

Psychology 304 (Unique # 43620)
Introduction to Child Psychology
Spring 2011

Instructor: Prof. Cristine Legare

Class meets: Tuesday, Thursday, 3:30-5pm

Classroom: Burdine Hall 108

Office: SEA 5.216

Office hours: Tuesday 2:30-3:30, Thursday 5-6 and by appointment

Email: legare@psy.utexas.edu

Webpage: www.ccdlab.net (course materials available online)

Teaching Assistant: Vanessa Scaringi, M.A.

Office: SEA 2.122

Office hours: Tuesday, Thursday 2-3pm, and by appointment

Email: vscaringi@mail.utexas.edu

Course Description:

The primary goal of this course is to examine the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional growth of infants, children, and adolescents, and the various factors (e.g., genetics, parenting, peer groups, schooling, and the media) that influence development. Prominent theories of child development and research methods used in developmental psychology are reviewed. Specific topics that are covered include: aggression, attachment, gender roles, language development, moral development, cognitive development, culture, and school achievement. The implications of course content for child-rearing, education, and social policy will also be discussed.

The course will combine both lecture and seminar formats. I will generally introduce each topic with some background information and/or lecture on some selected aspect of each topic, but much of what you learn from the class will be information that you glean from the readings and class discussions. Active student participation is required.

Text:

1. REQUIRED: Siegler, R., DeLoache, J., & Eisenberg, N. (2010). *How children develop* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Worth Publishers.
2. OPTIONAL: Saxon, J. (2010). Study guide for *How children develop* (3rd ed.)

Course Objectives:

1. To introduce you to the field of child psychology.
2. To provide you with the skills and information necessary to be a critical consumer of information.
3. To excite you about the process of scientific discovery.

4. To help you apply research in child psychology to real world concerns and your own experiences.

Prerequisites:

Please note that the Psychology Department will drop all students who do not meet the following prerequisites:

- (a) Completion of Psy 301 (Introductory Psychology)
- (b) Received at least a grade of C in Psy 301

Course Requirements & Grading Policies:

EXAMS: Five examinations will be given during the semester. The first four exams will be given in class. These four classroom exams will not be comprehensive, (i.e., they will cover only that material assigned after the previous exam). The last of the five exams will be an **optional, cumulative** exam given on the final exam date (Tuesday, **May 17, 2:00-5:00 pm**). This optional, cumulative final exam may replace your lowest test grade from the semester. Your cumulative exam grade will be your best four test scores, which will all contribute equally to the grade. If you do not take the optional final, your cumulative exam grade will consist of the four exam scores given during the course of the semester. All exams will be multiple-choice in format, and all course material is fair game for the exams. This includes all of the information in the textbook, the lectures, and any films presented during lecture. The exams will assess both conceptual knowledge and factual information, so be prepared to answer both types of questions. Each exam will consist of 45 multiple-choice problems and the total number of exam points it is possible to earn is 180. Dates of the exams are **February 10, March 10, April 12 and May 5**. Optional review sessions will be held by the TA outside of class prior to each exam (dates TBA).

NO MAKE-UP EXAMS: Make-up exams will not be given for missed exams. An optional, cumulative final exam is given at the end of the semester to allow students who may have missed an exam (and/or who would like to improve their grade) to make up points.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS: Students are required to complete 2 writing assignments: the Interview Project and the Media Project (5 pages, 60 points each total). Projects are designed to provide hands-on experience both in collecting and presenting new data and in critiquing existing findings. The Interview Project is due at the beginning of class on **February 22**. The Media Project is due in at the beginning of class on **April 5th**. You are required to turn in an interview or coding sheet (used to collect data) with your final papers. If either project is turned in late, the paper will be marked down 10% (6 points) per day after the due day. You must turn in hard copies of your final papers in class; emailing drafts is not sufficient to receive credit. If you are unavailable to attend class to turn your paper in, make arrangements to turn your paper in prior to the due date.

We strongly encourage you to seek out feedback on drafts of your papers in advance. We are both available to answer questions and read over your papers during office hours. The Writing Center is available as an additional resource to you.

