

**PSYCH 2AA3**  
**SURVEY OF DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY**  
**SUMMER 2008**

Instructor: Paul Szego  
Phone: (905) 525-9140 ext. 26033

Email: [szegopa@mcmaster.ca](mailto:szegopa@mcmaster.ca)  
Office: Psychology, rm. 219

I will be holding office hours each Wednesday from 12:30 to 1:30, or by appointment only. Please include *Psych 2aa3* in the title of all emails to bypass my spam filter. Sorry, but I can't be responsible for returning long distance calls.

Time: Monday & Wednesday; 9:30 – 12:20

Location: HH 302

Prerequisite: PSYCH 1A03, 1AA3; or registration in Honours Biology and Psychology or the Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours) program

Antirequisite: PSYCH 2A03, 3G03, 3GG3

Overview: The course is intended to provide an overview of the psychological and biological development of children, including behaviour, cognition, and perception. By the end of this course you should have 1) an understanding of a typical child's development, including when specific behaviours and abilities emerge, and 2) a greater ability to think critically and communicate clearly about research concerning developmental psychology specifically, and infants generally. Classes will be a combination of lecture, presentation, and discussion.

Required Text: Vasta, R., Miller, S. A., Ellis, S., Younger, A. & Gosselin, P. (2006). *Child Psychology Canadian Edition* (Canadian Edition). Mississauga: John Wiley and Sons, Ltd.

Student Resources: To help you access the course material, and to encourage discussion, this course has been registered on WebCT (<http://www.ltrc.mcmaster.ca/webct>). On this site, you can retrieve lecture notes (posted the evening before the lecture), view the class calendar and this syllabus, and check your marks. You can also post questions about course content; I encourage everyone to offer answers to each other. The instructor will *view* the discussions, but the emphasis is on the students to help each other; I will intervene when necessary (if people get very confused). Sample questions and discussion topics will also be posted before discussions and tests. When possible (barring copyright issues) other resources will be posted on the WebCT site.

Please make sure to check this site regularly – it's there to help you and make this course easier to navigate and more enjoyable. Use the site to your advantage!

Evaluation:

**(1) Short Research-Based Presentation – 30%**

Given the massive media coverage of infant development (e.g., “Baby Einstein”, causes of autism, Britney Spears' mom's book!), it is getting harder to tell what is good, research-based information and what is crap. The purpose of this presentation is to get you thinking about the information we are deluged with each day addressing our childrens' mental health, and to give you practice communicating clearly to others. To help hone your crap-detection skills, you will research some topic – of your choice, but confirmed by the instructor – and deliver a 15 minute presentation to the class. Topics must pertain to infant psychological development taken from the mass media and discuss its relevance, its research/scientific basis, and other issues helping us to decide if the topic is valid or not.

Presentations will be marked on 1) Quality & quantity of research done (10%), 2) Depth of thought (10%), 3) Clarity of communication (spoken & visual) (10%). You do *not* have to use PowerPoint – feel free to bring in props and examples, to demonstrate your topic, etc. (Make it an “anti-commercial” or “cover-up expose”!) Thinking outside of the box and having fun is encouraged, as long as the quality and clarity of your research and presentation is maintained.

**(2) Midterm Exam – In Class (2 hours) – 30%**

The midterm will be approximately 80% multiple-choice questions and 20% fill-in-the-blank questions. This test will focus on definitions, ages & stages, and theories of development.

The purpose of the midterm is to make sure that you are learning the basics of psychological development (the ages, stages, theories, etc.). I’m asking you to memorize a fair amount, so I will test your ability to retain the information in both recognition (multiple choice) and recall (fill-in-the-blanks).

**(3) Final Exam – Take Home – 35%**

For the final exam, you will answer two short questions (from three possible questions). Your answers will be in essay format (paragraphs, *not* point-form) and emailed to the instructor **by 10:00pm** of a date to be determined during class (yes, we can talk about when it’s due!)\* The final will test your ability to *integrate* what we’ve covered over the semester. Details won’t have to be memorized – you can use your class notes and the textbook as well as studies discussed in both or other resources to inform your answers.

