

**Spring 2009**  
**PSY 331**  
**Psychology of Infant and Child Development**  
**Tuesday/Thursday      12:30-1:45      AL-105**

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**Prerequisites:** PSY 101, PSY 230

**Required Texts:**

Cole, M. and Cole S.R. (2005). The Development of Children, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, New York: W.H. Freeman.

Crain, C. (2007). Twilight of the books: What will life be like if people stop reading? The New Yorker, December 24, 2007.

**Recommended Texts:**

Stolarz-Fantino, S. (2005). Study Guide for The Development of Children, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, New York: W.H. Freeman.

A dictionary. College is a good place to build your vocabulary. If there is a word that you don't understand, look it up! It may be critical to the concept that you are studying. Here are some options:

Merriam-Webster's (2003). Collegiate Dictionary, 11th Edition.

Online sources:

[www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)

Web of Online Dictionaries at

<http://angli02.kgw.tu-berlin.de/call/webofdic/diction3.html>

**Purpose and Organization of the Course:** This course provides a critical analysis and overview of developmental findings with particular emphasis on the period from infancy through childhood. Dominant theories of development are introduced and the importance of research in assessing these theories and in addressing contemporary topics in child development will be discussed.

The course is organized chronologically beginning with fetal development and concluding with biological and social development in middle childhood. The course has three components: text, lecture, and a group project. The text covers a wide range of changes during each major developmental period. The lectures elaborate on selected material in the text and introduce new material. The group project encourages you to explore a single topic in depth.

**Objectives:** Apply basic concepts from PSY 101 and PSY 230 to critically evaluate theories, methods, and findings in Infant and Child Development. You are expected to use these concepts to reason scientifically about development.

**Objective 1.** Discover how the *process* of development helps us to understand many phenomena (e.g., language, emotion, problem-solving.)

**Objective 2.** Know the major *theories* of child development, their historical influences, and how they affect the interpretation of experimental findings.

**Objective 3.** Develop critical thinking skills. Be able to evaluate the quality of the evidence for findings in developmental research.

### **To Succeed in this Course:**

1. Attend all scheduled classes. **Notes are not available online.**
2. Complete assigned readings. Material from both the text and lecture will appear on the exams. **Reading is required.**
3. Meet with my teaching assistant to fine tune your study skills.
4. Attend all exams as scheduled. **Make-up exams are not available.**
5. Spend approximately 6 hours per week (2 hours for each hour of class) studying for this class. You should study each section as it is being covered in class.
  - Read the assigned text
  - Outline the assigned text
  - Review and correct your lecture notes
  - Integrate your note from lecture with your outline of the text
  - Test your knowledge using questions at the end of the chapter or in the recommended study guide
  - Rather than memorizing the material, think about the different facts that you are learning and integrate them so that you can imagine the complex development of a human child in your mind and explain it
  - Tell yourself stories about the material
  - Draw pictures to illustrate to yourself how facts are related
6. Submit only your own, original, work. Any misrepresentation of someone else's work as your own is grounds for failure in the course and may result in referral for judicial review.

## **Classroom Conduct:**

Please raise your hand and wait to be acknowledged. If a concept is unclear to you it is probably unclear to others. Do not otherwise talk during class as this is distracting.

Make questions brief and to the point. Extensive commentary is distracting. (My answer might be on your exam.)

Arrive in class on time, Turn off your cell phone, Do not pack your belongings until I indicate that class has ended.

If you have a schedule conflict with this class, please resolve it before the second meeting. Do not disrupt class by arriving late or leaving early.

## **Definition of Grades for Undergraduate Students:**

**A** outstanding achievement; available only for the highest accomplishment

**B** praiseworthy performance; definitely above average

**C** average; satisfactory performance; the most common undergraduate grade

**D** minimally passing; less than the typical undergraduate achievement

**F** failing”

“Plus/minus grading is not mandatory but is utilized at the discretion of the individual instructor.” Source: SDSU General Catalog 2007-2008, p. 437.

