**PSY 226: Psychology of Childhood**

**Fall 2011, Tues / Thurs 4:30 Pen 401**

**Professor: Sean Duffy, Ph.D.**

**Email:** [**seduffy@camden.rutgers.edu**](mailto:seduffy@camden.rutgers.edu) **(best way to contact me)**

**Office hours: Tues Thurs 3:30 and by appointment**

**Office: Armitage 343 / B22 (Lab)**

**Course goals:**

The goal of this course is to acquire an understanding of the developmental processes underlying physical, perceptual, cognitive, social, and emotional growth over the course of childhood. We will cover a broad range of theories and research on children, and evaluate evidence supporting specific claims about child development. The topics addressed by this course will help inform current debates concerning real-world issues, such as the value of cultural diversity in educational settings and public policy concerning state and federal funding for childhood initiatives.

**Course requirements:**

There are 5 requirements in this course.

1. Mindful presence and attendance in all classes
2. Readings from the text and assigned articles.
3. Pop quizzes = 25% (Total of 12, I will drop the lowest 2 grades, but understand, there are no make ups for any reason whatsoever. Quiz questions will address topics from the readings and previous lectures.)
4. 2 in-class exams
   1. Exam 1 = 25%
   2. Exam 2 = 25%

5. Observation Project = 25%

**1. Text:**

*The Developing Person through Childhood and Adolescence* by Kathleen Berger – Eighth edition (although you can use the 7th edition and be okay) Available at bookstore, online. It has a painting of two kids looking at a birds nest on the cover.

**2. Quizzes:**

I will be giving quizzes on randomly chosen days. The quizzes will be short (5 questions that I will grade out of 4 so that if you get 4 correct you get a 100%, if you get 5 right you get a 125%) and will address the topics in the assigned readings for that given day. I will be giving 12 quizzes. I will use only the grades on 10 of these for calculating your final quiz grade. This means that you can miss (or bomb) 2 quizzes. However, **I will not give make up quizzes for any reason,** so use your two dropped quizzes wisely (i.e., rare days when you have to miss class).

**3. Exams:**

In class exams will be multiple choice. Questions will be drawn from the text and lectures. In the event of an absolute emergency that prevents you from taking the exam you must contact me IMMEDIATELY, explaining your situation, providing evidence for your excuse, (e.g., doctor’s note; the broken side mirror from your car accident) within 24 hours of the scheduled exam.

**4. Observation project**

Described at the bottom of the syllabus

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## Grading

90+ A

85-90 B+

80-85 B

75-10 C+

70-75 C

60-70 D

Below 60 F

## Classroom behavior

## The use of ALL portable electronic devices (cell phones, text messaging, pagers, laptops, blackberries) is strictly prohibited unless you have a disability that requires you to use this technology, which requires a note from the disability coordinator.

## You may not leave class to take a phone call, other than in case of an emergency. If I am not important enough to take a call during class, neither are you.

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## Use the bathroom before you come to class…it is distracting to your fellow classmates to have people wandering in and out just because you need to pee. PB4Ugo.

## If you are more than 5 minutes late, out of respect for your fellow students and me, do not come to class. I reserve the right to deny students entry to class 5 minutes after the class starts. If I can make it to class on time, so can you. I reserve the right to call you out for talking in class or engaging in foolish, inappropriate, and ridiculous behavior. I get distracted very easily by mindless chatter, and talk at your own (and your grade’s) risk.

If you happen to miss a single class, please do not email me explaining the reason for your absence. I don’t care. My class should be the most important thing in your life right now, because the grade you receive gets figured into your GPA, and your GPA will later determine whether you get into law school, get that awesome job, or accomplish whatever it is you plan to do with your life. So make it your priority. This class is your job - treat it like a job. You are paying a ton of money for this education – you might as well take advantage of it.

## Sakai

I use Sakai for distributing materials, grading, and general announcements.

## Use your Rutgers Email

When I email the class, I use the list that the Registrar gives me. I can not change this list, and it is your responsibility to either use your Rutgers email account or set up your Rutgers account so that you receive emails in your personal account. If you use some other account, such as [foolish-rutgers-student@yahoo.com](mailto:foolish-rutgers-student@yahoo.com), you may not receive my emails, and you will definitely not receive pity from me after you drive through a snowstorm to get to class on a day that the school cancels classes.

**Academic Honesty:**

You are expected to read and understand rules regarding academic misconduct. Ignorance of these rules will not be accepted as an excuse for academic misconduct. **If you are found cheating on exams or plagiarizing on your paper, you will receive a failing grade for the paper and I will report you to the Office of Academic Affairs.** I offer no exceptions to this rule, ESPECIALLY ignorance of what plagiarism is. Rutgers maintains a website with specific guidelines concerning academic honesty. You are expected to read and understand all of these rules:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>

Ask any of the students who have gotten Fs from me for plagiarizing how much fun it is to get caught. I’ve been a professor longer than you’ve been an adult, so I can spot plagiarism like a hawk can spot a mouse in a field. Do not test me on this. I will make your life absolutely miserable.

