**Course Title: Developmental Psychology**

**Course code:** PSY 260/560

**Term and year:** Fall 2024

**Day and time:** Thursday 8:15 – 11:00

**Instructor:** Dr Charlotte Longley

**Instructor contact:** charlotte.longley@aauni.edu

**Consultation hours:** Thursday 11:00 – 11:30

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Credits US/ECTS** | 3/6 | **Level** | Bachelor |
| **Length** | 15 weeks | **Pre-requisite** | Intro to Psychology |
| **Contact hours** | 42 hours | **Course type** | Letter Grade |

# Course Description

This course aims at introducing students to the main topics in child development and to the main approaches to the study of developmental psychology. The course covers the main aspects of development from conception through childhood, such as social and emotional development, linguistic development and the creation and storage of memories.

# Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

● Understand the main steps in the development of a child

● Master the main theories regarding child development

● Analyze critically scientific literature attaining to child development

● Hold an informed conversation on the topic of child development

# Reading Material

All required reading material is available via the electronic information resources offered by the Czech Academy of Sciences library or freely available online.

## Required Materials

* Baltes, P., Lindenberger, U. & Staudinger, U. (2006). Life Span Theory in Developmental Psychology. 10.1002/9780470147658.chpsy0111. pp 569 – 574

## Baillargeon, R. (2004). Infants’ Physical World. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 13(3), 89-94. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0963-7214.2004.00281>.

## Casby, M. W. (2003). The Development of Play in Infants, Toddlers, and Young Children. Communication Disorders Quarterly, 24(4), 163-174.

## <https://doi.org/10.1177/15257401030240040201>

* DiPietro, J. A. (2004). The Role of Prenatal Maternal Stress in Child Development. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 13(2), 71-74. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0963-7214.2004.00277>.

## Fernández, C. (2013). Mindful storytellers: Emerging pragmatics and theory of mind development. First Language, 33(1), 20-46. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0142723711422633>

* Garner, P. W., & Dunsmore, J. C. (2011). Temperament and maternal discourse about internal states as predictors of toddler empathy- and aggression-related behavior. Journal of Early Childhood Research, 9(1), 81-99. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476718X10366778>
* Glaser D. The effects of child maltreatment on the developing brain. Medico-Legal Journal. 2014;82(3):97-111. doi:10.1177/0025817214540395

* Nielsen, M., Haun, D., Kärtner, J., Legare, C.H. (2017) The persistent sampling bias in developmental psychology: A call to action, *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, Volume 162*, Pages 31-38. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jecp.2017.04.017>
* Plumert, J. M., Kearney, J. K., & Cremer, J. F. (2007). Children’s Road Crossing: A Window Into Perceptual–Motor Development. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 16(5), 255-258. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8721.2007.00515>

## Schneider, W. (2000). Research on memory development: Historical trends and current themes. International Journal of Behavioral Development, 24(4), 407-420. <https://doi.org/10.1080/016502500750037955>

## Thompson, R. A. (2011). Emotion and Emotion Regulation: Two Sides of the Developing Coin. Emotion Review, 3(1), 53-61. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1754073910380969>

## Recommended Materials

Blatný, M., Millová, K., Jelínek, M., Osecká, T. (2015). Personality Predictors of Successful Development: Toddler Temperament and Adolescent Personality Traits Predict Well-Being and Career Stability in Middle Adulthood. PLoS ONE 10(4). https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0126032

Dhuey, E., Figlio, D., Karbownik, K. and Roth, J. (2019), School Starting Age and Cognitive Development. Journal of Policy Analysis and Management., 38: 538-

578. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pam.22135>

Leung, A., Tunkel, A., & Yurovsky, D. (2021). Parents Fine-Tune Their Speech to

Children’s Vocabulary Knowledge. Psychological Science, 32(7), 975–984.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797621993104>

Walsh K., McCormack, C, A, Webster, R., Pinto, A., Lee, S., Feng, T., Krakovsky,

H.S., O’Grady, S.M., Tycko, B., Champagne, F.A., Werner, E.A., Liu, G., & Monk,

C. (2019). Maternal prenatal stress phenotypes associate with fetal neurodevelopment

and birth outcomes, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences

116 (48) 23996-24005; <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1905890116>

# Teaching methodology

Each session consists of an interactive lecture, in which the instructor presents the topic and discusses with the student’s research findings related with that topic. Classes contain both lecture-like parts and more discussion focused parts. Videos of children and babies that exemplify phenomena discussed in class may be played during the lecture.

