Psychology 115-1: Child Development

Tuesday & Thursday, 8:00 – 9:50, WH 216

“And Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’”

CONTACT INFORMATION
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Office Hours
Winter Hall 332
Tuesday 1:30 – 3:00,
Thursday 1:15–2:45, & by appointment

REQUIRED RESOURCES

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES
The major objective of this course is to increase your understanding of human development from a child development perspective. Throughout this course you will be expected to:

- Describe normative behavior of children and adolescence in terms of physical, cognitive, & social-emotional development.
- Demonstrate an understanding of theories that constitute the field of child development & how these theories guide both research and ‘best practices’ when working with children.
- Observe children’s development & discuss possible explanations of expected (and unexpected) behaviors in light of cultural expectations.
- Critically examine research & relate conclusions to your area of interest & experience with individual children.
- Synthesize research findings and communicate how these conclusions help inform practitioners (educators, psychologists, parents, etc.) about pressing issues in developmental psychology.
- Effectively write & communicate about issues, applications, and research in the field of child development.
- Examine your own developmental journey.
- Effectively utilize the APA format & style of writing in specified assignments.

GRADING CRITERION
Your grade in this course will be based on your performance on the following criteria:

- Written examinations (3 @.15 = .45 of total grade)
- Case study project (.20)
- Journey through Erikson’s stages paper (.20)
- Research Presentation (.10)
- Class attendance and participation (.05)

Each assignment is scored on a scale of 0 to 100, and the final grade can be calculated by multiplying each score by its respective weighting factor from above and summing all of the weighted scores. Course grades will be assigned on the basis of this total score, using cut-point scores of 90, 80, 70 and 60 for grades of A, B, C and D, respectively (+ and – grades will be assigned at the professor’s discretion).
COURSE PROJECTS
In addition to three exams, there are four required course projects – an oral presentation/discussion, written analysis of a current issue facing children today, a case study project, and a paper through Erikson’s stages.

1. Exams
There are 3 unit exams for this course. Format of exams will be multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay.

2. Group Presentation
Each student will actively participate in a group project/presentation during the semester. Your small group will have 40 minutes to present and your presentation should include (but is not limited to) an introduction and overview of the topic, various sides of the research, and discussion questions. In your presentation, be sure to relate your topic to multicultural/diversity issues and child development theories and research. Your presentation may include topic relevant activities, a skit, video (no more than 10 minutes in length), class discussion, and/or additional materials to supplement our reading for the week. Creativity and resourcefulness will be rewarded! Please have your topic approved by the instructor at least two weeks prior to your presentation.

Each student will sign up for a presentation under one of the following broad categories (possible approaches are listed only to stimulate thinking; you are encouraged to present other sub-topics!!):

- **BRINGING UP BABY (9/28)** Possible approaches: Maternal employment, adoption, orphanages, child care, super babies, maternal substance abuse.
- **LEARNING AND TEACHING (10/19)** Possible approaches: Learning styles, gender differences, motivation, good teachers/bad teachers, mentors.
- **BEING THE BEST THAT I CAN BE (10/31)** Possible approaches: Self-esteem, health, resilience, weight loss, plastic surgery, peer groups, kids and sports.
- **I COULD HURT YOU (11/2)** Possible approaches: Bullies, child/school violence, homicide, abuse and neglect.
- **BEING DIFFERENT (11/14)** Possible approaches: Genius/gifted and talented, creativity, prodigy/savant, retardation, coping with disabilities.
- **ALL ALONE (11/16)** Possible approaches: Divorce, orphan or foster child, runaways, abandonment, single-parent home.
- **CHILDHOOD LOST (11/28)** Possible approaches: Trauma, tragedy, death, suicide, serious illness, consequences
- **IT’S THE CULTURE, SILLY! (11/30)** Possible approaches: Gender or cultural discrimination in the media, cultural differences, kid consumers, sexualization of children

3. Case Study Project
Over the course of the semester you are to spend time with a child age 4-12 years old. You are to meet with the child a minimum of six times over the course of at least 6 weeks, and are to keep an observation journal in which you record your impressions as they relate to physical, social-emotional and cognitive development. A 6-8 page paper (in APA format) will be turned in toward the end of the semester, along with your observation journal. This paper should include your thoughts, reflections, and evaluations of the child’s development as well as reflect knowledge of expected abilities and limitations as they relate to developmental stages and theories.

