

**PSY 250 Life-Span Development**  
**Fall 2009**

Professor Jane Tyler Ward, PhD  
Curtis Hall 121

Office Hours: M - F 9:00 – 10:00, T-Th 11:00 – 12:00, other times by appointment

Telephone extension: x-3632

e-mail address: [Jane@cedarcrest.edu](mailto:Jane@cedarcrest.edu)

Text: Belsky, J. (2007) *Experiencing the lifespan*. New York: Worth Publishers.

Course Description: This course explores human development from conception through the later years and death. Course content will cover normal physical, cognitive and psychosocial development during each stage of life.

Prerequisite: PSY 100

The **general goals and objectives** of this course are to help the student:

- Learn and gain mastery over the basic facts and research findings, terminology, principles, and theories important in the various areas of life-span developmental psychology.
- Develop understanding, skills, and techniques for analyzing human behavior using a scientific approach.
- Gain a basic understanding of the interaction between genetic and environmental influences on human development.
- Gain a basic understanding of physical, cognitive and social development across the life-span development.
- Gain a basic understanding of family, play, work, and death and dying as they apply to life-span development, and find ways to apply psychological findings to everyday life.

**Specific course outcomes and measures:**

The student will:

1. demonstrate learning and evaluation of theories and research in life-span development  
measure: students will take six multiple-choice exams covering theories and research in life-span development.
2. demonstrate an ability to apply developmental principles to case studies of individuals at different stages of development  
measure: students will be given four case examples and asked the following questions: How old is the individual; what stage of cognitive development; what stage of psychosocial development; what is the primary developmental challenge this person faces.

## Grading policy:

Each test is worth 100 points. Your percentage score is converted into a point score. Your final course grade will be based on averaging the total points earned from the four exams. The final grade scale is:

A	93.0 – 100 points
A minus	90.0 – 92.9
B plus	86.7 – 89.9
B	83.4 – 86.6
B minus	80.0 – 83.3
C plus	76.7 – 79.9
C	73.0 – 76.6
C minus	70.0 – 72.9
D plus	67.0 – 69.9
D	66.9 – 60.0
F	below 60%

## Examination and Extra Credit Policies:

1. You will be given a test booklet and a scantron form for each test. You may write on the test booklet, but you must bring a #2 pencil to use on the scantron form. The Scantron grading machine is sensitive to erasures and if you do not erase completely, the machine will sometimes count the wrong answer. Erasures are the responsibility of the student. Zero credit will be given for mistaken erasures.
2. Makeup exams: There are no opportunities to make up an individual exam. I will only use the 5 highest exam grades to calculate your final grade. It is to your advantage to take all of the exams.
3. Extra credit: There will be opportunities during the semester for extra credit projects. All extra credit must be done and handed in by 12/03/07.

**Psychology Department Attendance Policy:** The Psychology Department is committed to the principle that regular and punctual class attendance is essential to the students' optimum learning and successful academic achievement. Regular class attendance is a student obligation, and students are responsible for all work, tests and written assignments. Therefore, students are expected to be present for all class sessions. The Psychology Department's attendance policy recognizes that there will be times when attendance at class is not possible. You may think of the policy as being similar to the type used in the corporate world where each employee is given a certain number of "personal/sick days." Based on the number of regularly scheduled class meetings, you will be allowed a certain number of absences (see below) with no consequences, no questions asked. In other words, there is no distinction between excused and unexcused absences. You are of course responsible for anything covered during those missed classes, and for submitting assignments on time, regardless of whether or not you attend. Beyond the allowable number of absences, there are consequences that will adversely impact your grade, much as missing too many days of work can adversely impact your employment status. Above all else, you should carefully consider each decision to not attend class, as once your allotted absences have been used, they are gone. *It is important that students arrive for class on time. Late arrivals are very distracting, not only to the instructor, but also to fellow students. Repeated late arrivals are not acceptable and will be addressed on an individual basis.* It is each

student's responsibility to understand this policy and to keep track of absences throughout the semester.

**Application to this Class:** Formal attendance will be taken during all class sessions. This class meets three times per week (42 class meetings). You may miss 4 classes without penalty. If you miss 5-6 classes, your final grade (cumulative percentage of points) will be lowered by 5%. That means that if you have earned 84% of the available points in the class, which is a B grade, you would be lowered to 79%, which is a C+. Likewise, if you have earned 77% of the points available, the penalty would take you down to 72%, which is a C-. As a reminder, a C grade (73%) is required in all Psychology courses. If you miss 7-8 classes, you will be docked an additional 5% points off of your final grade (for a total of 10%). If you miss 9 classes, you will receive a failing grade for the course. If you miss nine classes, you have missed approximately 25% of the class meetings.

