

# Psychology 250: Child Development

*Department of Psychology & Neuroscience*  
*MWF 10:10-11:00am*

## Course Description

This course is targeted toward individuals seeking to gain a deeper understanding of child development. It is designed to provide an introduction to the theories that guide developmental research, as well as an overview of typical development from the prenatal stages through adolescence. Students will gain knowledge of children's biological, cognitive, emotional, and social development by attending lectures, engaging in class discussion, and critically evaluating research on relevant topics.

## Course Objectives

1. Understand the major theoretical approaches to describing child development.
2. Utilize the major theoretical approaches to explain child behaviors and outcomes.
3. Critically evaluate classic and current research on multiple aspects of child development.

## Prerequisite

Psychology 101: General Psychology

## For students working with Accessibility Resources

After students make arrangements with ARS, please contact Taylor Thomas to confirm all accommodations.

## Course Components and Requirements

### Lectures

Lectures will cover material presented in the textbook, as well as information from relevant research on child development. Exams will cover all material presented in class, including information that is not presented in your textbook. PowerPoint slides for each lecture will be posted on Sakai at least 1 hour prior to class, and it is recommended that you print the slides to assist you in your in-class note taking.

### Textbook

The lectures will be guided by the information in *Developmental psychology: Childhood & adolescence* (9<sup>th</sup> ed.) by Shaffer & Kipp.

### Research Article Critiques

Four journal articles related to various topics covered throughout the semester will be posted on Sakai. Students will be required to use their knowledge from this course to critically evaluate the research articles and to submit a critique on Sakai. Critiques should be a minimum of 1,000 words and written in accordance with the guidelines posted on Sakai.

## Exams

There will be three exams during the semester that cover information presented in the textbook as well as material from lectures. All exams will consist of multiple-choice and short answer questions. Only the two highest exam scores will count towards your final grade. If you elect to take all three exams, your lowest score will be dropped.

## Final Exam

The final exam will be cumulative and will cover information presented in the textbook as well as material from lectures. The final exam will also consist of multiple-choice and short answer questions. Per university policy, all students must take the final exam.

## Grades

The total number of points earned throughout the semester will determine final letter grades. In order for students to check their progress, all grades will be posted on Sakai throughout the semester. There will be no curve and no opportunities for extra credit. Final grades are not subject to negotiation, and grades will only be changed if there is a clerical error.

Research Article Critiques	20pts	(@ 5pts each)
Exams	50pts	(@ 25pts each)
Final Exam	30pts	

The numbers of points needed to receive each letter grade are as follows:

94-100	A	87-89	B+	77-79	C+	67-69	D+
90-93	A-	84-86	B	74-76	C	60-66	D
		80-83	B-	70-73	C-	<60	F

The following descriptions indicate what each grade is designed to reflect:

- A** Exceptional understanding of all material, including classroom material and assigned readings, general ideas and specific details, and facts as well as applications; excellent work on all assignments
- B** Very good understanding, but some gaps in mastering details or applications; some small issues with completion of assignments
- C** Satisfactory understanding with substantial gaps in understanding of details and applications; may not have completed all of the reading; substantial mistakes on assignments
- D** Superficial understanding of general ideas with failure to grasp details, applications, and connections among general ideas; minimally acceptable work on assignments, if completed

## Class Policies

### Academic Honesty

The Honor Code is in effect at all times to ensure the integrity of our learning experiences. Students must sign a pledge on each paper and exam to state that they have complied with the Honor Code. Students must take exams without help of notes, books, other people, or any other kind of external aid. Students must also take steps to reduce the possibility of others' cheating by protecting their own tests and answer sheets from the view of others.

### Electronic Devices in the Classroom

Laptops, cell phones, and other electronic devices can be a distraction to you and those around you. Therefore, it is highly encouraged that students go device-free during lecture periods.

### Final Exam Schedule

The final exam must be completed at the time assigned by the University. If students need to reschedule because of having two exams at the same time or three exams during twenty-four hours, students must obtain an exam excuse form from Academic Advising and return the form to Taylor Thomas. The exam will be subsequently be rescheduled.

### Late Assignments

Late submissions are accepted with a 50% late penalty. All deadlines are noted in the class schedule, on Sakai, and on the instructions for each assignment. Assignments must be submitted on Sakai (no paper copies, no emailed copies).

### Missed Tests

There are no individual make-ups and no exams given early. Only two exams contribute to students' final grades. If students miss more than one exam, there is likely to be a serious issue interfering with their learning, and they should see their academic advisors or dean to discuss a course drop or semester withdrawal.

## Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignments
<i>M</i> 1/11	Introductions	
<i>W</i> 1/13	Studying Human Development	Ch. 1
<i>F</i> 1/15	Research Methods	
<i>M</i> 1/18	<i>No Class: Martin Luther King Day</i>	
<i>W</i> 1/20	Article Critique Guidelines	
	<b>Section One: Biological Foundations of Development</b>	
<i>F</i> 1/22	Hereditary Influences on Development	Ch. 2
<i>M</i> 1/25	Hereditary Influences on Development	
<i>W</i> 1/27	Prenatal Development	Ch. 3
<i>F</i> 1/29	Prenatal Development & Birth	
<i>M</i> 2/1	Infancy	Ch. 4
<i>W</i> 2/3	Infancy	
<i>F</i> 2/5	Physical Development	Ch. 5

<b>M</b>	2/8	Physical Development	
<b>W</b>	2/10	Article Discussion & Exam Review	<b>Critique Due</b>
<b>F</b>	2/12	Exam	
<b>Section Two: Cognitive Development</b>			
<b>M</b>	2/15	Piaget	Ch. 6
<b>W</b>	2/17	Piaget	
<b>F</b>	2/19	Vygotsky	
<b>M</b>	2/22	Information Processing	Ch. 7
<b>W</b>	2/24	Memory	
<b>F</b>	2/26	Intelligence	Ch. 8
<b>M</b>	2/29	Language	Ch. 9
<b>W</b>	3/2	Language	
<b>F</b>	3/4	Article Discussion & Exam Review	<b>Critique Due</b>
<b>M</b>	3/7	Exam	
<b>Section Three: Social and Personality Development</b>			
<b>W</b>	3/9	Emotional Development	Ch. 10
<b>F</b>	3/11	Emotional Development & Attachment	
<b>M</b>	3/14	<i>No Class: Spring Break</i>	
<b>W</b>	3/16	<i>No Class: Spring Break</i>	
<b>F</b>	3/18	<i>No Class: Spring Break</i>	
<b>M</b>	3/21	Attachment	
<b>W</b>	3/23	Self-Concept	Ch. 11
<b>F</b>	3/25	<i>No Class</i>	
<b>M</b>	3/28	Self-Concept	
<b>W</b>	3/30	Gender Role Development	Ch. 12
<b>F</b>	4/1	Moral Development	Ch. 13
<b>M</b>	4/4	Moral Development	
<b>W</b>	4/6	Article Discussion & Exam Review	<b>Critique Due</b>
<b>F</b>	4/8	Exam	
<b>Section Four: The Context of Development</b>			
<b>M</b>	4/11	Family	Ch. 14
<b>W</b>	4/13	Family	
<b>F</b>	4/15	Peers	Ch. 15
<b>M</b>	4/18	School	
<b>W</b>	4/20	Neighborhood	
<b>F</b>	4/22	TBA	
<b>M</b>	4/25	TBA	
<b>W</b>	4/27	Article Discussion & Exam Review	<b>Critique Due</b>
<i>Final Exam</i>			

*This syllabus is subject to change. Any change will be announced in lecture and on Sakai.*