Syllabus for PSYC 201, Section D02
Child Psychology – Online
Department of Psychology
Fall 2026
10/19-12/18

About the Instructor

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Welcome

Welcome to PSYC 201! Over the next 8 weeks we'll learn all about prenatal development, infants, toddlers, and young children. We have a lot to cover, but I hope you find it interesting and engaging.

This is an asynchronous, online course. That means that the course does not "meet" as a group at a certain time; however, you will have deadlines for your work—the class is NOT entirely self-paced. All class materials will be posted weekly to Blackboard. Plan to check Blackboard and SIUE email each morning and each evening for any necessary class updates.

A class announcement will be emailed to students to outline all expectations for the week on Monday mornings. Lectures and any supplemental materials to be covered for that week will be posted and should be viewed before the next week's class. It will be very important to avoid falling behind each week as the materials that are required will accumulate quickly. Typical weekly materials include lectures and additional videos or activities to further illustrate material in the lectures and readings. Weekly expectations, assignment details, and due dates will be noted in each week's emailed announcement; however, they are all also outlined in the syllabus below.

Bio

I earned my Specialist in School Psychology from Northern Illinois University. I worked in both public and private schools, interacting with kids age 3-21. I have also facilitated both online and in-person courses for almost 20 years. I am currently facilitating undergraduate psychology online courses for Capella University, in-person undergraduate psychology classes for Lewis & Clark Community College, and a graduate Seminar class in School Psychology.

Communicating with the instructor

Email is the fastest way to communicate with the instructor, however, students can also attend office hours via Teams offered each week (see the link pasted above), by requesting an appointment for a virtual meeting, or by posting a question on the Discussion Board.
To ensure the best experience, students can expect the instructor to:

- *Be available to students to clarify or explain concepts further.* See the office hours outlined above. Email any requests for an office hour or Teams appointment if necessary. Please do not email assignments, however emailed questions or concerns are welcomeAbout the Course

Course description

This course is designed to cover psychological and biological development of children from conception to puberty. Topics covered in the course focus on the following types of development: physical, motor, sensory, perceptual, cognitive, communication, emotional, behavioral, social, moral, gender, family, and the community.

Prerequisite knowledge and credit hours

3 credit hours; Prerequisite: PSYC 111

Course goals and objectives

At the completion of this course students will:

1) understand of theories of child development,
2) understand genetics, prenatal development, birth, and newborns,
3) understand physical, sensory, and cognitive development in children,
4) understand communication, emotional development, and important relationships in children,
5) understand of the effect of gender on development,
6) understand of disorders common in childhood and evidence-based treatment,
7) enhance critical thinking skills and skepticism regarding the media and research,
8) enhance skills in using PsycINFO,
9) enhance professional writing skills.

Course textbooks

Child Development: From Infancy to Adolescence (3rd Edition; 2024) by Levine & Munsch

The E-Textbook is provided in VitalSource within the course room.

Other course materials

Additional readings and materials will be posted on Blackboard.

Course requirements

Expectations

To ensure the best experience for all, students are expected to:

- *Watch class materials provided.* If you are hoping to do well in this, or any, course, regular viewing and active participation with all materials provided will always be the first step. The course is fast! Lectures that would typically be 2 weeks in an in-person class (so, 5 hours of lectures) will be completed in 1 week for this course. Please plan accordingly in regards to how much time to account for lectures to be viewed.
- *Be courteous and respectful of fellow students' comments*. As we will not be seeing one another in class this semester, it will be very important to utilize good online communication. We will be viewing comments made by each other without the benefit of facial expression, tone, and body language that is so important in expressing our own and understanding others' comments. Below are simple reminders on ways to keep online communication beneficial and respectful (see Online Class Behavior).
- *Be responsible for your own learning*. As college students you are entering adulthood; therefore, keeping records of your own grades, being aware of the class assignments, and being proactive if you are falling behind (contacting the instructor to clarify confusing concepts prior to the exam, for example) is up to you. If you are having difficulty with any aspects of the course, contact me or our graduate assistant as soon as possible.
- *Please print and read the syllabus!* Before asking the instructor a question regarding due dates or assignments make sure it is not already on the syllabus. A syllabus quiz will be completed during the first week of the course to ensure there are no misunderstandings regarding expectations. Find the Syllabus Quiz in Week One on Blackboard to complete.
- *Complete assignments on time.* Only Critical Thinking Papers will be accepted late. All assignments will be completed through Blackboard.

Blackboard (Bb)

- All lectures, grades, assignments, handouts, additional readings, and class announcements will be posted on Blackboard. Please check this system regularly.
- All materials posted in each weekly folder on Bb are required to be completed by 11:59pm on Sunday evenings with the exception of Week 8, which concludes on Friday, 12/18.
- Chrome and Firefox are recommended browsers. Do not attempt to complete classwork on mobile devices or through the Blackboard mobile app.

