

# Syllabus for PSY K201 Life Span Development Spring 2012

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## Course Description

This upper level course provides an overview of the physical, cognitive, social and emotional development of humans from birth through late adulthood and death. There is an emphasis on distinct periods such as development of the fetus, infancy, childhood, adolescence, and the phases of adulthood.

## Learning Objectives

The course investigates the factors which contribute to an integrated, whole person as well as the problems faced by individuals moving toward maturity and through adulthood. We explore the manner in which classic theories and contemporary research inform our knowledge of human development. You may use personal experience to evaluate theories. You will discover the manner in which physical, cognitive and social factors *interact* to affect growth. We take a research-based approach to all aspects of development; examine societal influences and cross-cultural perspectives. You may find this course relevant to your personal growth and helpful in understanding your family, friends and those with whom you work. The course emphasizes scientific reasoning skills, written communication, questioning, and collaborative learning. Given the breadth of our subject matter, tenacity and pacing yourself are *necessary*.

*How will learning occur?* The course will entail a combination of: discussion threads, web-based video, field research activities, PowerPoint slides, writing assignments, chapter notes, and group work. Ask questions! Keep abreast of global, national and local news as such events are often discussed in light of persons' developmental stage. Learning is not a spectator sport. Integrating course information into your work life, campus life, and daily personal life is the goal.

## Required Reading

Papalia D., Olds S. & Feldman R. (2009). Human Development 11th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.

A dictionary is needed to support your reading and writing assignments.

Use the textbook's companion web site, the address is <http://www.mhhe.com/papaliahd11e>

## The Reading Assignments

Each chapter contains a plethora of theoretical material and research data. Plan and manage your time accordingly. The weekly reading assignments will follow the schedule below. You are expected to complete the reading *and critically analyze it*. This will prepare you for discussion threads, group work, homework questions, and debates. Each week you are encouraged to practice asking and answering questions.

## Methods of Evaluation / Grading

- 200 points Discussion board participation and group work
- 100 points Exam #1
- 150 points Exam #2
- 150 points Exam #3
- 150 points Exam #4
- 250 points Research Project Paper
- 1000 point scale

There are primarily three key pieces to your grade; they are discussion board activities, tests and a research project (Sim, 2009).

You have the opportunity to complete four on-line **examinations** which are scheduled in advance and must be completed on *specified* dates. Customarily, a 36-hour window is given for tests. Examinations will reflect material from the assigned readings (whether discussed or not), video assignments, PowerPoint slides, class notes, homework assignments, and discussion boards. **Do not wait for the exam date** to assess your knowledge; practice tests are found at: <http://www.mhhe.com/papaliahd11e> . Make-up exams will be given only to students who have contacted the instructor in advance of the exam, and have a substantial reason for missing the test. If a student misses an exam for an unacceptable reason, a zero will be averaged into the student's grade for the missed exam.

You have the opportunity to participate in weekly **discussion board assignments**. The grading rubric for discussion board assignments is found below under the "Participation" section.

The **research project** write up is designed to meet the College's expectations for critical thinking, systematic inquiry, information literacy and quality writing. Detailed information about this writing requirement will be presented in a few weeks. In the spirit of fairness and clear expectations, a grading rubric for the paper will be disseminated.

## Required Materials

You will need a library card to access materials from the Three Rivers Community College library. Go to [http://www.trcc.commnet.edu/Div\\_IT/Library/Forms/Library\\_card\\_form.html](http://www.trcc.commnet.edu/Div_IT/Library/Forms/Library_card_form.html) to *remotely* access the form for a library card.

You may use a USB flash drive (a.k.a. memory stick or thumb drive) or Read/Writable CD-Rom for storing files outside Blackboard Vista. Back-up your work once a week!

**Save Your Work** — It is important to save your assignments on a USB flash drive or home hard drive. This helps you see your progress, verify the grades you receive, and prove your work is your own. You will have less to redo if any computer problem occurs (Barfield, 2006).

## Participation

**Overview:** Discussion is a very important component of this course (equivalent to *more than* one exam). Sharing one's own ideas and responding to others' reactions improves thinking and deepens understanding (The Johnson Foundation, 1987). Discussions are not optional. Your ability to communicate your learning to other participants is an important measure of how well you understand course concepts and information (Sim, 2009).

**Discussion board:** Discussion assignments are thought-provoking exercises that can extend the learning of everyone when done well (Barfield, 2006). You will have discussion board assignments almost every week. Weekly discussions will have deadline dates. You are expected to post your own answer and reply to at least two classmates' postings. Replying with a question is a good idea. Responses to postings should add to the substance of the posting, request clarification, provide a different perspective or challenge the assertions. Your familiarity with pertinent units of the texts and the online lesson material will give you higher quality posts for maximum points (Barfield, 2006). In studying Life Span Development, ***disagreements are guaranteed*** to arise! Address the content of the posting, not the person. Remember the purpose of discussions is to stimulate academic debate and foster intellectual communication. Everyone appreciates supportive comments.