Grades are awarded using the universal qualitative standard above.

Quantitatively, a grade of A corresponds to earning 90% of the possible points in the course. B corresponds to 80%, C to 70%, D to 60% and F to less than 60% of the possible points in the course. Plus/minus grading is not available.

**Final Grade:** There are three, non-cumulative, exams and one group project that serves as an extra credit opportunity. These assignments, and their relative contribution to your final grade, are discussed below.

**Exams:** Each exam will cover the approximately one-third of the material presented in the text and lectures. All exams are multiple-choice format. **You must attend all scheduled exams.** Should you miss an exam, you will receive an F for that exam. There is no final. Each exam is worth 80 points and constitutes 33.3% of your grade in the course. Total possible points in the course are 240.

**Group Project:** You will be assigned to small groups at the beginning of the semester. Your group will meet three times during scheduled classes and you will develop a series of essays on trends in reading in the United States and the consequences of these trends. Your essays will be based upon your discussion of the assigned critical essay by Caleb Crain. The essays will address the following questions:

Essay 1: What is the general trend of literary reading in the United States? How is this change related to reading ability?

- How did the evidence from the assigned reading contribute to your discussion?
- What was the consensus of your group on these questions?
- What differences in opinion emerged?
- What is your position on the questions?

Essay 2: What are the implications of societal changes in reading for development during the school years? What are the implications for college students and society?

- How did the evidence from the assigned reading contribute to your discussion?
- What was the consensus of your group on these questions?
- What differences in opinion emerged?
- What is your position on the questions?

Essay 3: Given what you know about reading and development, do you think that any changes should be implemented in schools/society? If so, what changes would you recommend? If not, why not?

- How did the evidence from the assigned reading contribute to your discussion?
- What was the consensus of your group on these questions?
- What differences in opinion emerged?
- What is your position on the questions?

**You must participate in the group discussions in order to receive credit. You must submit two copies of your essay no later than the class meeting following the assigned discussion. A digital copy of your essay must be submitted in the digital dropbox on Blackboard and a paper copy must be submitted in class.** Each essay should be 2 pages in length, double-spaced, using 12 point font. Each essay is worth a maximum of 5 points of extra credit toward your final points in the course. Essays that do not meet these guidelines will not receive credit.

**Study Guides:** I will not make study guides available. A key component of college success is organizing your thoughts and developing an effective strategy for studying. Providing this organization for you deprives you of developing your own best strategy for thinking about the material. However, if you feel you need a study guide please see the one listed under Recommended Texts at the beginning of this syllabus.

## Schedule

- Jan 22-29      **Introduction to Child Development**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 1 all
- Feb 3**            **First Group Meeting**  
Required Reading: Crain (2007).
- Feb 5**            **First Essay Due**
- Feb 5-10        **From the Beginning: Genes and Environment**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005). Chapter 2 all
- Feb 12-17      **Prenatal Development and Early Capacities**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 3 pp. 71-93
- Feb 19-24      **Processes of Change in Infancy**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 4 pp.113-129
- Feb 26**         **EXAM #1**
- Mar 3**            **Second Group Meeting**  
Required Reading: Crain (2007).
- Mar 5**            **Second Essay Due**
- Mar 5-10        **Transition into Toddlerhood**  
**The First Year**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 5
- Mar 12-17      **End of Infancy**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 6
- Mar 19-24      **Language and Representation**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 8
- Mar 26**         **EXAM #2**
- Mar 30–April 3** **Spring Break**
- April 7**         **Final Group Meeting**  
Required Reading: Crain (2007).
- April 9**         **Final Essay Due**

- April 9-14      **Early Childhood Cognition**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 9
- April 16-21    **Early Childhood Social Development**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 10
- April 23-28    **Middle Childhood**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 12
- April 30**      **Review for Third Exam**
- May 7**        **EXAM #3**