

Seminar in Psychosocial Development
PSY 4930 (U03)/ DEP 5725 (U01)
M 9-11:45am
Room GC 275B

Instructor: Bethany Reeb-Sutherland
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Office: DM 201B
Office hours: Mondays 1-3pm or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course provides an overview of infant's and young children's social development. Psychosocial development is a broad topic. I have designed the course so that we will be able to discuss some of the main aspects of early social development, but you should keep in mind that this course is by no means exhaustive. We will focus on various theories of social development and touch upon some of the neural mechanisms underlying such development. In addition, we will discuss environmental and genetic contributors to both typical and atypical social development. My goal for you is that you will come away with a better understanding of the course of early social development. In addition, I am hoping to help you develop some critical thinking skills by presenting competing theories as well as inconsistent findings so that you can better critique others' research. Critical thinking is not only an important skill to have as a researcher, but can be applied in any career.

GRADE EVALUATION:

Class participation (leading and involvement in class discussions): 50%
Research proposal: 40% for graduate students; 50% for undergraduate students
Proposal presentation: 10% for graduate students only

Class Participation (50%): Students will be required to read weekly articles prior to class and be prepared to discuss these articles. I will post these readings via Blackboard (<http://online.fiu.edu/login>) at least a week prior to class. Each week, 3-4 students will be assigned to lead discussion on that week's readings. Your group will be assigned to lead discussions twice during the semester. During the days that you lead discussion, you will be responsible for thoroughly reading the papers assigned and preparing a list of discussion topics to discuss during class. You will hand in your list at the end of class. All members of your group should have their names on the list. If you come to class, are involved in discussions, and lead your two assigned discussions, you will get the full 50% credit. If you are not attending class and are not involved in discussions, you will not receive full credit. If you know that you will be unable to come to a class, please email me ahead of time, but try not to make this a habit.

Research Proposal (40% G; 50% UG): Students will be required to write a 10-15-page research proposal outlining a research study that will examine any aspect of infant or child social development. The proposal should contain an abstract (300-500 words), introduction (5-6 pages of background describing the reasoning and hypotheses behind your study), methods (5-7 pages of how you plan to set up your study), and references. If you are not confident in your writing skills, there are resources on campus that can help

you. So, if you think you need additional support and instruction regarding writing skills, contact the Center for Excellence in Writing (<http://writingcenter.fiu.edu>). In addition, if you would like to send me a draft of your proposal to get some early feedback, you can send it to me by 11:59pm on December 1st. I will attempt to get it back to you by December 3rd. Your final research proposal must be sent to me via email by 11:59pm on December 7th.

Graduate student presentation (10%): Graduate students will additionally be required to give a 15-20-minute presentation outlining their research proposal. This will be done on the last day of class (November 26th). Even though undergraduates are not required to present their studies, they are still required to attend.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND CLASS CONDUCT:

As members of the University community, you are expected to adhere to FIU rules and principles. Plagiarism or other dishonorable or disruptive conduct in this course is not tolerated. If such acts occur, consequences may include an automatic “F” in the course and referral to the Student Judicial Affairs Office. When you attend discussions, please arrange your schedule so you will be at class on time and will not have to leave early. Please silence phones in class and give your fellow students your respect when they are talking.

IMPORTANT: This class will use Turn-it-in software to check for plagiarism, and you will be able to check your plagiarism levels before turning in your final paper. **Acceptable plagiarism** for this course is **30% overlap or less** (but your goal should be 10% or less). If you have over 40% plagiarism on your research proposal, you will receive an automatic zero for the assignment and cannot make it up. While some direct quoting in papers is acceptable (where you acknowledge the source you are citing), paper elements based on direct quotes are not counted in the plagiarism total. Nevertheless, direct quotes should be kept to a minimum, so make sure your papers do not overlap with other published work, and DON'T plagiarize! Note that turning in a paper you have turned in for another course is still plagiarism, and you will receive a zero if you turn in the same paper twice.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Individualized accommodations for students with disabilities that may affect their participation in course activities and completion of course requirements are available. Please contact me and the Disability Resource Center (drcupgl@fiu.edu, 305-348-3532, <http://drc.fiu.edu/>) for additional information ASAP.

COURSE OUTLINE OF DISCUSSION TOPICS (*subject to change*)

8/20 Introduction to course

8/27 Infancy – Neonatal Imitation & Face Preference

***Last day to add/drop course without penalty

9/3 Labor Day – no class

9/10 Infancy– Social Contingency & Joint Attention

9/17 Biological Bases of Infant Social Development (EEG & ERP)

9/24 Atypical Infant Social Development (maternal depression & autism)

10/1 Toddlerhood – Temperament

10/8 Toddlerhood – Attachment

10/15 Biological Bases of Toddler Social Development (amygdala & neuroendocrine)

10/22 Atypical Toddler Social Development (anxiety; indiscriminate friendliness)

10/29 Early Childhood – Theory of Mind

11/5 Early Childhood - Morality

11/12 Veterans Day – no class

11/19 Biological Bases (temporal-parietal junction) & Atypical (autism) Child Social Development

11/26 Graduate student proposal presentations

12/7 Final Research Proposal Due

***Proposal has to be emailed to me by 11:59pm on the due date