Course activities/assessments

- **Syllabus Quiz -** To encourage students to be fully aware of class expectations, a quiz over the syllabus will be completed. This quiz can be found in the Week One folder on Blackboard. The quiz will be due on Sunday, at the end of Week One by 11:59 pm CST. This will not be accepted late.

- **Lecture Video Participation Points -** To receive the best class experience, participation and engagement are necessary. Each week some of the lecture videos will have "Participation Points" awarded if at least 80% is watched. To encourage adherence of watching materials these videos will not be announced or indicated to the class. Although all video lectures will remain open throughout the semester, participation points will only be awarded when completed by midnight each Sunday evening (i.e. for participation points, Week 1 lecture videos need to be viewed by midnight on 10/25). Tracking of these points will be completed by the instructor each week.

- **Discussion Board Posts -** Four times throughout the course (every other week, starting in the 1st week) students will respond to a discussion prompt that will be posted on Blackboard in the class Discussion Board. Questions and responses will be graded on content, clarity, and grammar. Throughout each week the content of students' questions/comments will be evaluated and given a grade. Each Discussion Board is worth 5 points, for a total of 20 points for the class. Posts must be made by midnight on Sunday each week. Posts are not accepted late.
    - Guidelines for this grading posts on the Discussion Board are listed below, but will also be available on each discussion post:
      To receive full points for a discussion post, answers must be between 4-5 sentences in total and address all parts of the prompt. A 5-point response will have no grammatical or spelling errors, is at least the requested length, and is a complete, well-structured response. A 3-point response has some errors in spelling or grammar, and is not a fully expressed response, but does address all parts of the prompt. A 1-point response is written poorly, does not address all parts of the prompt, and has poor structure with multiple errors.
        - See the Psychology Department Policy on Writing included below for further clarification of acceptable writing skills.

- **Critical Thinking Paper-** Students will choose from a list of topics that relate to some area of childhood development to reflect on. These topics are intended to generate critical thinking about one's own development or about aspects of development that are affected by culture, families, peers, or other factors. A specific question or task will be assigned that will allow the student to fully consider the different aspects of the topic. Students will then reflect on these questions or tasks by writing a paper using good writing skills (as outlined by the Psychology Department and which can be found on the syllabus). Additional guidelines will be provided on Bb. *All papers must be submitted as a .docx or a .pdf file. No .pages files will be accepted.*

- **Adolescent Presentations and Peer Reviews-**Time constraints prevent the class from covering Adolescent Development, although this period is crucial for many individuals. To ensure that students have familiarity with the basic principles within Adolescent Development students will be assigned specific sections of the Chapters that cover Adolescence. Students will prepare a presentation to summarize what should be known about this developmental stage. Each student will then provide a Peer Review of fellow student's presentations. Details regarding this assignment will be provided on Bb and in a video explanation.

- **Exams**-Four (4) exams will be given throughout the semester. Each exam will cover only the material since the last exam. As such, the final exam **is not cumulative.** Each exam will cover both lecture topics and information from the assigned readings, and will include 50-55 questions with any combination of multiple choice and true or false. Each exam will be available on Blackboard for completion. **Once an exam is opened by the student, the exam will auto-submit after 75 minutes**. Students are encouraged to prepare for the exam as if no resources (notes and textbook) are available, although these materials are allowed. Use of online resources, such as Google or other search engines, are not allowed.

  -Tips for taking online assessments:

- Plan to complete Exams when an internet connection is typically stable
- Choose a time to complete the Exam when distractions are limited
- Do not use a mobile device, such as a phone or tablet
- Read the instructions and directions carefully
- Be prepared to complete the Exam in the allotted time
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Grading and Grading scale

Assignments		Final Grades (points)
Exams (100 points)	400 points	A: 90% and above
Syllabus Quiz (10 points)	10 points	B: 80-89%
Lecture Video Participation (2 points each x 8)	16 points	C: 70-79%
Discussion Board Posts (5 points each x 4)	20 points	D: 60-69%
Critical Thinking Paper	35 points	F: 59% and below
Adolescent Presentation	35 points	Total points: 526
Presentation Peer Review	10 points	

Feedback and grading timeline

Many grades, such as the Syllabus Quiz and Exams, will be posted immediately upon completion. Discussion Board posts and writing assignments will be graded by the end of each week. You can find your grade by clicking the My Grades link on the left menu of the Blackboard course.

Late or Missed Assignments

The penalty for late Critical Thinking Papers and the Adolescent Presentations is 3 points off per date late. These are not accepted over 7 days late, however. No other work is accepted late.

Participation

See "Lecture Video Participation" section above for details on how participation credit will be given.

- ## Online discussions

See "Discussion Board Posts" section above.

