

Rutgers University, Department of Psychology
Developmental Psychology, Fall 2017

Psych 323 Boyden Rm 413 Monday & Wednesday 10:00 am - 11:20 am

PROFESSOR

	Office Hours	Office	Phone	Email/Web
Vanessa LoBue	Wednesday 11:30-1:00pm	Smith 341	353-3950	vlobue@psychology.rutgers.edu

TEXT

Required text: The required text can be found on Blackboard. It contains 15 Modules that parallel the lecture material. The Modules each contain published papers that are part of the required reading. These papers are comprised of both empirical studies that we will discuss during lecture, and review articles that provide an overview of the topic. You can access it two ways: First by simply clicking the home button on the class Blackboard page—the modules will show up as folders from there. Second, you can click on Course Documents → Textbook, and in that folder, there is a link to the web version of the book (recommended), and a pdf version of the book. The textbook includes links to 17 empirical papers/review papers/chapters. **These are required reading.** You can also find copies of each of these papers under Course Documents → Readings.

Optional supplementary textbook: If you would like to read further about any of the class topics, I recommend the referring to the following textbook, but it is **not required for the course.**
 Siegler, R., DeLoache, J. S., & Eisenberg, N. (2011). *How Children Develop, 3rd Ed.*, New York: Worth.

BLACKBOARD

The syllabus and required readings are available on blackboard, and you will use Blackboard to upload all assignments. Course announcements and grades will be posted on blackboard as well. Lecture notes will be posted before the lectures so that you can print out the slides to take notes.

ATTENDANCE AT LECTURES

You are responsible for all material and announcements given in class. You will not be able to do well on the exams without attending the lectures since the exams are based on lecture material that is not in the online textbook. While the required readings will supplement the lecture material, they will not duplicate the lectures, and exams will be based on the material in the lectures. If you miss a class, you are responsible for getting notes and announcements from another student. I am happy to go over material and clarify specific questions, but I will not repeat a lecture for you.

COMMUNICATION

You are responsible for making sure that the email address on Blackboard and in the Rutgers online directory is a current address where I can reach you. You are also responsible for checking Blackboard regularly for announcements and information.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- You will learn how children behave at various points in development and how their behavior changes from infancy to adolescence. Children are fascinating, both for their amazing competencies and their equally amazing lack of abilities.
- You will learn some of the ways that psychologists conceptualize development and understand the strength and scope of several major theories. You will see that no single theory provides the whole

story and competing theories provide different explanations for the same phenomena.

- You will become versed in developmental methods and be able to think about children's behavior using the tools of the trade. Many research methods and terms overlap with other areas of psychology but some techniques were devised specifically to address developmental issues or to obtain data from noncompliant, nonverbal subjects.
- Perhaps most important, you will be able to relate the facts, theories, and methods of developmental psychology to everyday problems and real world concerns. This course should give you a scientific basis for understanding your own childhoods, caring for your own children, and considering social policy and norms.

REQUIREMENTS & EVALUATION

Your grades will be based on the total score on your best 3 of 4 exams (90%) and a paper assignment (10%). Your lowest exam grade will be dropped.

Exams

90% of your final grade is based on your best three grades of four exams. Each exam (including the cumulative final exam) is weighted equally and is worth 100 points. I will give three exams during the semester and one final exam. Your lowest exam score will be dropped. This means that you can skip the final exam, or you may skip/drop one of the first three exams and take the final.

The exams require you to apply what you learned in lectures to new material. Research methods and major concepts are cumulative and will be tested on each exam. For the first three exams, research findings and theories that are specific to certain topics are not cumulative. The final exam is cumulative and will include material from throughout the semester. The text will help you to study for the exams, but the exam questions are mostly based on the lecture material. All exam questions are multiple choice. Bring a #2 pencil and eraser for the scantron bubble sheets.

Paper Assignment

10% of your final grade is based on a paper assignment worth 30 points. The paper requires you to find an empirical paper from Google Scholar, and summarize it in one page. The paper assignment will be done in three parts, each worth 10 points.