**Grading - Weekly Discussion Boards:** All students have one "grace period" to use at their discretion with any one of the weekly discussion board assignments. The grace period allows you to skip the required discussion(s) for a specified week chosen by you. **If you wish to invoke your grace period**, please note it in the subject line of the discussion thread "grace period" and state that you will not participate in the weekly discussion (Brammer, 2009).

Each week your discussion board posts and your replies to classmates' posts will be evaluated according to the rubric below. Contact me immediately if you have questions about the rubric.

Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Does not meet requirements
Student followed the directions for the discussion board post. All required posts are made on time. The word minimum is met or exceeded. The required reply to classmates' posts is met. Effort is made by learner to follow through conversations or questions. Credible outside sources or scientific research evidence is utilized to support points -- as needed.	All required posts are made. Some may not be on time or some may not meet the word minimum. Discussions with other students are limited or sometimes missing when required. If applicable, an attempt to support points with research evidence is lacking.	Student did not follow the directions for the discussion board post. Required posts are not made and/or majority of posts are not on time. Many reply posts are missing or are too brief to create an opportunity for the students to exchange meaningful information.

The grading rubric is modified from Professor Sim's (2009) scale.

**Course Conduct and Etiquette:** At Three Rivers Community College, we are committed to open, frank and insightful dialogue. Diversity has many manifestations, including diversity of thought and values. We encourage all learners to be respectful of that diversity and to refrain from inappropriate commentary. Respect for your fellow students' ideas is critical to everyone getting the maximum benefit from this online course. Flaming, profanity or demeaning comments will not be tolerated. Such comments will be deleted by the instructor and are grounds for removal from the course. (Barfield, 2006)

**Homework:** For homework questions, a minimum of one paragraph is expected. Customarily, one to three paragraphs for each question suffice. The paragraphs should reflect information in the text and be based on scientific evidence as well as recent research data (**not** opinions, not your personal experience and feelings). **Approach your homework as a psychological scientist.** To **avoid plagiarism**, you *must* reference sources from which your information is derived.

**Withdrawal:** If you choose to withdraw from the course, please notify the instructor via telephone or a message. Make sure you contact the Registration Office to complete the official procedures.

## Learning Needs

If you have difficulty with the course material, please send me a Message, stop by my office, or request a telephone appointment. I am happy to clarify any questions you may have.

If you have special needs (such as a learning disability, physical condition, etc.) and require accommodations to enhance your participation in the class, please contact the Learning Specialist, Christopher Scarborough, or speak with me during the *first week* of class. In order to provide you with accommodations, I must receive documentation pertaining to your needs. Effort will be made to support everyone's learning.

## Integrity and Civility

We are together for a short time as a community of learners. Each person is expected to show respect and courtesy to fellow students and the instructor.

Academic dishonesty erodes the integrity of the College and devalues *every* degree granted. While the instructor encourages students to work together as they see fit, honesty in academic endeavors is expected. **Plagiarism** and cheating are prohibited. This means writing shall be the original creation of each student and answers on examinations will be derived according to stated examination conditions. If the instructor has any reason to question your conduct, the college's Academic Dishonesty policy will be swiftly executed. You risk receiving a **zero grade** for an assignment and failing the course. An "F" on your academic transcript is permanent.

## Course Outcomes

The goals and objectives for Life Span Development are integrated with the College's general education goals. After completing this course, the successful student will have the following knowledge and skills.

**Critical Thinking:** Utilize critical thinking skills to analyze psychological theories and research data

- Develop the ability to evaluate the quality and utility of classic theories of human development psychology
- Develop the ability to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary research studies pertaining to human development psychology
- Articulate, in verbal or electronic discussions, the manner in which one's personal viewpoint supports or refutes a position stated in a written passage or expressed by a classmate

**Cultures and Societies:** Understand how social institutions, historical trends and cultural context impact the development of the individual

- Develop an understanding of how cultural differences in America and around the globe influence individual differences in social, emotional, intellectual or physical development
- Evaluate the impact of healthcare, economic and family systems on individual development

- Examine the manner in which historical era impacts psychological theories as well as individual development

**Communication:** Understand and express ideas about human development psychology through reading and writing

- Demonstrate the ability to comprehend and interpret written passages
- Develop the ability to analyze and synthesize written material pertaining to psychological research or theories of human development
- Produce college-level writing

**Systematic Inquiry:** Understand social science research methods used in human development psychology research

- Acquire knowledge about academic inquiry
- Develop an understanding of various research methods used in human development psychology
- Acquire knowledge about the major figures in the field of human development psychology
- Understand the difference between correlation and causation as well as how this difference impacts the interpretation of human development research