4. Personal Journey through Erikson’s Stages of Development
This assignment is a paper consisting of three parts: first, an interview with your parents to gain their perspective of your journey through Erikson’s stages, and second, a personal exploration of that same journey. For each stage that you have traveled, explore how you personally resolved the conflict presented in that stage and how that resolution facilitates future stages. For example, the first stage is trust vs. mistrust. Explore with your parents the events and circumstances of your first year. Examine also your past and present issues concerning trust and mistrust. Conclude with your own understanding of your resolution to this stage. Remember, having resolved the conflict at one year does not preclude your dealing with that conflict at a later age/stage. Yet, how you deal with trust vs. mistrust currently may be a window into your earlier resolution.
Fall 2017

The third part of the paper is to be a critique of Erikson’s stages based on your personal journey. Does his theory adequately explain your behaviors? Did you have any problems relating to his theory? In what way is his theory helpful for developmental psychology? Speak to potential drawbacks as well as to strengths. Like all papers, this is to be in APA format.
**COURSE POLICIES**

**Class attendance and participation** are expected, and you will be responsible for information gained by the readings as well as that supplied by the lecture. You are allowed to miss a total of two unexcused class sessions during the semester. Students accruing more than four absences during the course of the semester may be dropped from the class. You are responsible for making up work missed by absences.

**Assignments** are due at the beginning of class. Assignments turned in after this time will incur a 5% per day penalty. Exceptions will be considered if you turn in a written request 1 week prior to the due date.

**Missed exams**: A student who misses an exam without making prior arrangements with me receives a score of 0 for that exam. Make-up exams may be scheduled ahead of time under extenuating circumstances.

**Academic Integrity**: All students are expected to subscribe to the highest ideals of academic integrity. Any form of academic dishonesty will be dealt with as severely as allowed by the college, most likely a grade of F in the course and recommendation of dismissal from the college. “Academic dishonesty” includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (see below), cheating, and falsification. Please refer to the College’s policy on Academic Integrity: [http://www.westmont.edu/_offices/registrar/academic_policies/academic-dishonesty.html](http://www.westmont.edu/_offices/registrar/academic_policies/academic-dishonesty.html).

**Plagiarism**: Any student found cheating on class projects or exams will receive an F for that particular project with no opportunity to make up the project. Although sometimes unintentional, plagiarism is considered cheating and students should be aware of how to properly acknowledge sources of information in order to avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism will not be tolerated at Westmont College. According to the Westmont plagiarism policy document,

> To plagiarize is to present someone else's work—his or her words, line of thought, or organizational structure—as your own. This occurs when sources are not cited properly, or when permission is not obtained from the original author to use his or her work. Another person's "work" can take many forms: printed or electronic copies of computer programs, musical compositions, drawings, paintings, oral presentations, papers, essays, articles or chapters, statistical data, tables or figures, etc. In short, if any information that can be considered the intellectual property of another is used without acknowledging the original source properly, this is plagiarism.

The current plagiarism document can be found at: [http://www.westmont.edu/_offices/provost/plagiarism/academic_integrity_policy.html](http://www.westmont.edu/_offices/provost/plagiarism/academic_integrity_policy.html) This document defines different levels of plagiarism and the penalties for each. It also contains very helpful information on strategies for avoiding plagiarism. It cannot be overemphasized that plagiarism is an insidious and disruptive form of academic dishonesty. It violates relationships with known classmates and professors, and it violates the legal rights of people you may never meet.

