

PSY 250 Life-Span Development Spring 2010

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

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

Note: The website is very good and will help to organize your studying.

The required textbook for this course is Janet Belsky's *Experiencing the Lifespan*, First Edition. There is a very helpful free Web site to accompany the book at www.worthpublishers.com/belsky. This site (from the publisher) has activities and simulations for the more challenging concepts, as well as self-quizzing (two for every chapter) to help you prepare for exams.

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 have at least 10 application questions on each of six exams.

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 five 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. Although you will take 6 exams, 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 4/30/10

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 the work, tests and written assignments. Therefore, students are expected to be present for all class sessions.

Attendance Policy: Formal attendance will be taken during all class sessions, and this course will adhere to the Psychology Department Attendance Policy. This class meets three times a week. You may miss 4 classes without penalty. If you miss 5-6 classes, your grade will be lowered by one full letter grade. If you miss 7-8 classes, your grade will be lowered by two full letter grades. If you miss 9 classes, you will receive a failing grade for the course. There are no exceptions.

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 19th century children were treated as if they were miniature adults. With the underpinnings of Darwinian 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 20th 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 developed 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 “life-span” 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

WEEK	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
1/20-1/22	Part I: FOUNDATIONS Introduction to course: the people and the field Theories Nature and Nurture Research Methods	Ch. 1
1/25-1/29	Prenatal Development: germinal, embryonic, fetal stages Teratogens & genetic counseling Infertility Birth	Ch. 2
2/01	TEST #1 (Ch. 1 & 2)	

2/03-2/05	PART II: INFANCY	
	Brain growth & development: transient exuberance and pruning Communication Infant states & self-soothing Piaget: Sensory motor development Language Development	Ch. 3
2/08-2/12	Ainsworth: attachment & attachment styles Erikson: autonomy vs. shame & doubt Temperament styles	Finish Ch. 3 Ch. 4
2/15	TEST #2 (Ch. 3 & 4)	
	PART III: CHILDHOOD	
2/17-2/19	Piaget: preoperational development Concrete operations Vygotsky: Zone of Proximal Development; scaffolding Language development	Ch. 5
2/22-2/26	Self-understanding, self-awareness, self-esteem Prosocial behavior & altruism Aggression & bullying Relationships: friendship & play	Finish Ch. 5 Ch. 6
3/01-3/05	Parenting styles Discipline & child abuse Effects of divorce on children Measuring intelligence (IQ); multiple intelligences	Ch. 7
3/08-3/12	SPRING BREAK	
3/15	TEST #3 (Ch. 5,6,7)	

3/17-3/19	<p style="text-align: center;">PART IV: ADOLESCENCE AND EMERGING ADULTHOOD</p> <p>Adolescence: puberty & Hormones Body image issues, eating disorders Sexuality</p>	Ch. 8
3/22-3/26	<p>Piaget: formal operations Kohlberg: moral development Emerging adulthood (Italy, Sweden, USA) Erikson: Identity vs. role confusion; intimacy vs. isolation</p>	Finish Ch. 8 Ch. 9
3/29-3/31	<p>College & career Finding love & a mate Sternberg: tripartite theory of love Adult attachment styles</p>	Finish Ch. 9 Ch. 10
4/02	BREAK	
4/06-4/07	<p style="text-align: center;">4/06 TUESDAY IS A MONDAY</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PART V: EARLY & MIDDLE ADULTHOOD</p> <p>Couple communication & happiness Divorce Parenthood Careers</p>	Ch. 11
4/09	TEST #4 (Ch. 8, 9, 10)	
4/12-4/16	<p>Midlife: The Big Five Erikson: generativity vs. stagnation Selective optimization Relationships: adult children, friends, grandchildren Menopause</p>	Ch. 11 & 12

4/19	TEST #5: (Ch. 11 & 12)	
4/21-4/23	<p style="text-align: center;">PART VI: LATER LIFE</p> <p>Life expectancy Young old and old old Memory (IPP) Emotional development Transitions: retirement, widowhood, grief & mourning</p>	Ch. 13
4/26-4/30	<p>Successful aging Activities of daily Living (ADL) issues</p>	Ch. 14
5/03	<p>Healthy Aging Dementia & Alzheimer's Disease</p>	Ch. 14
5/05	TEST #6 (Ch. 13, 14)	