

**Psyc 463:****Development of Social Behavior and Personality**

Prerequisites: Psyc 101, 250, 210 or 215.

**Course Organization**

There is no textbook to be purchased for this course. Instead, I selected a group of research articles pertaining to the topics outlined in the above overview. The first third of these articles are currently available for download from **Sakai** (in a folder called "**Required Readings**"). The list of required readings is provided at the end of this syllabus, along with "read-by-dates"; the whole set will be made available soon.

a) Assigned readings:

Taken as a set these articles are intended to provide a comprehensive overview of perspectives, research designs, and statistical approaches currently used in research on human social development. These texts should be read by the "read by dates" specified in this syllabus. To orient your reading and animate class discussions, I will post 3 to 5 questions pertaining to a subset of texts on **Sakai** a few days in advance of the "read by date" (in a folder called "**Study Questions/Essay Guides**"). You may find that some texts, especially those that report empirical findings make for a difficult read, in part because of the use of sophisticated statistics. Because this is the direction our field is taking (increasing statistical sophistication) it is my duty to provide a broad-based understanding of what those statistics are intended to contribute to developmental science.

b) Class discussion and lectures:

You will find that most of the topics listed in the overview have two sections, one theoretical that lays out specific questions and perspectives to address them, and a second part that consists in the empirical investigations of those questions. As stated above, the empirical pieces are more difficult to digest, so I will take care of those in my lectures. But I want the theoretical papers to be your responsibility to cover through systematic discussions in class, using leading questions I will post on Sakai for this purpose (or any other you may want to bring forth). For this to work for the collective benefit, you must make it your duty to read those texts (for which guiding questions will be posted on Sakai) by their due date, and come to class ready to share your thoughts. As stated below, I will grade this aspect of your participation to our class.

**Evaluation**

To do well in this class you should prepare yourself to read, reflect upon the different topics, discuss your views, and write about them. You will be evaluated on the following bases:

(1) Short essays on two of the topics listed below in the Calendar and Assignment section. I suggest 5 pages, double-spaced (Times 12) as a guideline. You can exceed this limit by half a page if the extensiveness of your coverage justifies it. You will find on Sakai in due time guidelines for writing these essays in the "Study Questions/Essay Guides" folder. **I will not accept your essays by email; only in class on the due dates specified in this syllabus.**

(2) Midterm and final exam exams will each cover the first and second half of the semester respectively, and the **final is not cumulative**. Both will include multiple-choice questions, matching questions, fill in the blanks, and short essay questions (3 to 6 lines on average).

(3) As stated above, your participation to class is important. Using the reading material as a basis, we will *introduce* each topic with a class discussion of how researchers cast their questions and how their different perspectives dictate the questions they formulate. Guideline questions for these discussions (not to the exclusion of your own) will be posted on Sakai at least one week ahead of time. On those introduction days, I will circulate a class roster onto which students who did contribute to discussion will appose a check mark next to heir name. Over the semester I will tally check marks to estimate overall grades on class participation. You will be evaluated on the following basis:

2 essays @ 20% each	40%
Midtepm and Final@ 20% each	40%
Class participation:	20%

### **Honor Code:**

“Plagiarism—using information from a written source without appropriate acknowledgement—is an honor code violation. Ideas or information in your written work and class presentations must be appropriately referenced, whether the original source is written or verbal. Five or more words taken verbatim from any source must be placed in quotation marks with the source appropriately referenced. If you have questions about any of these matters, ASK.” Each student is required to sign his/her name to the honor code pledge (i.e. “I herby certify that during this examination I have neither given nor received aid.”) in order to receive a final grade.

