



PSYCH 3II3 –Cognitive Development
Course Syllabus
Winter 2013

Instructor:

Oriane Landry
Office Hours: after class



Please use Avenue to Learn email for course correspondence
Psychology 304

Teaching Assistants:

Lauren Drvaric & Erin Rose

Lectures: Mon 9:30 – 10:20am
Thurs 9:30 – 11:20am Room: PC 335

Learning Objectives: This course will provide a broad survey of cognitive development in childhood. The objectives of this course are to:

1. Explain fundamental concepts in cognitive development.
2. Practice public speaking / presentation skills.
3. Evaluate peers' presentations and provide constructive feedback.
4. Critically analyse, evaluate, and interpret scientific research in a focused topic of cognitive development.
5. Practice written communication skills.

Required Readings:

Bjorklund, D. F. (2012). *Children's Thinking: Cognitive Development and Individual Differences (5th Ed.)*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Assessment - Your final grade will be made up of the following:

20% mid-term exam Feb 11
30% critiques (2) due Feb 25 & Mar 25
15% group presentation
5% peer-evaluations
30% final exam (cumulative)



Late assignments – All assignments are due at the beginning of class (9:30am) unless otherwise specified. 2% will be deducted for each day late including weekends.

Illness / missed class – Students should make themselves aware of the policies surrounding the McMaster Student Absence Form, and contact the Instructor as soon as possible in the event of a missed exam; a make-up exam will be arranged as needed:

<http://mcmaster.ca/msaf/>

<http://www.science.mcmaster.ca/associatedean/>

In this course we will be using AvenueToLearn. 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 the 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.

Lecture and Activity Schedule (Red indicates 2h lecture days - Thurs)

DATE	LECTURE / ACTIVITY	READING
7-Jan	Introduction	Ch 1
10-Jan	Biological Bases of Cognitive Development	Ch 2
14-Jan	How to write a critique	Ch 2
17-Jan	Sociocultural Perspectives	Ch 3
21-Jan	Mills Library – Connections Centre (L113)	
24-Jan	Sociocultural Perspectives con't	Ch 3
28-Jan	Presentation 1: Infant visual perception	Ch 4
31-Jan	Presentation 2: Infant auditory perception Presentation 3: Violation of expectation method & Core Knowledge?	Ch 4
4-Feb	Presentation 4: Symbolic Representation	Ch 5
9-Feb	Presentation 5: Piaget 1 – Sensorimotor & Pre-operations Presentation 6: Piaget 2 – Concrete & Formal Operations	Ch 5
11-Feb	mid-term exam	
14-Feb	Presentation 7: Folk Psychology Presentation 8: Folk Biology	Ch 6
18-Feb	<i>Winter Break – no classes</i>	
25-Feb	Presentation 9: Folk Physics	Ch 6
28-Feb	Presentation 10: Information Processing (processing speed, memory, & attention) Presentation 11: Executive Functioning	Ch 7
4-Mar	Presentation 12: Strategy & Problem Solving	Ch 7
9-Mar	Presentation 13: Memory in Infancy Presentation 14: Event Memory & Eyewitness Accounts	Ch 8
11-Mar	Presentation 15: Consistency & Stability of Memory	Ch 8
14-Mar	Presentation 16: Language - Descriptive Presentation 17: Language – Theories	Ch 9
18-Mar	Presentation 18: Bilingualism	Ch 9
21-Mar	Presentation 19: Social Learning Presentation 20: Developing a Concept of Self	Ch 10
25-Mar	Presentation 21: Gender Identity	Ch 10
28-Mar	Presentation 22: Formal Schooling & Cog Dev Presentation 23: Theories of Intelligence	Ch 11 Ch 12
1-Apr	Easter Monday – Submit questions for Exam Review	
4-Apr	Presentation 24: Nature and Intelligence Presentation 25: Nurture and Intelligence	Ch 13
8-Apr	Exam Review	

Grading

The instructor reserves the right to alter course requirements, weighting, assignments, and the course schedule if necessary. All attempts will be made to inform students within a reasonable

timeframe, using AVENUE TO LEARN or official McMaster email accounts. Students are responsible for monitoring communications in both. The instructor also reserves the right to adjust a student's grade either up or down in light of special circumstances and/or the student's overall performance in the course.

Students are responsible for making themselves aware of the Statement on Academic Ethics and the Senate Resolutions on Academic Dishonesty as found in the Senate Policy Statements distributed at registration and available in the Senate Office.

The following standard grading scheme will be used:

Letter Grade	Numeric Grade	Letter Grade	Numeric Grade	Letter Grade	Numeric Grade
A+	90-100	B	73-76.9	C-	60-62.9
A	85-89.9	B-	70-72.9	D+	57-59.9
A-	80-84.9	C+	67-69.9	D	53-56.9
B+	77-79.9	C	63-66.9	D-	50-52.9
				F	<50

ASSIGNMENTS

Critiques

You will select an original research article within the scope of cognitive development (any topic). Examples of journals are *Child Development*, *Developmental Psychology*, *Journal of Cognition and Development*. The article should describe a study (or a series of studies), and should not be strictly a review article. Studies may be experiments or correlational. A critique should highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the study. Why is the study important? How does it contribute to our knowledge? What are the study's weaknesses? How do they affect our interpretation of the results? A well-informed critique will require you to read more than just your target article, and cite for example studies with conflicting results or better methodology. Your critiques may be on the same topic as your presentation, or on completely different topics according to your interests.

Length – 1000-1500 words.

Recommended reading: Hyman, R. (1995). How to critique a published article. *Psychological Bulletin*, 118, 178-182.

Presentations

In groups of 2 you will give a presentation of that day's topic. You may base your presentation on material in the textbook, but you are expected to supplement your presentation with additional resources (ie. original journal articles – at least one per presenter). Each presentation should include one demonstration (e.g. of an experimental task). You may act it out, use props, or film it ahead of time.

Presentations should be 30 minutes, plus 10-15 minutes for questions and discussion. Please submit a written summary of your presentation (1-2 pgs). Summaries are due the day of your presentation @ 4pm (submit to AVENUE).

Peer Evaluations

You will give each presentation a grade out of 5 and 1-2 constructive feedback comments (e.g. one strength & one weakness). Your peer's grades will not form your grade, but you will receive a synthesis of their feedback.