Welcome to our seminar!

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Blackboard Login Website: https://blackboard.ilstu.edu (also available via iCampus)

Seminar Overview and Objectives
The purpose of a graduate seminar is to facilitate learning and professional development via participation in a community of scholars. The focus of this seminar is the examination of development during infancy and childhood, including biological, cognitive, social, emotional, and cultural 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 seminar 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. These objectives will be assessed through participation in and leadership of class discussions and completion of written reaction papers and a research proposal.

This seminar 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 2.4: Socialization and Development of Life Skills, Standard 2.5: Student Diversity in Development and Learning, and Standard 2.8: Home/School/Community Collaboration).

For each topic, our class time will be devoted to discussion of readings and their implications. Because active participation is crucial to the success of any seminar, 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, we will share responsibility for 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)

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

1. **Class participation.** Regular participation is essential for our learning together as a community of scholars. You are expected to read the required readings for each session and to attend and contribute to class through questions and discussion. Everyone must bring the assigned readings to class to facilitate careful discussion. In addition, everyone must pose questions, make observations, and provide insights regarding the readings and their implications. Please be prepared to share your thoughts, as well as to respond to those made by colleagues, during class time. Class participation will be worth 25% of your seminar 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 reaction 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 Blackboard by 8 am each Thursday before class (attached as Word documents to your discussion posting). All students are responsible for reading the reaction 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 Blackboard, including your name, year and area at ISU, something interesting about yourself, one personal goal for this seminar (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 our class meeting during finals week) 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 your seminar grade.

3. **Discussion leadership.** You will be responsible for leading discussion for two class meetings. Each discussion leadership day will be worth 15% of your seminar 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 3 additional articles on the topic. In addition to clarifying the main ideas regarding our assigned readings, your questions should help us analyze, synthesize, evaluate, interpret, and apply these ideas. 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 Blackboard 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. Please come see me before your discussion day if you would like help finding appropriate outside readings and/or understanding and integrating key details.

4. **Research proposal.** You will write a research proposal on an aspect of infant and/or child development that is of interest to you. Research proposals should focus on theoretical and empirical issues addressed in this seminar. The NRSA-style grant proposal will be worth 20% of the seminar 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 seminar 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:* Preparedness and promptness are important aspects of professional development. Please complete all work by the assigned date. 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:* Unless otherwise specified in the syllabus, assignments in this seminar 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 seminar. Please consult the Code of Student Conduct (http://www.deanofstudents.ilstu.edu/crr/) for details regarding University academic integrity policies.

*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, surfing the web, 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.shtml) and the Code of Student Conduct 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. 22

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.

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

Week 2: Aug. 29

Piagetian Theory

Miller Chap. 1 (pp. 25-103)


Week 3: Sept. 5

Social Learning Theory

Miller Chap. 3 (pp. 165-211)


Week 4: Sept. 12

Information Processing Approach

Miller Chap. 4 (pp. 213-276)


Week 5: Sept. 19  
Sociocultural Theory

Miller Chap. 7 (pp. 367-419)


Week 6: Sept. 26  
Core Knowledge Approach and Dynamic Systems Theories

*Research Summary due by class time*

Miller Chap. 8 (pp. 421-445)


**Cognitive Development**

Week 7: Oct. 3  
Language

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


Week 8: Oct. 10

**Memory**


Week 9: Oct. 17

**Attention, Symbolic Understanding, and Academic Skills**


**Social and Emotional Development**

Week 10: Oct. 24

**Temperament and Attachment**


**Week 11: Oct. 31**

**Emotions**


**Week 12: Nov. 7**

**Self-Awareness and Theory of Mind**


Week 13: Nov. 14  


Week 14: Nov. 21  


Week 15: Nov. 28  
Thanksgiving Break—No Class
**Week 16: Dec. 5**

**Conclusions**

*Research Proposal due by class time*

Miller Chap. 9 (pp. 447-457)


**Week 17: Tuesday, Dec. 9 7:50 am**

**Round Table Discussion**

*Reflection paper due at class*

*Around the room discussion of research proposals and concluding thoughts*