## **Topics, Calendar, and Assignments**

<b>WEEK</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT</b>
Jan. 8	Orientation: Content, organization & evaluation	Syllabus
Jan. 13	Class Discussion: What is development? . What is a critical period? . What do the genes do? What is temperament? . Does early experience predict later development?	Guiding questions on Sakai

### **1. ORIGIN, DIMENSIONS, AND FUNCTIONS OF TEMPERAMENT**

Jan. 15- 20	What is temperament? . Clinical, biological, developmental approaches . Temperament as regulation of reactivity . How does temperamen develop?	Goldsmith (1987) Rothbart (2000)
Jan 22	Class discussion: Emotion-regulation, Effortful Control, and Executive function.	Zhou (2012)

## 2. THE FIRST YEAR OF LIFE: THE CHALLENGE OF INFANCY; ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTION OF INFANT-MOTHER ATTACHMENT

Jan. 27	Infant-mother interactions and regulation	Tronick (1989)
Jan. 29-Feb 3	Attachment: The Bowlby-Ainsworth theory . Theoretical antecedents; attachment system, secure base, working models, classification	Bretherton (1992) Cassidy (1999)
Feb. 5	. Attachment disorganization <b>Note: sections 1 or 2 are possible topics</b> <b>For your First Essay: Due on February 26</b>	Lyons-Ruth (2008)

## 3. CHILD CHARACTERISTICS AND PARENTING STYLES IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Feb. 10-12	Maternal sensitivity to stress and non-distress Heart regulation, harsh parenting, and attachment disorganization Children's drawings of their family: effects of chaotic families on child social adjustment	Leerkes (2009) Holochwost (2014) Zvara (2014)
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## 4. EPIGENESIS: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR STUDYING DEVELOPMENT

Feb. 17-19	Development as epigenesis: . Development creates a hierarchy of systems . Predetermined and probabilistic epigenesis	Lerner (2002) Gariépy (2007)
Feb. 24	Applying the Probabilistic Epigenetic model: . Parenting and the development of vagal tone	Propper (2008)
Feb. 26	. The legacy of early attachment relations	Kochanska (2012)
Mar. 3	Three models of G x E interaction	Lecture notes

**Mar. 5 Midterm Exam (Spring break, Friday 6)**

## 5. EMPIRICAL VERIFICATIONS OF THE DIFFERENTIAL SUSCEPTIBILITY HYPOTHESIS

Mar. 17-19	The differential susceptibility hypothesis: . A 4 <sup>th</sup> model of G x E interaction Prenatal programming of postnatal plasticity	Ellis (2011) Pluess (2011)
Mar. 24-26	Testing the differential susceptibility to context hypothesis: . Enhancing attachment security through intervention	Cassidy (2011)

**Note: Section 4 & 5 is the topic of your Second Essay  
Due in class on April 9**

## 6. THE PRESCHOOL PEER GROUP AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mar. 31- Apr. 7	The peer group social ecology . Emergence of sex segregation . Affiliative networks . Social dominance . Attraction to the high rank	Lafreniere (1984) Strayer (1984)
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## 7. SOCIAL ROLES IN CHILDHOOD AND EARLY ADOLESCENCE

Apr. 9	Sociometry: Popularity and rejection	Coie (1983)
Apr. 14-16	Peer-perceived popularity, likeability and social dominance	Parkurst (1998)
Apr. 23	Popularity, relational aggression, and social dominance orientation	Mayeux (2014)

**Apr 28 (Tuesday) FINAL EXAM: 8:00 AM (SAME CLASSROOM)**

### REQUIRED READING

#### JANUARY 15-22

Goldsmith, H. H. et al. (1987). Roundtable: What is temperament? Four approaches. *Child Development*, 58, 505-529. [Note: the Commentaries section is optional reading]

Rothbart, M. K., Ahadi, S. A., & Evans, D. E. (2000). Temperament and personality: Origins and outcomes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78, 122-135.

Zhou, Q., Chen, S. H., & Main, A. (2012). Commonalities and differences in the research on children's effortful control and executive function: A call for an integrated model of self-regulation. *Child Development Perspectives*, 6(2), 112-121.

#### JANUARY 27 – FEB 5

Tronick, E. Z. (1989). Emotions and emotional communication in infants. *American Psychologist*, 44, 112-119.

Bretherton, I. (1992). The origin of attachment theory: John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth. *Developmental Psychology*, 28, 759-775. [Note: pages 769 to end of the article are optional reading]

Cassidy J. (1999). The nature of the child's ties. In J. Cassidy and P.R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment theory, research and clinical applications*. New York: Guilford Press.

Lyons-Ruth (2008). Attachment disorganization. In J. Cassidy and P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment theory, research and clinical applications*, read ony pp 666-669. New York: Guilford Press.