**Class cancellations:**

In the event of a natural disaster (e.g., snow storm, earthquake, tsunami) class may be cancelled. In the case of bad weather, check your email to be sure that I have not cancelled class. (See above section on using your Rutgers email)

**Incompletes / Pass – No-credit:**

Granted ONLY under unusual situations. Poor performance in the course is not a valid reason for requesting an incomplete. Those signed up for pass/no-credit, a final grade of a C or better is required to pass.

**Disability accommodations:**

For disability accommodations, please call the Disability Services Coordinator.  Students who require special accommodations for the course or its assignments or exams (as indicated by a formal letter/statement from the Disability Services Coordinator) should also contact the instructor as early as possible.

**Missed class:**

Get to know someone in this class. Not only might you make a new friend, you will have someone to borrow notes from in the rare and unusual circumstance in which you might have to miss lecture. Don’t bother asking me for lecture notes or slides.

**Course Schedule:**

The course schedule provided here is tentative. I may make adjustments to the schedule in class, a good reason to come to class so that you don’t miss the changes.

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| WEEK | TOPIC | READING |
| WEEK 1: | Thurs, 9/1: Course Intro / Overview |  |
| WEEK 2: | Tues, 9/6 Defining Development  Thurs, 9/8: NO CLASS – TUES CLASS MEET | Chapter 1 / Duffy |
| WEEK 3: | Tues, 9/13: Theories of Development  Thurs, 9/15: Continued discussion | Chapter 2 / Wertsch / Flavel / Kinzer |
| WEEK 4: | Tues, 9/20: Heredity & Environment  Thurs, 9/22: Continued discussion | Chapter 3 / Gottlieb / Dipietro |
| WEEK 5: | Tues, 9/27: Prenatal and the “miracle” of birth  Thurs, 9/29: Babies film | Chapter 4 / Hrdy |
| WEEK 6: | Tues, 10/4: First 2 years: Biosocial  Thurs, 10/6: Continued discussion | Chapter 5 / Erikson |
| WEEK 7: | Tues, 10/11: First 2 years: Cognitive  Thurs, 10/13: Continued discussion | Chapter 6 / Piaget |
| WEEK 8: | Tues, 10/18: First 2 years: Psychosocial  Thurs, 10/20: Continued discussion | Chapter 7 / Marshal |
| WEEK 9: | Tues, 10/25: Exam review  Thurs, 10/27: Exam 1 (Ch. 1 – 7) |  |
| WEEK 10: | Tues, 11/1: Early childhood: BioSocial  Thurs, 11/3: Early childhood: Cognitive | Chapter 8  Chapter 9 |
| WEEK 11: | Tues, 11/8: Early childhood: Social  Thurs, 11/10: Continued discussion | Chapter 10 / Levitt |
| WEEK 12: | Tues, 11/15: Middle Childhood: Biosocial  Thurs, 11/17: Middle Childhood: Cognitive | Chapter 11  Chapter 12 |
| WEEK 13: | Tues, 11/22: Middle Childhood: Social  Thurs, 12/24: NO CLASS | Chapter 13 / Patterson |
| WEEK 14: | Tues, 11/29: Adolescence: Biosocial  Thurs, 12/1: Adolescence: Cognitive | Chapter 14  Chapter 15 |
| WEEK 15: | Tues, 12/6: Adolescence: Social  Thurs, 12/8: Exam Review | Chapter 16 / Hening  **Observation Project Due on 12/6** |
| WEEK 16: | Tues, 12/13: Exam 2 (Ch. 8 – 16) |  |

Observation project

*For this project, I would like you to observe children and write a 5-7 page summary and discussion of your observations and how they relate to topics addressed in the course or text. Please describe the interaction or task, and relate it to material discussed in the text. Please supplement the text and lectures with at least 3 peer-revieThurs journal articles that address the topic you have chosen. We will go over in class how to find such resources at the Rutgers Camden library system.*

We all know children are fun to observe and interact with (most of the time). So the purpose of this project is for you to get some experience interacting with or observing children, but through the lens of a psychological investigation.

If you have a child or know a child, it may be fun to run them through one of the studies reported in the text (i.e., Piaget’s conservation task, still face task, Kohlberg’s moral dilemma test) and report how the child responds. If you do not have access to children directly, it may be possible for you to complete an observational study by watching children at a mall or playground (and relating the observations to the studies discussed in the text on gender differences in playing styles, or psychoanalytic theory about the affective relationship between children and their parents).

**Important! Please do not interact directly or speak with children you do not know personally or who are not related to you. If the child is not yours, please obtain permission to interact with the child from the child’s parent, as well as obtaining assent from the child by asking if he or she would mind engaging in your task. And do NOTHING that could cause psychological or physical harm, like showing the child graphic images or having the child climb a ladder. If you are observing children in public, please do so in a manner that isn’t upsetting to children or parents (i.e., no following children; no staring at children for long periods in a way that could be interpreted as stalking).**