1. **Empirical article (10 points)**. Use the Rutgers Library to log in to Google Scholar to find an interesting empirical paper that is **less than 10 years old** (i.e., published in 2007 or after) to use for your writing assignment. An empirical paper is a report of scientific research completed by the author(s). Empirical papers are published in peer-reviewed journals, they report the results of a research study, and generally have four sections: Introduction, Method, Results, and General Discussion. If the paper you choose does not have these four sections, it is likely not an empirical article and cannot be used for the assignment. **Please note that you may not choose an empirical article that is part of the assigned readings on Blackboard.** Review articles and book chapters (that do not have clearly delineated Introduction, Method, Results, and General Discussion sections), will not be accepted. Please see the required text on Blackboard for examples of both empirical articles and review articles. The empirical article you choose should focus on a topic relevant to child development, so searching in journals like *Child Development*, *Developmental Psychology*, *Developmental Science*, *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, *Infancy*, *Social Development*, or *Journal of Cognition and Development* are recommended.

You must turn in a full paper copy of the article on the due date. **You will receive 10 points for turning in (1) an empirical article that (2) reports on a study relevant to child development that (3) was published within the last 10 years.** If you hand in an article that is not empirical, is not

relevant to child development, or was published in or before 2007, I will return the paper to you and **you will have one week to correct the assignment for half credit.**

2. **First draft (10 points).** Your assignment is to provide a one-page summary of the empirical article you chose, and to provide your own thoughts on the reported findings. Each paper should be clear and concise, without spelling or grammatical errors, and carefully organized into essay format. Papers should be **1 double-spaced typed page of text**. Use 12-point font in Times New Roman, with 1-inch margins on top, bottom, and sides of each page. I will not read more than 1 page, papers with smaller than 1-inch margins, papers that are not double-spaced, or papers that have fonts other than 12-point. The first line of the paper should be your name, and the next line should be the full citation of the article you selected in APA format, followed by your essay.
3. **Final draft (10 points).** You will have the opportunity to revise your paper based on my comments and hand it in for a final 10 points.

A pdf copy of the article/paper is due (to be submitted on Blackboard) at the end of class on the designated due date. Do not email me your articles/papers because I will not read them. **Late assignments (turned in after 11:30am on the due date) will not be graded.**

Tips for writing a good paper:

- Make sure you list the article citation in APA format.
- **Do not quote.** You will lose a point for **every** quotation you use in the paper.
- Use a spell checker and proofread. You will lose a point for **every** instance of a misspelled word including: its/it's, their/there/they're, ensure/insure, and affect/effect.
- Begin your essay with a few introductory sentences that describe **what the article is about** (2 pts). Show that you can situate a study in a larger conceptual and/or empirical context. What is the real question? You can take your lead from the "introduction" section of the article, but note that you can disagree with the authors regarding the really important issues addressed in the article.
- Write a few sentences that describe **what the researchers did** (2 pts). This description should highlight the design and procedure that are relevant for the results. Weed out irrelevant details. You can take your lead from the "current study" (found just before the "method" section) and "method" sections of the article.
- Write a few sentences that describe **what the researchers found** (2 pts). You should limit yourself to the critical findings that make the paper important and interesting with regard to your argument. You can take your lead from the "results" section of the article and from the summary paragraphs in the "discussion" section.
- Next, describe **why the researchers think their findings are important** (2 pts). What was their primary interpretation of the results? You will find the authors' interpretation of the results in the "discussion" section of the article.
- Finally, end your essay with a clear description of **your own point of view** (2 pts). You might relate the method or findings to material that you learned from lectures. You might criticize some aspect of the article. You might highlight some aspect of the article that emphasizes its importance in a way that was not covered by the authors. You might suggest another way to study the question or ways to improve the study or to follow-up on the findings. Other options are also possible. You should demonstrate your facility with the material and your ability to integrate and generalize what you have learned in the unit.
- **Write clearly and concisely.** Avoid jargon and define all technical terms. Remember, you will lose 1 point for each spelling error, so proofread your work.

Submitting Assignments:

All assignments for this course are to be submitted via Blackboard. In order to submit an assignment, please go to the Blackboard page for this course and click on the Assignments tab. Under this tab, you will see all the assignments, their descriptions, and the due dates. Please submit all assignments within their respective folders. You should submit all assignments as Word or PDF documents. All assignments are due by 11:30 a.m. on the due date listed. Late assignments will not be graded, and will receive a 0.