The Undergraduate Writing Center (UWC) offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT undergraduate, by appointment or on a drop-in basis. The writer works with a trained consultant to define goals for the session, for example:

- deciding on a topic
- clarifying and organizing ideas
- researching, drafting, and revising
- improving grammar, punctuation, and usage
- citing sources properly

If you do decide to take advantage of this resource, please make sure you prepare specific questions to bring. The better organized and focused you are, the more they can help you.

The UWC is located in the Flawn Academic Center 211

Hours:

Monday—Thursday

9:00 AM—7:00 PM, last appointment at 6:00 PM.

Friday

9:00 AM—3:00pm, last appointment at 2:00 PM.

Last consultations begin 1 hour before closing. If your paper is due in two hours or less, you cannot meet with a consultant. You will not have enough time to revise after your consultation.

Contact them by phone or email (512) 471-6222; coordinator@uwc.utexas.edu

Further information is listed on their website: <http://www.uwc.utexas.edu/>

GRADE DISTRIBUTION: The total number of points that it is possible to earn for the semester is **300**: Exams = 180 (45 points each), Writing Assignments = 120 (60 each). Final grades including a decimal point of .5 or higher will be rounded up.

A = 93-100

A- = 90-92

B+ = 87-89

B = 83-86

B- = 80-82

C+ = 79-77

C = 73-76

Etc.

GRADING POLICY: No grade adjustments will be made. Grades are a reflection of what you have earned during the semester, and the course is not curved. Incomplete grades will be given in extremely rare and extraordinary circumstances. Students are expected to plan ahead in starting assignments and to keep up with the coursework throughout the term.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percentage of grade</u>
Writing assignment: Interview Project	20
Writing assignment: Media Project	20
Exams (4 total)	60
Total	100

Class Participation, Preparation, and Communication:

The bulk of class time will be devoted to introducing you to the study of child psychology, discussing the readings, and critically evaluating course material. I highly encourage active class participation and reading the course material in advance. Please take the opportunity to attend office hours as well, as they allow for more in depth conversations about course material than is possible during lecture. If you cannot attend scheduled office hours, please contact us to schedule an appointment.

Email communication is also encouraged. Please treat email as a professional means of communication and allow at least 1-2 days for an email response. Questions about the content of course material can be addressed to either Prof. Legare or the TA. All administrative questions should be addressed to the TA.

Course Policy:

Lectures will include material that is not in the textbook. If you miss a class, it will be your responsibility to find out from a classmate what happened in class (including handouts, announcements, and lecture content).

Notes:

1. The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-4641 TTY.
2. Academic integrity is an integral part of the educational process. Please read the information about academic integrity on this website:
http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php
Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary penalties.

**Psychology 304
Course Outline**

DATE	TOPIC	TEXTBOOK	EXAMS AND ASSIGNMENTS
1/18	Introduction: What is child psychology?	1	
1/20	Why study child development?		
1/25	Prenatal development	2	
1/27	The newborn		
2/1	Biology and behavior	3	
2/3	Cognitive development	4	
2/8	Infant cognition	5	
2/10			EXAM 1
2/15	Language development and symbol use	6	
2/17	Conceptual development	7	
2/22	Intelligence and academic achievement	8	INTERVIEW PROJECT DUE
2/24	Academic achievement		
3/1	Educating children		
3/3	Educating children		
3/8	Social development	9	
3/10			EXAM 2
3/15	Spring Break		
3/17	Spring Break		
3/22	Emotional development	10	
3/24	Attachment and development of self	11	
3/29	Gender development	15	
3/31	Television and media		
4/5	The family and parenting	12	MEDIA PROJECT DUE
4/7	Daycare		
4/12			EXAM 3
4/14	Divorce		
4/19	Peer relationships	13	
4/21	Moral development	14	
4/26	Child psychopathology		
4/28	Adolescence		
5/3	Conclusions	16	
5/5	Final class		EXAM 4
5/17	FINAL EXAM		FINAL EXAM (OPTIONAL)