# Course Schedule

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Class Agenda** |
| Session 1  September 5 | **Topic:** Introduction to Developmental Psychology and Course Overview  **Description:** What is developmental psychology? Key principals and themes, history of the field of study and where we are today.  **Reading:**  **Assignments/deadlines:** NA |
| Session 2  September 12 | **Topic:** Theories of Development  **Description:** Overview of a selection of theories and perspectives on human development.  **Reading:** Baltes, P., Lindenberger, U. & Staudinger, U. (2006)  **Assignments/deadlines:** NA |
| Session 3  September 19 | **Topic:** Research Methods  **Description:** Methods and ethical considerations in the research of children.  **Reading:** Nielsen, M., Haun, D., Kärtner, J., Legare, C.H. (2017)  **Assignments/deadlines:** NA |
| Session 4  September 26 | **Topic:** Biological Foundations I: Physical development, motor growth  and genetics  **Description:** Factors impacting physical and motor development with consideration of the role of environmental and genetic influences.  **Reading:** DiPietro, J. A. (2004).  **Assignments/deadlines:** Written paper, details to be confirmed in class |
| Session 5  October 3 | **Topic:** Biological Foundations II: The developing brain  **Description:** Exploring neuroanatomy and developmental neuroscience  **Reading:** Glaser, D. (2014)  **Assignments/deadlines:** Group presentations (schedule to be shared in class) |
| Session 6  October 10 | **Topic:** Perception  **Description:** Development of perception and sensory skills.  **Reading:** Plumert, J. M., Kearney, J. K., & Cremer, J. F. (2007).  **Assignments/deadlines:** Group presentations (schedule to be shared in class) |
| Session 7  October 17 | **Topic:** Theories of Cognitive Development  **Description:** Three major theories of cognitive development, with an exploration of evidence and critique.  **Reading:** Baillargeon, R. (2004).  **Assignments/deadlines:** Group presentations (schedule to be shared in class) |
| Session 8  October 24 | **Topic:** Recap and Midterm Exam  **Description:** This class will involve a recap of the previous lectures and an in-class exam.  **Reading:** NA  **Assignments/deadlines:** NA |
|  | **MIDTERM BREAK** |
| Session 9  November 7 | **Topic:** Cognitive Processes  **Description:** Exploring key cognitive processes; attention, memory, metacognition, and problem solving.  **Reading:** Schneider, W. (2000).  **Assignments/deadlines:** Group presentations (schedule to be shared in class) |
| Session 10  November 14 | **Topic:** Language and Cognition  **Description:** An overview of the dominant theories of human language development and the processes of language acquisition.  **Reading:** Fernández, C. (2013).  **Assignments/deadlines:** Group presentations (schedule to be shared in class) |
| Session 11  November 21 | **Topic:** Emotional Development  **Description:** Exploring concepts such as emotional expression and regulation, attachment, and temperament.  **Reading:** Thompson, R. A. (2011).  **Assignments/deadlines:** Group presentations (schedule to be shared in class) |
| Session 12  November 28 | **Topic:** Social Development  **Description:** An examination of the development of the sense of self, play, peer interaction and friendship.  **Reading:** Casby, M. W. (2003).  **Assignments/deadlines:** Group presentations (schedule to be shared in class) |
| Session 13  December 5 | **Topic:** Moral Development  **Description:** Covering the components of moral development and key theories.  **Reading:** Garner, P. W., & Dunsmore, J. C. (2011)  **Assignments/deadlines:** Group presentations (schedule to be shared in class) |
| Session 14  December 12 | **Topic:** Recap and Final Exam  **Description:** This class will involve a recap of the previous lectures and an in-class exam.  **Reading:** NA  **Assignments/deadlines:** NA |

# Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment** | **Workload (hours)** | **Weight in Final Grade** | **Evaluated Course Specific Learning Outcomes** | **Evaluated Institutional Learning Outcomes\*** |
| Class Participation | 42 | 15% | Hold an informed conversation on the topic of child development. | 1,2,3 |
| Group presentation | 20 | 20% | Analyze critically scientific literature relating to child development. | 1,2,3 |
| Midterm exam | 30 | 20% | Demonstrate understand the main steps in the development of a child.  Master the main theories regarding child development. | 1,2,3 |
| Final exam | 30 | 20% | Demonstrate understand the main steps in the development of a child.  Master the main theories regarding child development. | 1,2,3 |
| Written paper | 28 | 25% | Be able to explore a topic related to child development and present in essay-form | 1,2,3 |
| **TOTAL** | **150** | **100%** |  |  |

\*1 = Critical Thinking; 2 = Effective Communication; 3 = Effective and Responsible Action

# Detailed description of the assignments

## Assignment 1: Class Participation

Students are expected to take an active role in the class and to behave professionally at all times. Taking an active role in this class means demonstrating a willingness to contribute to discussions and respectfully listening to the contributions of others. Students are expected to arrive on time and be prepared for the session. Devices should be switched to silent and should not be used in class for anything other than related learning tasks.

**Assessment breakdown**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assessed area** | **Percentage** |
| Involvement in the class, including both making contributions and actively listening to the contributions of others during large and small group discussions. | 50 |
| Professional behavior in class, including punctuality and preparedness. | 50 |

## Assignment 2: Group Presentation

## Students will be required to participate in a group presentation task. Detailed information

## will be provided in class.

## Assessment breakdown

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assessed area** | **Percentage** |
| Knowledge and understanding of material and ability to convey this to an audience | 20 |
| Critical evaluation skills | 20 |
| Organization and teamwork | 30 |
| Presentation skills | 30 |

## Assignment 3: Midterm Exam

The midterm exam will be completed individually and is a test of knowledge and understanding of the material covered in the first half of the semester.

**Assessment breakdown**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assessed area** | **Percentage** |
| Demonstration of knowledge and understanding | 100 |

## Assignment 4: Final Exam

The final exam will be completed individually and is a test of knowledge and understanding

of the material covered in the second half of the semester.

**Assessment breakdown**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assessed area** | **Percentage** |
| Demonstration of knowledge and understanding | 100 |

## Assignment 5: Written Paper

## Students will submit a written paper, which explores a specified topic in detail. The task requires students to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the topic, the ability to think critically and show understanding of real-world applications. Detailed information will be provided in class.

**Assessment breakdown**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assessed area** | **Percentage** |
| Knowledge and understanding of topic | 25 |
| Demonstration of critical thinking | 25 |
| Application of knowledge | 25 |
| Demonstration of appropriate academic writing skills | 25 |

1. **General Requirements and School Policies**

**General requirements**

All coursework is governed by AAU’s academic rules. Students are expected to be familiar with the academic rules in the Academic Codex and Student Handbook and to maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work. Please see the AAU intranet for a summary of key policies regarding coursework.

**Course specific requirements**

There are no special requirements or deviations from AAU policies for this course.