**FEBRUARY 10-12**

- Leerkes, E. M., Blankson, A. N., & O'Brien, M. (2009). Differential effects of maternal sensitivity to infant distress and non-distress on social-emotional functioning. *Child Development*, 80(3), 762-775.
- Holochwost, S. J., Gariépy, J.-L., Popper, C. B., Mills-Koonce, W. R., & Moore, G. A. (2014). Parenting behaviors and vagal tone at six months predict attachment disorganization at twelve months., *Developmental psychobiology*, DOI 10.1002/dev.21221
- Zvra, B. J., Mills-Koonce, W. R., Garret-Peters, P., Wagner, N. J., Vernon-Feagans, L., Cox, M., & and FLP contributors (2014). The mediating role of parenting in the association between household chaos and children representations of family dysfunction. *Attachment and Human Development*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14616734.2014.966124>

**FEBRUARY 17-MARCH 3**

- Lerner, R.M. (2002). *Concepts and theories of human development* (Chapter 7, Developmental systems theories, pp. 163-169S). New-York: Lawrence Erlbaum & Associates
- Gariépy, J.-L. (2007). Gilbert Gottlieb's contribution to developmental thinking in developmental psychology. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 1, 184-193.
- Propper, C., More, G. A., Mills-Koonce, R. M., Halpern, C. T., Hill-Soderlund, A. L., Calkins, S. D., Carbone, M. A., & Cox, M. J. (2008). Gene-environment contributions to the development of infant vagal reactivity: The interaction of dopamine and maternal sensitivity. *Child Development*, 79(5), 1377-1394.
- Kochanska, G., & Kim, S. (2012). Toward a new understanding of legacy of early attachments for future antisocial trajectories: Evidence from two longitudinal studies. *Development and Psychopathology*, 24, 783-806.

**MARCH 17-26**

- Ellis, B. J., Boyce, W. T., Belsky, J., Bakersman-Kranenburg, M. J., & Ijzendoorn, M. H. (2011). Differential susceptibility to the environment: an evolutionary-neurodevelopmental theory. *Development and Psychopathology*, 23, 7-28
- Pluess, M., & Belsky, J. (2011). Prenatal programming of postnatal plasticity? *Development and Psychopathology*, 23, 28-38.
- Cassidy, J., Woodhouse, S. S., Sherman, L. J., Stupica, B., & Lejuez, C. (2011). Enhancing infant attachment security: An examination of treatment efficacy and differential susceptibility. *Development and Psychopathology*, 23, 131-148.

**MARCH 31-APRIL 7**

- La Freniere, P., Strayer, F. F., & Gauthier, R. (1984). The emergence of same-sex affiliative preferences among preschool peers: A developmental/ethological perspective. *Child Development*, 55, 1958-1965.
- Strayer, F. F., & Trudel, M. (1984). Developmental changes in the nature and function of social dominance among young children. *Ethology and Sociobiology*, 5, 279-295.

**APRIL 9-23.**

Coie, J. D., Dodge, K. A., & Coppotelli, H. (1982). Dimensions and type of social status: A cross age perspective. *Developmental Psychology*, 18, 557-550.

Parkhurst, J. T & Hopmeyer, A. (1998). Sociometric and peer-perceived popularity: Two distinct dimensions of peer status. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 18(2), 125-144.

Mayeux, L. (2014). Understanding popularity and relational aggression in adolescence: The role of social dominance orientation. *Social Development*, 23, 502-517.

**Overview**

This course is designed to provide an advanced introduction to research and perspectives on social development. A unifying question in the organization of the semester is: "How does the developmental process integrate the multiple factors that shape the organization of social behavior and life histories?" The last two decades of research on this question have been particularly exciting. Informed by a systemic understanding of living systems—instead of a strict mechanistic framework, researchers are now examining complex interactions among genes, neurological activity, behaviors, and environmental conditions as they unfold over time, and see this task as essential to a scientific understanding of how the developmental process works. It is thus my goal to sensitize my students to the heuristic value of a systems approach for studying social development, including its methods and statistical procedures. To do this I selected a few themes that have been central to recent research in social and personality development, namely, child temperament, infant-mother attachment, parenting styles, and peer relations during childhood and adolescence. Through the semester we will explore these themes as we study at some length theoretical and research articles from the recent and the not so recent, but historically relevant literature.

