

SYLLABUS
PSYCHOLOGY 2AA3: SURVEY OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT
 Department of Psychology, Neuroscience, and Behaviour
 McMaster University
 Fall Term 2015

Time and Location: T 7-10p in CNH 104

Professor:

Dr. J. Ostovich

Contact: psy2aa3@mcmaster.ca (**PSY**, *not* PSYCH) for all course-related emails; do **not** use the *Avenue* system.

Office: PC-415A

Office hours: Monitor website for days and times; also by appointment.

Teaching Assistants:

Olivia Jon, Alina Protopopescu, and Anna Siminoski

Email: Use psy2aa3@mcmaster.ca for initial contacts.

Office hours: Monitor website discussion boards (under “administrative”) for days, times, and locations; also by appointment.

Please note: This syllabus – including scheduling, topic order, topics themselves, and assessment strategy – is subject to change if circumstances warrant (e.g., TA loss, blizzard). Changes will be announced on the course website.

Course Description: This course is designed to introduce you to research and theory in developmental psychology, covering the years from birth to the beginnings of adolescence. We will discuss the major topics of interest to developmentalists, including perceptual, cognitive, social, emotional, and moral development. We will also discuss the influence of parenting style and media on child development. After having taken this course, you may want to take *Adolescence*, or *Aging*. Having completed these three courses, you will have covered the development of humans across their lifespan.

Required Textbook: Kail, R. V. & Barnfield, A. (2015). *Children and their development, 3rd Canadian Ed.* Use other editions *at your own risk*. The textbook’s content may differ between editions, which could cause you problems on tests. Moreover, page, chapter, and module numbers may differ between editions, thereby making doing your readings confusing (we will not help you sort any mismatches out! you must do this yourself).

Evaluation: Your final mark will be based on your performance on two multiple choice (MC) midterms (@25% MT1 and 35% MT2) and one MC final exam (@40%). The midterms will be **non-cumulative** (*exception*: research methods, basic concepts such as nature/nurture, continuous/discontinuous development, and the like), and will cover lecture material *and* assigned readings, *especially* readings on topics not discussed in class. The final exam will be **cumulative**, but otherwise exactly the same as the midterms.

See the section entitled “how to do well in this course” (pages 3-4) for more detail on test content.

Test-Taking Policy: Midterms will be run like final examinations. You can bring writing instruments, an eraser (or similar), and essentials like kleenex and bottled water to your desk. You must also bring your student ID card. All other materials, especially electronics, must stay in your bag, at the front or side of the room in which you write your test. Note that ***if your cell phone rings or vibrates during a midterm, then you will be docked 5%*** on that midterm. TURN IT OFF!

Missed Tests: Report your absence to McMaster and to psy2aa3@mcmaster.ca **within 2 days of the missed test**. Failure to comply with the **two-days rule** could result in your earning a mark of zero on the missed test. Make-up tests are held one week after the original test, during class time; hence the need for speedy communication.

In order to receive any sort of accommodation (e.g., makeup test), we must receive an official university email indicating that you've complied with university regulations, as well as your personal email requesting accommodation.

How to report an absence to McMaster: In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should *carefully* review and follow the regulations outlined in the undergraduate calendar, "[Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work](#)". Please note that these regulations have changed beginning Fall 2015. Any deviation from these regulations will result in a mark of "0" for the missed work.

Note that you may only use an MSAF for work valued at *less than* 25%. This means that, in this course, you *cannot use the MSAF*, and must follow the regulations described in part 2 of the *Requests for Relief* section. Please have documentation from your faculty sent to psy2aa3@mcmaster.ca, **not** to Dr. Ostovich's personal email address.

How to report an absence to teaching staff: Your email to psy2aa3@mcmaster.ca should do the following: (a) *briefly* explain why you've been forced to miss the test (less detail is best!); (b) request relief for the missed work, and (c) indicate whether you have submitted documentation to the university, and if not, when that will be happening. The content of your email will be kept confidential.

What if you miss the make-up test? If you miss the make-up test due to a prolonged illness or prolonged family crisis (or similar), then you must report your absence for both the original test *and its make-up* to your Faculty or Program office **within 2 days of the makeup test**; otherwise, you will receive a mark of zero for the missed work. If you can provide an acceptable excuse for having missed the make-up, then we will figure something out for you. If you **miss both midterms and their makeups**, then **you will fail** this course (you cannot have a 100% final). You are advised to seek academic counseling if this happens to you.

E-mail Policy: E-mails must originate from a valid McMaster account (please use *MacMail* rather than the *Avenue* system for all e-mail communication). As per McMaster policy, e-mail sent from third-party providers (e.g., hotmail, cogeco, google) will be deleted. Please also keep in mind that e-mails to your professors and TAs are professional communications. They should (1) include correct spelling and punctuation, (2) have an *informative subject line*, and (3) be brief.

Website Policy: You are expected to check our course website on *Avenue to Learn* regularly for announcements, updates, discussion board postings, and other valuable information. It is *your responsibility* to keep up with the information provided on this site.

Use of the website's **discussion boards** is strongly encouraged, and, in the case of non-private inquiries, is *preferred to email communication*. By asking questions on the discussion boards (rather than over e-mail), you are (1) giving other students the chance to benefit from your question, and (2) provide an encoding (learning) experience for students who wish to answer your question (this is *strongly* encouraged!).

The discussion boards are meant to be a "safe place" for asking and answering questions. Students who are rude or inconsiderate (e.g., "trolls") may be banned from using them.

