

**SYLLABUS**  
**PSYCHOLOGY 2AA3: SURVEY OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT**  
Department of Psychology, Neuroscience, and Behaviour  
McMaster University  
Fall Term 2008

Course time: W 7:00pm  
Course location: CNH 104

**Professor:**

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**Teaching Assistants:**

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**Course Description:** This course is designed to introduce you to research and theory in developmental psychology, covering the years from conception to the beginnings of adolescence. After having taken this course, you may want to take Dr. Day's new course on Adolescence, or my course on Aging (offered every other year). Having completed these courses, you will have covered the development of humans over their lifespan.

**Textbook:** Kail, R. V. & Barnfield, A. (2008). *Children and their development, 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Ed.* Available at the bookstore.

I had Pearson, the textbook's publishers, put together a custom version of this textbook in order to save you money. This custom textbook deletes chapters and sections I won't be touching on this term, and therefore saves both money and trees. If you prefer to own the chapters and sections I've deleted, then you can buy the full edition on the web (e.g., amazon.ca).

*Please note:* I cannot vouch for the previous edition of this textbook, Kail (2007), and I cannot provide a separate syllabus to support its use. The previous edition may be available used in the bookstore, but it is not a Canadian edition, and therefore may be significantly different, in pagination and content, from the edition I've assigned this year.

**Website:** This course has a Blackboard website. You are expected to check this website with regularity for announcements, updates, discussion board postings, and other valuable information. It is *your responsibility* to keep up with information provided for you on this site.

**How To Do Well in this Course:** Read the syllabus very carefully! Read the website carefully as well: follow the discussions, read the announcements, and read the “Important Information” section. Check the website *several times per week*.

Know the *missed tests policy*. This is available on our website under “Important Information”; partial information is available in this syllabus, but the website version is more comprehensive. Do exactly as this policy asks if you miss a test, or you may be in for a nasty surprise.

You cannot do well in this course if you do not *attend lectures*. Although the textbook does support the lecture material, lectures often go beyond the textbook. Therefore, if you miss lectures, you will miss important information.

You also cannot do well in this course if you do not supplement lectures with *independent learning from the textbook*. I do not cover all of the materials in the textbook; there is no time for that in a one-term course. Therefore, I expect you to spend some of your study-time identifying important concepts from the text, and learning them. Independent learning is a very important skill. You will be expected to do this in your upper level courses, and – more importantly – in what academics call “the real world”.

Slides are posted *after* their contents have been lectured on. I post the slides after lectures for several reasons. The most important of these is that no one in the real world is going to give you slides! In order to do well in the real world, you will have to know how to cope with large amounts of incoming information. If you have trouble taking effective notes, then please visit CSD, or see me or one of your TA’s, for advice.

Please note that my slides contain only basic information – bullet points, figures, and pictures. You cannot recreate lectures, and therefore cannot succeed in this course, by depending on them instead of attending lecture.

Finally: Think carefully about the information I’m presenting you in lecture. Two things are usually happening: I’m telling the story of some theory or idea; I’m giving you details on research that helped tell the story. I expect you to be able to tell us about both theory *and* research on tests, so try to figure out

- (1) what’s the story? (i.e., the theory), and
- (2) what does the research we learned about tell us about that story?

If you study with these questions in mind, then you should do well on the midterms. If you find that you’re not sure what the story is or how the research fits in with or supports the story, then please make use of my office hours!

**Participation:** In-class and discussion board participation are *strongly encouraged*. Remember, if you have a question, your colleagues probably have one, too, and will appreciate it if you speak up. Don’t be shy about asking questions!

See the link on Blackboard, under “Important Information”, for discussion board guidelines.

**Assessment:** Your final mark will be based on the following.

- (1) Midterm 1 = 30%
- (2) Midterm 2 = 30%
- (3) Final Exam = 40%

The midterms will be non-cumulative (*exception*: general understanding of research methods), and will cover lecture material *and* assigned readings, *even* readings not discussed in class. The final exam will be cumulative, and will be held during the examination period. All tests will be comprised of some combination of multiple choice (MC) items and short answers/definitions. The quiz will not include MC items. Please see the schedule, below, for assessment dates.

**Missed Tests:** You are strongly encouraged *never to miss a test*. If something comes up that will interfere with your ability to write a test, then you must *immediately* contact me by *email* – *before* the deadline, if at all possible, not after the fact. If you do not contact me in a timely manner, your grade in the course will suffer.

If you miss a test, then you must provide a doctor's certificate (or equivalent for non-medical situations) to your Dean's office, or you will receive a zero (0) on that assessment. If you miss a make-up (given during class, in a room TBA on our website, a week to the day after the original midterm date), then you must also provide a doctor's certificate for the date of the makeup, or you will receive a zero (0) on that assessment.

See the link on Blackboard, under "Important Information", for more information on missed assessments.

**Final Grade Calculations:** Each midterm is worth 30% of your final grade; the final exam is worth 40% of your final grade (30+30+40=100).

Your final grade will be converted to a letter grade, according to the following scheme:

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

**Note:** The instructor reserves the right to adjust final grades up or down, on a individual basis, in the light of special circumstances. The instructor also reserves the right to alter the evaluation scheme if circumstances warrant it (e.g., TA loss).

**Academic Integrity:** You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g., a grade of zero (0) on an assignment, loss of course credit with a notation on the transcript ("grade 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 about academic dishonesty, please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>.

## SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Note: This schedule is subject to change. Changes will be announced on Blackboard.

This course is divided into three (3) sections. Below is a list of topics (with associated readings listed in [blue](#)) that I expect to cover in each of these sections. Even though I will not cover the entire contents of any given chapter in lecture, you are expected to read and learn its contents.

At the end of each section, you will write an exam. Here are the pertinent dates:

**Midterm 1:** Wed 8 Oct

**Midterm 2:** Wed 5 Nov

**Final Exam:** To be scheduled by the Registrar

**A note on the readings:** I will *not* be deleting any of the readings listed below. Plan carefully so that you do not find yourself “cramming” the readings at the last minute. Please do not email me asking whether I plan to delete any of your readings! This is rather high up on my “top ten most annoying emails” list!

Extra readings may be assigned as we go. These will be announced in class and on Blackboard; links to extra readings will be posted on Blackboard; it is your responsibility to keep track of extra materials.

### **SECTION 1: SEPT 10 TO OCT 8**

#### **Intro and Research Methods**

[Read Ch's 1 and 2](#)

#### **Prenatal Development**

[Read Ch's 3 and 4](#)

#### **Growth and Health**

[Read Ch 5](#)

#### **Perceptual and Motor Development**

[Read Ch 6](#)

#### **Cognitive Development**

[Read Ch's 7, 8, and 9 \(don't fear, Ch's 8 and 9 have been shortened substantially in your custom textbook\)](#)

### **SECTION 2: OCT 15 TO NOV 5**

#### **Personality Development**

[Read pp. 10-12 \(on Freud and Erikson\) and section 11.2 \(on Temperament; see Ch 11\).](#)

#### **Social Development**

[Read 11.1 \(on Emotion Development\) and Ch 12](#)

### **SECTION 3: NOV 12 TO NOV 26**

#### **Moral Development**

[Read Ch 13](#)

#### **Ecology of Development 1: Family Influences**

[Read section 11.3 \(on Attachment\) and Ch 15](#)

#### **Ecology of Development 2: Peer, School, and Media Influences on Development**

[Read Ch 16](#)