We begin our journey by asking the question: "What is temperament and how does it develop?" Temperament, that is, the set of dispositions the infant, the child, and the adolescent bring to their social world, has been a subject of intensive research in developmental psychology. A brief historical review will serve to introduce Mary Rothbart's widely accepted conception of temperament as consisting of two main aspects: reactivity (to stimuli) and regulation (of this reactivity). Her model further allows for a distinction between positive (approach, exuberance) and negative (anger, fear, sadness) reactivity. As Rothbart grounded her effort at defining temperament with reference to their neurological substrates she opened the way to research on processes (biological and behavioral) by which reactivity as expressed in emotions and behaviors is differentially regulated by different individuals. From her collaboration with Posner on the neurobiology of attention processes we also owe our current interest in executive function, its development, and correlated life histories.

Next we examine processes that lead to the formation of the first affective bond the infant forms with her mother. Here again we adopt a historical approach to appreciate how John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth came to formulate their famous attachment theory, a theory that has enlightened research on social development since its inception (1969-1981)—and that in the recent context of a better integration of biological and behavioral processes in social development continues to inform current research even as it seeks to understand how early life

experiences get “under the skin” (i.e., at cellular/molecular level). We will touch lightly on this growing line of research in developmental psychobiology. Other factors beyond the quality of infant-mother attachment like parenting styles and the effects of chaotic family environments on child development have received a lot of attention in recent literature, so an introduction to this research is warranted. The purpose of these first three sections is to set the stage for examining how personal (temperament), relational (attachment), and contextual (family) factors interact over time to promote more or less stable individual differences in life-histories. Because the conduct of his research, unlike 20 years ago, is now informed by dynamic systems theory, it is indicated to preface it with a summary of the central premises that distinguish a systems approach from the mechanistic approach that preceded it.

The systems approach sets forth specific heuristics for understanding how personal and relational factors interact in their effects on the ongoing organization of social development. Its basic premise is that development generates a hierarchy of nested systems, with genetic activity as the lowest (most embedded) level, on to neural substrates, behaviors, and the structured and changing social environment to which the developing person is adapting. The further postulation of bidirectional relations (co-actions) among those nested systems implies that activity in any of them is contingent upon activity at other organismic levels, such that no specific level (as in mechanism) can claim precedence in causation, not even the genetic; instead a systemic framework focuses on relational causation as is currently examined, for example, in mediation and moderation models of human development. The upshot of the systems approach is that development is probabilistic, not predetermined. A few articles will be used in class to exemplify. As you know from other classes, the role that genes play in development has been an important focus of research in developmental psychology. After Spring break, we will contrast and compare four different models, proposed in this line of research, of how G x E interactions take place. The most recent of these models called “differential biological sensitivity to context” is now receiving substantial empirical support and will occupy our attention in the following section using published articles with two purposes in mind: (1) explaining how a systems approach can be implemented in actual research, and (2) weighing the empirical evidence in favor or against the differential susceptibility to context hypothesis proposed by Belsky (1997-2013) and Boyce (2005-2013).

The sphere of influences on social development is greatly expanded with the rapid transitions to the preschool peer group and then to formal schooling. Thus, our final topic examines how the peer group, the formation of friendship and dominance relations, and the demands placed upon the child at school entry, emerge as new sets of factors capable of affecting the consolidation or reorganization of adaptive patterns established in the family. In the transition from the family to the peer group, individual differences in social adjustment, positive or negative, may undergo amplification or attenuation. In this context, we consider different proposals linking popularity, peer rejection, and individual differences in social competence. We begin with a descriptive analysis of the preschool ecology with the goal of capturing how the joint motives of making friends and acquiring social status develop and transact over this age range. Next we examine the psychometric approach to “popularity” and “rejection” that emphasizes “likeability” as the primary goal of young adolescents. This approach is finally contrasted to recent literature that recognizes the co-existence of these two needs in adolescent social development: securing friendship and acquiring social status.

Beyond the conceptual and empirical integration this course is intended to facilitate, attention will be given throughout the semester to the methods, research designs, data collection procedures, and the various analytical techniques used in developmental studies of social behavior.