down in accordance with the degree of lateness (unless there is a university-mandated and officially documented reason). You will lose 10% of the possible points for each hour the reaction papers, discussion questions, and annotated bibliography are late and each day the summary and research proposal are late.

**Academic Integrity.** Please consult the [Code of Student Conduct](http://www.deanofstudents.ilstu.edu/crr/) for details regarding University academic integrity policies. Unless otherwise specified in the syllabus, assignments in this course must be completed by you alone and should represent your best effort. Plagiarism and cheating in any form will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action and failure of this course.

**Civility and Respect:** We will respect one another and our learning environment. For example, interruptions during class such as using your cell phone, reading the newspaper, or talking to your neighbor about issues unrelated to class are disrespectful actions that will not be tolerated. Please consult the Department of Psychology civility guidelines ([http://www.psychology.ilstu.edu/diversity/civility.htm](http://www.psychology.ilstu.edu/diversity/civility.htm)) and the [Code of Student Conduct](http://www.deanofstudents.ilstu.edu/crr/) for complete details.

**Students with Disabilities.** Any student in need of special accommodation should contact 438-5853 (voice), 438-8620 (TDD).
Schedule of Topics and Required Readings

Developmental Theories and Approaches

Week 1: Aug. 24

Introduction

Miller Introduction (pp. 1-22)


See http://fellowships.ssrc.org/art_of_writing_proposals/ for additional tips regarding writing grant proposals in the social sciences.

WebCT “Getting to Know You” post due by next Monday at 6 pm

Week 2: Aug. 31

Piagetian Theory

Miller Chap. 1 (pp. 25-103)


Week 3: Sept. 7

Social Learning Theory

Miller Chap. 3 (pp. 165-211)


Week 4: Sept. 14

Information Processing Approach

Miller Chap. 4 (pp. 213-276)


Week 5: Sept. 21  
Sociocultural Theory

Miller Chap. 7 (pp. 367-419)


Week 6: Sept. 28  
Core Knowledge Approach & Dynamic Systems Theories

**Research Summary due by class time**

Miller Chap. 8 (pp. 421-445)


**Cognitive Development**

Week 7: Oct. 5  
Language

**Individual meeting regarding research summary must be completed by class time**


**Week 8: Oct. 12**  
**Memory**


**Week 9: Oct. 19**  
**Attention, Cognitive Flexibility, & Academic Skills**


**Social and Emotional Development**

**Week 10: Oct. 26**  
**Emotions (Guest: Dr. Renée Tobin)**


**Week 11: Nov. 2**

Temperament & Attachment


**Week 12: Nov. 9**

Self-Awareness & Theory of Mind


**Week 13: Nov. 16**

Families


Week 14: Nov. 23
Thanksgiving Break—No Class

Week 15: Nov. 30
Peers


Week 16: Dec. 7
Conclusions

Research Proposal due by class time
Miller Chap. 9 (pp. 447-457)


Week 17: Monday, Dec. 10 7:50 am
Round Table Discussion

Reflection paper due at class

Around the room discussion of research proposals and concluding thoughts