**Academic Policies:** We will all adhere to the College Honor Philosophy. Specifically, you are to do your own work on exams. You will sign your name to the honor pledge on all exams, after you have completed the exam. Please see the College Honor Philosophy as it relates to academic settings for specific information about reporting.

The College Classroom Protocol states that each student has the right to a positive learning environment free of extraneous interruptions and distractions and inconsiderate or uncivil behavior. Some examples of inconsiderate behavior include talking when the professor or other students are talking, leaving class early, coming into class late, and disrespectful behavior to another student in the class. Students who are consistently inconsiderate will be warned, and may have grade consequences for their behavior.

A student with a documented disability on file with the Academic Advising Center should discuss any special accommodations with me within the first two weeks of class. I am happy to make reasonable accommodations, or assist the Advising Center in making the best possible accommodations.

### **The Study of Lifespan Development**

Developmental psychology is a relatively new area of study. Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, children were treated as if they were miniature adults. With the underpinnings of Darwinism theories relating infancy and childhood as a period of helplessness and dependency on parents, and the advent of G. Stanley Hall's theories in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (he coined the terms "adolescence" in 1904, and "senescence" in 1922), humans began to be seen as developing over a number of years. At first, developmental psychology was primarily a descriptive, normative discipline. For example, Arnold Gesell's work (books spanned 1929-1954) provided the field with useful information about the expected sequence for, and normative time of, the emergence of numerous physical and mental developments in infants and children. Later, theories were put forth by psychologists such as Jean Piaget and Erik Erikson to explain, not just describe, developmental progressions. These theories generated hypotheses that could be researched and modified, and thus the area of developmental psychology became an important sub-discipline in psychology. In the 1970s, a "lifespan" perspective of development emphasized a concern for an active organism changing across life (as a consequence of having to confront new "developmental tasks".) From this perspective, the potential for developmental change is seen to be present across all of life.

## Course Outline for PSY 250

Date and Subject	Assigned Reading	
8/24-8/28	Introduction to course; the people and the field Theories Nature and Nurture Research Methods	Ch. 1
8/31-9/04	Prenatal Development: germinal, embryonic, fetal stages Teratogens & genetic counseling Infertility Birth	Ch. 2
9/7-9/11	9/7 LABOR DAY – NO CLASS 9/9 TEST #1 (Ch. 1, 2) 9/11 Start Chapter 3	Start Ch. 3
9/14-9/18	Infancy: brain growth & development Transient exuberance & pruning Communication Sensory-motor development Language development  9/18 Start Ch. 4	Ch. 3      Start Ch. 4
9/21-9/25	Attachment and attachment styles Autonomy vs. shame & doubt Temperament styles 9/25 TEST #2 (Ch. 3, 4)	Ch. 4
9/28-10/2	Piaget: Preoperational and Concrete Operational Development Vygotsky: Zone of Proximal Development and Scaffolding Language development	Ch. 5
10/5-10/9	Self-understanding, self-awareness, self-esteem Prosocial behavior & altruism Aggression & bullying Relationships: friendship & play	Ch. 6

10/12-10/16	10/12 FALL BREAK – NO CLASS Discipline & child abuse Effects of divorce on children Multiple intelligences	Ch. 7
10/19-10/23	10/19 TEST #3 (Ch. 5, 6, 7) Begin chapter 8  10/23 PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION NO CLASS	Start Ch. 8
10/26-10/30	Adolescence: puberty & hormones Body image issues, eating disorders Sexuality  Formal operations, moral development Emerging adulthood (Italy, Sweden, U.S.)	Ch. 8  Start Ch. 9
11/2-11/6	Identity vs. Role Confusion  College & career Finding love & a mate	Ch. 9  Ch. 10
11/9-11/13	Tripartite theory of love Adult attachment styles  11/11 TEST #4 (CH. 8, 9, 10) Begin Ch. 11	Chapter 10  Start Ch. 11
11/16-11/20	Couple communication & happiness Parenthood Divorce Career  Midlife: The Big Five Generativity vs. stagnation Selective optimization Adult relationships	Ch. 11  Ch. 12
11/23-11/27	11/23 TEST #5 (Ch. 11, 12)  11/25-11/27 THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS	

11/20-12/4	<p>Life expectancy  Young old and old old  IPP and memory in late adulthood  Emotional development  Retirement, widowhood, grief &amp; mourning</p> <p>Successful aging  Activities of Daily Living issues</p>	<p>Ch. 13</p> <p>Ch. 14</p>
12/7-12/8	<p>(Tuesday follows Friday schedule)</p> <p>12/8 TEST #6 (Ch. 13, 14)</p>	Finish Ch. 14