Finally, students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Policy re. the Recording of Lectures: If you feel that recording lectures will help you perform optimally in the course, then feel free to do so. **HOWEVER:** Consider the lectures **copyrighted material**: you **may not share** your recordings with others. That means that **you cannot post recordings anywhere online**, including on our *Avenue* website.

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!

Final Grade Calculations: 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 marks up *or down*, on a individual basis, in the light of special circumstances. Students *who do not pass the final*, or whose final exam mark is their *lowest mark* in the course, will *not* have their final marks adjusted up under any circumstances – poor performance on a cumulative final demonstrates a lack of familiarity with course content.

Note as Well: I do *not* do special favours for one student that I do not also do the whole class. Your final mark is your final mark, unless a marking or mathematical error has been made. Special favours to one student are unfair to the multitude of students who neither ask for nor get those same favours. Therefore, if you are concerned about your final mark, it is your responsibility to visit with me or with one of your TA's for guidance.

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 on the various types of academic dishonesty, please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>.

How To Do Well in this Course

This course tests your knowledge using multiple choice (MC) items. The MC items have been designed to test your knowledge in the following domains: **facts** (e.g., “what was the finding?” or “what is the definition of X?”); **concepts** (e.g., “what does the finding mean?” or “why is this particular finding important?”); and **application** (e.g., “given what you know about topic A, how would a child behave in situation B?”). Below are several **tips** that will help you perform optimally in PSYCH 2AA3. You can find more tips in our course **FAQ** (see website).

First: Use your resources. Read this **syllabus** *very* carefully! And read our *Avenue to Learn website* carefully as well, including your course **FAQ**. Check the website *several times per week*.

Second: Know the *missed tests policy*. Do exactly as this policy asks if you miss a test, or you may be in for a nasty surprise (i.e., a zero!). Makeup tests occur during class time, about one week after the original test.

Third: Attend lectures. 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, or have a different focus than, the textbook. Therefore, if you miss lectures, you will miss important information.

Fourth: Read your textbook and any other assigned readings. You 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. Note that your textbook comes packaged with an **online learning tool**. This may help you to more easily learn the textbook materials. Independent learning is an important skill. You will be expected to do this in your upper level courses, and – more importantly – in what academics call “the real world”.

Fifth: Learn how to take effective notes. Slides are posted *after* their contents have been lectured on. In order to do well in the real world, you will have to know how to cope with large amounts of incoming information, without slides to guide you. If you have trouble taking effective notes, then please visit CSD, or see me or one of your TA’s for advice.

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 and/or taking effective notes.

Sixth: Visit with a TA or with Dr. Ostovich if you’re having trouble in the course. **Do not wait** until you’ve done poorly on both midterms to set up a meeting: at that point, **it’s too late**. You should monitor your performance and visit with someone at the first sign that something is amiss!

Finally: Think carefully about the information I’m presenting you in lecture. Three things are usually happening: first, I’m telling you the story of some theory or idea; second, I’m giving you details on research that helped tell the story; third, I’m often tying the theory and research to some organizing theme. Therefore, try to figure out

- (1) what’s the story? (i.e., the theory)
- (2) what does the research we learned about tell us about that story?
- (3) is there an overarching theme related to the theory and research? what is it?

If you study with these questions in mind, then you should do well on the midterm and final. 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 the discussion board and any office hours offered by me or by your TA’s.

SCHEDULE AND READINGS

This schedule is *subject to change*. Any changes will be announced on our course website. The most likely changes involve timing and testing of topics right before and after the midterms.

Below is a list of topics (with associated readings listed in [blue](#)) that I expect to cover this term, divided into three sections: pre-midterm 1, post-midterm 1/pre-midterm 2, and post-midterm 2. Even though I will not cover the entire contents of any given chapter in lecture, you are expected to read and learn all assigned modules and chapters.

A note on dates and deadlines: The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with an explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Midterm 1: Tuesday 29 September during class time (rooms TBA)

Midterm 2: Tuesday 10 November during class time (rooms TBA)

Final Exam: To be scheduled by the Registrar

Section 1: 8 September to 29 September

Introduction: Themes in Developmental Psychology → [Modules 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3 \(in Ch 1\)](#)

Research Methods in Developmental Psychology → [Module 1.4 \(in Ch 1\)](#)

Behavioural Genetics → [Ch 2 \(whole chapter\)](#)

Neural Development → [Module 4.3 \(in Ch 4\)](#)

Perceptual Development → [Modules 5.1 and 5.2 \(in Ch 5\)](#)

Section 2: 6 October to 10 November: Cognitive Development

Cognitive Development 1: Piaget → [Ch 6 \(whole chapter\)](#)

Cognitive Development 2: Information Processing → [Modules 7.1 and 7.2 \(in Ch 7\)](#)

Cognitive Development 3: Intelligence → [Modules 8.1 and 8.2 \(in Ch 8\)](#)

Section 3: 17 November to 8 December: Socio-Emotional Development

Understanding of Self and Others → [Module 10.1 \(in Ch 10\) and Ch 11 \(whole chapter\)](#)

Moral Development → [Ch 12 \(whole chapter\)](#)

Family Influences on Development → [Modules 10.2 and 10.3 \(in Ch 10\) and 14.1 \(in Ch 14\)](#)

Peer, School, and Media Influences on Development → [Modules 14.2 and 14.3 \(in Ch 14\)](#)