Your paper assignments will be submitted via Turnitin. They will be scanned through a large database of websites, scholarly articles, and student papers from around the globe. Any potential instances of **plagiarism** will be indicated on the Turnitin report. Please be sure to cite all information properly in all assignments. When information is copied word for word, you are required to use quotation marks to indicate that the words were not written by you, and to provide an in-text citation to give credit to the original author. When you summarize research in your own words, you are still required to use proper in-text citations to demonstrate where the ideas came from. There is an absolute zero tolerance policy for any incidences of plagiarism in this class and **any evidence of plagiarism will result in a 0 on the writing assignment.** Please see the policy on Academic Integrity for more information.

In the online environment, there is always a possibility of technical issues (e.g., lost connection, hardware or software failure). Many of these can be resolved relatively quickly, but if you wait to the last minute before due dates, the chances of these glitches affecting your success are greatly increased. Please plan appropriately. If a problem occurs, it is essential you take immediate action to resolve the problem. Technical questions should be directed to the Student Help Desk at:

help@newark.rutgers.edu

973-353-5083

Hill Hall 109

<http://ncs.newark.rutgers.edu/hd>

No Make-Up Exams/Papers

There are absolutely no make-ups. Because you have the opportunity to drop one exam, you will not have the opportunity to make up missed exams or take exams early. If you miss two of the four exams, a 0 will be entered into the calculation of your exam grade. If you miss three of the four exams, two 0s will be entered into the calculation of your final grade.

Academic Integrity

Students who cheat will receive a 0, and I will alert your department chair and dean. Copying words from published sources, the Internet, or your classmates on paper assignments is considered plagiarism and is considered cheating. Students are expected to do their own work at all times. This course adheres strictly to the University policy on academic integrity.

Mini-Quizzes

In addition to the scheduled exams, there will be a number of unscheduled mini-quizzes in class throughout the semester, in all likelihood including one per week. These will be very short and will take a variety of forms: You might watch a film and be asked questions about what you observed, or you might be asked to write something about an assigned reading, about lecture material from a previous class, or what you think about an upcoming topic. These quizzes will not be graded—they will be collected and kept on file. At the end of the semester, if you have turned in two-thirds or more of the quizzes and they are of acceptable quality, I will add **3 points** to the total number of points you have accumulated on the 3 exams and the paper assignment. Thus, if you are close to the borderline of a particular grade, these bonus points will raise your final grade. This system rewards you for regular class attendance.

Because of the mini-quizzes, there will be **no extra credit assignments**. Handing in mini-quizzes is the only way to add points to your grade at the end of the semester.

Calculating Your Final Grade

The grading scale is 89.5-100%=A, 86.5-89.4%=B+, 79.5-86.4%=B, 76.5-79.4%=C+, 69.5-76.4%=C, 59.5-69.4%=D, 0-59.4%=F. I do not grade on a curve.

The total number of points for the semester will be **330**—100 points for each of your 3 best exams, and 30 points for your paper assignment.

A	296 – 330
B+	286 – 295
B	263 – 285
C+	253 – 262
C	230 – 252
D	197 – 229
F	<197

Again, if you have turned in two-thirds or more of your mini-quizzes, 3 points will be added to your total score out of 330 total possible points.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Part 1: Theory and Methods