**Digital Etiquette**: Electronic devices can be a great help in taking notes for this class. However, if you can’t resist the temptation to check your email, Facebook, surf the web, etc., do not bring your device to class. It is difficult to take good notes while surfing the web and, additionally, electronic devices used for the purposes other than class can be a distraction to the students around you.

**Writers’ Corner**: Westmont’s writing center is a creative space where student writers can find friendly “test readers” as they develop projects for professors, employers, and others. Tutors support peers as they mature into more skillful and confident writers. Tutorials are free of charge; come visit us in Voskuyl Library 215. Clients with appointments get first priority; drop-ins are also welcome. Make an appointment using WConline at: [https://westmont.mywconline.com/](https://westmont.mywconline.com/)

**Academic Accommodations**: Students who have been diagnosed with a disability are strongly encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services as early as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations for this course. Formal accommodations will only be granted for students whose disabilities have been verified by the Office of Disability Services. These accommodations may be necessary to ensure your equal access to this course. Please contact Sheri Noble, Director of Disability Services. (310A Voskuyl Library, 565-6186, snoble@westmont.edu) or visit the website: [http://www.westmont.edu/_offices/disability](http://www.westmont.edu/_offices/disability).

**Take your Professor to Lunch**: One of the things I value most is the opportunity to develop relationships with students. The classroom environment does not always allow for more personalized attention or one-on-one exchanges, but I am always open to getting together for coffee or lunch. I look forward to getting to
know each one of you better!

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Topics</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Child Development</td>
<td>8/29</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>8/31</td>
<td>History &amp; Context</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Prenatal &amp; Birth</td>
<td>9/7</td>
<td>Genetics, Prenatal Dev &amp; Ethics</td>
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<td>9/12</td>
<td>Birth &amp; Newborn Capabilities</td>
<td>F4 &amp; D18</td>
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<td>9/14</td>
<td>Infancy: Physical Development</td>
<td>F5</td>
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<td>Infancy</td>
<td>9/19</td>
<td>Infancy: Cognitive Development</td>
<td>F6, D2</td>
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<td>9/21</td>
<td>Infancy: Cognitive Development</td>
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<td>9/26</td>
<td>Infancy: Socio-Emotional Dev.</td>
<td>F7, D10, D11</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Early Childhood &amp; Elementary Years</td>
<td>10/5</td>
<td>Early &amp; Middle Child: Physical Development</td>
<td>F8 &amp; 11</td>
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<td>10/10</td>
<td>NO CLASS: FALL BREAK!</td>
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<td>F1-7 / Dixon</td>
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<td>10/12</td>
<td>Preschool Yrs: Cognitive Development</td>
<td>F9</td>
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<td>10/17</td>
<td>Everyone Rides the Carousel</td>
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<td>10/19</td>
<td>Middle Childhood: Cognitive Development</td>
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<td>10/24</td>
<td>Cognitive Development</td>
<td>D9, D13</td>
<td>Erickson Paper</td>
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<td>Preschool Yrs: Social Development</td>
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<td>10/31</td>
<td>Middle Childhood: Social Development</td>
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<td>11/2</td>
<td>Review Early &amp; Middle Childhood</td>
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<td>Presentation</td>
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<td>11/7</td>
<td>Exam 2</td>
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<td>Moral &amp; Faith Development</td>
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<td>Physical Development</td>
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<td>Case Study Reflections</td>
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<td>NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING!</td>
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<td>Social &amp; Emotional Development</td>
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<td>12/7</td>
<td>Wrap-up &amp; Review</td>
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Final Exam: F14-16 & Dixon. Wednesday, December 13, 8:00 -10:00

Please be aware that this syllabus and its contents are subject to change. Changes will be announced in class and students are expected to note any changes at that time. Being absent is not an excuse for being uninformed.
PSY-115 in Relation to Program Learning Outcomes

The College and the Department each maintain separate but overlapping list of goals and outcomes for our students. Each psychology course is designed not only to develop the skills and knowledge appropriate to that course, but also to help students develop toward these goals.

