

**Spring 2008  
PSY 331  
Psychology of Infant and Child Development**

**Professor:** Dr. Margaret Friend  
**Office:** 6505 Alvarado Rd., Suite 101, Rm. 19  
**Phone:** 594-0273  
**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Prerequisites:** PSY 101, PSY 230

**Contacting me:** Please contact me at the number above to make an appointment. I will respond to phone messages within 1-2 days unless I am out of town.

**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:** The purpose of this course is to provide an overview of the field of developmental psychology 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 material in the text and introduce new material. The group project encourages you to explore a single topic in depth.

**Objectives:** Apply the basic concepts from PSY 101 and PSY 230 to critically evaluate theories, methods, and findings in Infant and Child Development. In this class you are expected to use these skills to reason scientifically about the process of 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.

### **Scholarship:**

1. Attend all scheduled classes
2. Complete assigned readings in **advance** of the class for which they are assigned
3. Meet with me to fine tune your study skills.
4. Attend all exams as scheduled. Make-up exams are not available.
5. If you miss a class, obtain notes from a studious (and generous) classmate. I do not make my notes available and material from all assignments (including lecture) appears on your exams.
6. Submit only your own, original, work. Any misrepresentation of someone else's work as your own is grounds for failure and may result in judicial review.

### **Classroom Conduct:**

Please raise your hand and wait to be acknowledged. Chances are that if a concept is unclear to you it is unclear to other students as well. Do not talk during class unless you are invited to do so.

When you are called on, make your question brief and to the point. Extensive commentary distracts the class from the lecture and interruptions keep everyone from hearing my answer. (It 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 the missed 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 for college education. 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 consequences of societal changes in reading activities for students pursuing a college education? What are the consequences for 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: How does the current trend in reading affect you personally? Would you like to change this trend and, if so, why? What do you think should be done about it?

- 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 for your essay. Your essay must be submitted at the class meeting following the assigned discussion.** 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 to succeeding in college is organizing your thoughts about new material 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.

## Syllabus

Jan. 22- 31	<b>Introduction to Child Development</b> Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 1
Feb. 5	<b>First Group Meeting Day</b> Required Reading: Crain (2007).
Feb. 7-12	<b>From the Beginning: Genes and Environment</b> Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005). Chapter 2 <b>First Essay Due</b>
Feb. 14-19	<b>Prenatal Development and Early Capacities</b> Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 3

- Feb. 21-26      **Processes of Change in Infancy**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 4
- Feb. 28            **EXAM #1**
- Mar. 4             **Second Group Meeting Day**  
Required Reading: Crain (2007).
- Mar. 6-11         **Transition into Toddlerhood**  
**The First Year**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 5  
**Second Essay Due**
- Mar. 13-18       **End of Infancy**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 6
- Mar. 20-25       **Language and Representation**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 8
- Mar. 27            **EXAM #2**  
International Conference on Infant Studies  
(Mar. 26-30)
- Mar. 31-Apr. 4   **Spring Break**
- Apr. 8-22         **Early Childhood Cognition**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 9
- Apr. 24            **Early Childhood Social Development**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 10
- Apr. 29-May 1   **Middle Childhood**  
Required Reading: Cole & Cole (2005) Chapter 12
- May 6             **Final Group Meeting Day**  
Required Reading: Crain (2007).
- May 8             **EXAM #3**  
**Final Essay Due**