Part 2: Foundations of Development

Part 3: Cognitive Development

Part 4: Social Development

LECTURE TOPICS & READINGS

(1) Wednesday, 9/6	INTRODUCTION <i>Overview of Syllabus and Class Policies</i>
(2) Monday 9/11	PART 1 – Theory and Methods <i>The Study of Development [Module 1; Chapter 1 in textbook]</i>
(3) Wednesday 9/13	PART 1 – Theory and Methods <i>Methods for Studying Development [Module 2; Chapter 1 in textbook]</i>
(4) Monday 9/18	PART 2 – Foundations of Development <i>Fetal Development [Module 3; Chapter 2 in textbook]</i>
(5) Wednesday 9/20	PART 2 – Foundations of Development <i>Fetal Learning and The Newborn [Module 3; Chapter 2 in textbook]</i>
(6) Monday 9/25	PART 2 – Foundations of Development <i>Genetics, Teratogens, and Brain Development [Module 3; Chapter 3 in textbook]</i>
(7) Wednesday 9/27	PART 2 – Foundations of Development <i>Infant Learning and Perception [Module 4; Chapter 5 in textbook]</i> ARTICLE FOR PAPER ASSIGNMENT DUE
(8) Monday 10/2	PART 2 – Foundations of Development <i>Motor Development [Module 5; Chapter 5 in textbook]</i>
(9) Wednesday 10/4	EXAM 1
(10) Monday 10/9	PART 3 – Cognitive Development <i>Memory Development [Module 6; Chapter 4 in textbook]</i>
(11) Wednesday 10/11	<i>Dr. LoBue at a conference, No Class</i>
(12) Monday 10/16	PART 3 – Cognitive Development <i>Cognitive Development – Sensorimotor Intelligence [Module 7; Chapter 5 in textbook]</i>
(13) Wednesday 10/18	PART 3 – Cognitive Development <i>Alternative Theories of Development [Module 7; Chapter 5, 9 in textbook]</i>
(14) Monday 10/23	PART 3 – Cognitive Development <i>Cognitive Development – Preoperational Intelligence [Module 7; Chapter 5 in textbook]</i>
(15) Wednesday 10/25	PART 3 – Cognitive Development <i>Pre-operations and Theory of Mind [Module 7; Chapter 5, 7 in textbook]</i>
(16) Monday 10/30	PART 3 – Cognitive Development <i>Cognitive Development – Concrete and Formal Operations [Module 7; Chapter 5 in textbook]</i>
(17) Wednesday 11/1	PART 3 – Cognitive Development <i>Prelinguistic Social Interactions and Speech Perception [Module 8; Chapter 6 in textbook]</i>
(18) Monday 11/6	PART 3 – Cognitive Development <i>Language Acquisition [Module 8; Chapter 6 in textbook]</i> FIRST DRAFT OF PAPER ASSIGNMENT DUE
(19) Wednesday 11/8	PART 3 – Cognitive Development <i>Intelligence and School Achievement [Module 9; Chapter 8 in textbook]</i>
(20) Monday 11/13	EXAM 2
(21) Wednesday 11/15	PART 4 – Social Development

	<i>Family, Parenting, and Peers [Module 10; Chapters 12, 13 in textbook]</i>
(22) Monday 11/20	PART 4 – Social Development <i>Emotional Development [Module 11; Chapter 10 in textbook]</i>
(23) Wednesday 11/22	<i>Thanksgiving, No Class</i>
(24) Monday 11/27	PART 4 – Social Development <i>Temperament [Module 12; Chapter 10 in textbook]</i>
(25) Wednesday 11/29	PART 4 – Social Development <i>Attachment [Module 13; Chapter 11 in textbook]</i> FINAL DRAFT OF ASSIGNMENT DUE
(26) Monday 12/4	PART 4 – Social Development <i>Moral Development and Aggression [Module 14; Chapter 14 in textbook]</i>
(27) Wednesday 12/6	PART 4 – Social Development <i>Gender Development [Module 15; Chapter 15 in textbook]</i>
(28) Monday 12/11	EXAM 3
(29) Wednesday 12/13	FINAL EXAM REVIEW SESSION

Name: Vanessa LoBue

Article Citation: LoBue, V. & DeLoache, J. S. (2008). Detecting the snake in the grass: Attention to fear-relevant stimuli by adults and young children. *Psychological Science, 19*, 284-289.

Previous research suggests that the human visual system has adapted to assign priority in attention to stimuli that are threatening. In other words, humans may have evolved to quickly detect threatening stimuli, such as snakes and spiders, very quickly—more quickly than neutral or non-threatening stimuli. Evidence for faster visual detection of threatening stimuli like snakes and spiders has been reported previously with adults. LoBue and DeLoache (2008) sought to examine the same issue in younger child participants who have less experience with and knowledge about threatening stimuli. In three experiments, they presented preschool children (aged 3 to 5) and adults with 3 x 3 matrices of photographs on a touch-screen monitor. One photo was the target and there were 8 distracters. Participants were told to find and touch the targets on the screen as quickly as possible.

Across experiments, the researchers report that both children and adults detected snakes more quickly than flowers (Exp. 1), and more quickly than other animals that closely resemble snakes, such as frogs (Exp. 2) and caterpillars (Exp. 3). The authors conclude that their study presents a strong case for the evolutionary account since children as young as 3 have much less experience than adults with threatening stimuli like snakes and spiders. The article was interesting and the authors' arguments were convincing. However, I wonder whether the bias in detection is unique to snakes, or whether it would apply to other threats, such as spiders or angry faces, or even modern threats like guns and knives. In order for the authors to make a strong argument for a bias in detection for threat, other threats should be examined as well.