Although most of our courses are designed to contribute to all of our goals, some courses focus more particularly on one or a few. PSY-115 focuses on the specific departmental outcomes checked in the list below.

✔✔Knowledge Base. Our students will be able to articulate both (a) the structure of the academic discipline of psychology and (b) the key elements of content within a wide variety of areas within psychology, integrating them with each other. Students will also be familiar with career/vocation options in psychology and psychology-related fields. PSY-115’s associated course learning outcomes are for students to demonstrate the ability to identify, recognize, or otherwise articulate key elements of the science of child development.

Scientific Research Methods and Skills. Our students will be able to recognize, describe, and implement a variety of research methods and skills common to the psychological sciences.

✔✔Written and Oral Communication. Our students will be able to write and speak in genres appropriate to the academic discipline of psychology. PSY-115’s associated course learning outcome is for students to effectively utilize APA format and style of writing in specified assignments and to effectively use both primary and scholarly secondary sources.

✔✔Values and Character. Our students will value, appreciate, and welcome, through understanding and demonstrative action,

1. scientific methods. Students will see empirical, evidence-based methods as essential and as complementary to other methods of knowing.
2. ethics. Students will be committed to high ethical standards, including professional, discipline-specific domains and their own personal lives.
3. faith. Students will be able to articulate the interactions between psychology and faith. PSY-115’s associated course learning outcome is for students to articulate the intersection between child development and the Christian faith.
4. openness to experience. Students will understand the importance and desirability of a diversity of experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds (including ethnic, sociocultural, and gender diversity). They will embrace ambiguity, being comfortable without closure or black-and-white answers, and valuing questions as much as answers.

✔✔Applications. Our students will apply psychological principles, knowledge, and skills to their own lives and to the transformation of their worlds. Domains to which these are applied include:
1. *personal* (personal development, relationships, personal experience, etc.). PSY-115’s associated course learning outcome is for students to increase their self-awareness regarding their own developmental experiences and how it influences their beliefs and behaviors.
2. *community and societal/global concerns and issues.*
3. *integration with other academic disciplines.*
The psychology department has identified specific, assessable learning outcomes for each of the departmental goals (in parentheses below), and has associated each outcome with a college-wide goal (identified in bold below). Learning outcomes most pertinent to PSY-115 are checked in the list below:

✔✔Knowledge Base: Demonstrate the ability to identify, recognize, or otherwise articulate key elements of content (e.g., core concepts, theories, and individuals) within a wide variety of areas in psychology. (Goal: Knowledge Base)

✔✔Competence in Written and Oral Communication: Write efficiently, creatively, and competently using APA style in both theoretical/review and research report genres. (Goal: Written and Oral Communication)

✔✔Christian Understanding/Practices/Affections: Demonstrate ability to identify important contemporary areas of overlap between psychology and Christian theology and spirituality, and are both affectively positively disposed towards them and inclined towards practicing them. (Goal: Values and Character)

✔✔Critical and Interdisciplinary Thinking: Demonstrate ability to recognize good vs. bad experimental designs, theories, and arguments in psychology, and also reasoning linking psychology to other disciplines. (Goal: Scientific Thinking, Methods, & Skills)

✔✔Diversity and Global Awareness: Engage as active global citizens with an awareness of cultural diversity, one’s own culture/s, and the responsibility of self towards others. (Goal: Values and Character)

Active Societal/Intellectual Engagement: Engage as active agents in their local communities, bringing their intellectual and academic abilities and interests to bear on improving the lives of those around them. (Goal: Applications)

Creative Expression: Recognize the creative aspects of theory construction, experimental design, application and collaborative work in psychology, and demonstrate such creativity in their own disciplinary work. (Goal: Scientific Thinking, Methods, & Skills).

We encourage students to visit the departmental web page and talk with their academic advisors for more information about learning outcomes and goals, and about the structure of our curriculum.