NOTE: Plagiarism (from **any** source, including each other, text, web) will result in a zero on the exam!

The purpose of having an essay is to show that you're able to think deeply about the material and communicate those thoughts clearly and in your own words. It is take-home so that you don’t have to spend your energy memorizing everything for one stressful in-class experience, and instead can take your time to think about and review what you’d like to say.

\* Upon receiving your emailed essay, the instructor will respond confirming that it was received.

If you do not get a confirmation email *by midnight of that day*, make sure to contact the instructor!

(If you do not contact me within 24 hours, late penalties will begin to accumulate!)

Note: For both tests, students are responsible for knowing the lecture material and the textbook, with roughly equal weighting.

**(4) Participation/Discussion – 5%**

This is my way of encouraging you to take part in the class discussions, as well as asking questions, offering examples, funny stories, etc. In return for your effort, you will have an easy chance to raise your mark and make the class more enjoyable for all of us. Topics for discussion will be posted on WebCT well before class. Take the time to think about the topics, and feel free to bring in material from outside the class to make these discussions more lively and interesting. Anything funny is always appreciated!

**(5) Bonus Marks (Experiments) – 4%**

You can also take part in up to four experiments in the Psychology Department, for one bonus percent each! Use Experimentrix to sign up, just like in Psych 1AA3/1A03 (<https://experimentrix2.com/mac>)

Date	Topic	Chapter
June 23	Syllabus; Background; Research Methods; Discussion	Chapter 1 & 2
June 25	Biology/Genetics; Prenatal Development; Discussion	Chapter 3 & 4
June 30	Physical Development; Discussion	Chapter 5

July 2	Sensory & Perceptual Development; Discussion	Chapter 6
July 7	Cognitive Development: Piaget's approach; Presentations	Chapter 7
July 9	Cognitive Development: Information-Processing; Presentations	Chapter 8
July 14	Cognitive Development: Sociocultural approach; Presentations	Chapter 9
July 16	Intelligence & Schooling; Discussion; Presentations Review of Material & Emailed Questions	Chapter 10
July 21	<b>In-class Midterm (2 hours)</b>	Chapter 1-10
July 23	Language Development; Discussion; Presentations	Chapter 11
July 28	Early Social & Emotional Development; Discussion; Presentations	Chapter 12
July 30	Development of the Self; Moral Development; Discussion; Presentations	Chapters 13 & 14
August 4	CIVIC HOLIDAY!	
August 6	Review & Questions <b>Hand out Take-Home Exam (DATE: TBD)</b>	

**Note:** Please organize travel and work plans keeping the exam and presentation dates in mind. If you miss any assignments or exams due to illness or other personal reasons, you will need to provide appropriate documentation to the Associate Deans office of your faculty **before** any accommodations can be made by the instructor. The final exam will then be weighed proportionately higher. If you are unable to write the final exam and permission has been given from the Associate Deans office, the exam will be deferred into the following semester.

If you require special accommodations regarding note-taking/mid-term/final exam, please contact the Centre for Student Development located in MUSC B-107 or via their website at <http://csd.mcmaster.ca/>

The instructors have the right to adjust final marks on an individual basis in light of special circumstances. The grading scheme for this class is:

90-100 A+	85-89 A	80-84 A-	77-79 B+	73-76 B	70-72 B-	67-69 C+	63-66 C	60-62 C-	57-59 D+	53-56 D	50-52 D-	0-49 F
--------------	------------	-------------	-------------	------------	-------------	-------------	------------	-------------	-------------	------------	-------------	-----------

Policy Reminder on Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy:

[http://www.mcmaster.ca/senate/academic/ac\\_integrity.htm](http://www.mcmaster.ca/senate/academic/ac_integrity.htm).