- ## Online class behavior

- **Reflect** before you post an emotional response and reread what you have written to be sure it is professional. Communicate as if your comments are printed in a newspaper.
- **Communicate** effectively**.**
  - Do not use all caps or multiple punctuation marks (!!!, ???, etc.).
  - Be sure to define or explain acronyms, jargon or uncommon terms so everyone can understand and participate in the discussion.
- **Sign your name.** Take responsibility for your comments in order to build a strong classroom community.
- **Foster community.** Share your ideas and contribute to ongoing discussions. Make comments that add to, not detract from, a positive learning environment for the course.
- **Be constructive.** Challenge ideas and the course content, but do so in positive ways. It's fine to disagree, but when done politely you stimulate and encourage helpful discussion, and you maintain positive relationships with fellow students.
- **Keep the conversation on topic**. Online dialogue is like conversation. If there is a particular dialogue going on, please add to it, but if you have something new to say, start a new thread.

Technology requirements

Technical requirements for students can be found in this ITS Knowledge Base article.

Technology capabilities

Students in an online course should be able to:

- Use a word processor, such as MS Word, to compose assignments and communicate with others in class
- Attach files to emails or course areas
- Navigate websites and course materials
- Reach out to tech support staff when issues arise and troubleshoot to resolve problems

Additional guidance for taking online courses can be found on the Online at SIUE site.

Course and University policies

Academic integrity/plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use of another person's words or ideas without crediting that person. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and may lead to failure on an assignment, in the class, or dismissal from the University, per the SIUE academic dishonesty policy. Students are responsible for complying with university policies about academic honesty as stated in the University's Student Academic Conduct Code.

Departmental Policy on Plagiarism

Plagiarism includes either presenting someone else's words without quotation marks (even if you cite the source) or presenting someone else's ideas without citing that source. If you plagiarize, your instructor cannot evaluate your understanding of the topic. When paraphrasing from another source, at the very least the student should change the wording, sentence syntax, and order of ideas presented in the paper. Ideally, the student will integrate ideas from multiple sources while providing critical commentary on the topic in a way that clearly identifies whether words and ideas are those of the student or are from another source. Plagiarism is one type of academic misconduct described in SIUE's Student Academic Code (http://www.siue.edu/policies/3c2.shtml). University policy states that "Normally a student who plagiarizes shall receive a grade of F in the course in which the act occurs. The offense shall also be reported to the Provost." (http://www.siue.edu/policies/1i6.shtml). The University policy discusses additional academic sanctions including suspension and expulsion from the University. To ensure that you understand how to avoid plagiarism, we encourage you to review the information on plagiarism provided on the Department of Psychology web page at http://www.siue.edu/education/psychology/plagiarism.shtml.

*ANY case of academic dishonesty will receive the recommended university policy: failure of the course and reporting of the case to the Provost.

Department of Psychology Writing Policy

As a student in this course, you will be expected to display university-level writing, which includes completing course assignments that meet the following basic writing criteria. Specifically, all written assignments completed for this course should include:

- clear transitions from sentence to sentence and idea to idea (e.g., paper is organized/flows well)
- verb tense consistency
- clear and unambiguous sentences and ideas
- writing that is free of typos, spelling errors, and major grammatical errors
- properly formatted citations and references (if relevant)
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This is by no means an exhaustive list of basic writing skills, but will give you an idea of what we are looking for in our papers. If you feel you need help with your writing, you are encouraged to seek assistance from the writing center on campus (http://www.siue.edu/is/writing) or utilize one of the many online resources they have identified to help students (http://www.siue.edu/is/writing/resources.shtml). If your graded written assignments fail to meet the basic writing requirements listed above (and any others found to be appropriate by your instructor), the instructor will stop

the grading process and return the paper to you with the grade of 0. You will have 24 hours to return the assignment in an acceptable form; if it still fails to meet the basic writing criteria, the grade of 0 will remain.

University guidance on artificial intelligence (AI)
Unless expressly allowed by the instructor, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools and applications (including ChatGPT, DALL-E, and others) to produce content for course assignments and assessments is a violation of SIUE's academic policy and is prohibited.

University Policies and Information

University policies and guidance that address teaching, learning, and student support services are available at: https://kb.siue.edu/132378 Students are encouraged to visit this resource site for current information on:

- Regular and Substantive Interaction
- Recordings of Class Content
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Pregnancy and Newly Parenting Policy
- Services for Students Needing Accommodations (ACCESS)
- Academic and Other Student Services (Library, Academic Success, Tutoring, etc.)
- Cougar Care
- Student Success Coaches

Course Schedule:

Week	**Topics** All lectures/notes found in Weekly folder on Bb	**Readings/Activities** Chpts are in textbook, any other items will be linked here and/or in the Weekly folder on Bb	**Assignments and Due Dates** All assignments are due by 11:59pm on Sunday evenings before starting new week
Week 1	Introduction Themes and Theories	Read course syllabus and watch intro video Read Chpts. 1 and 2 Watch lecture videos Discussion Board	Syllabus Quiz Discussion Board Post #1
Week 2	Genetics and Prenatal Development and Newborns Exam 1	Read Chpts 3-4 Watch lecture videos and supplemental videos posted on Bb Exam 1	**Exam 1**
Week 3	Physical and Cognitive Development of Infancy and Toddlerhood	Read Chpts 5-6 Watch lecture videos and supplemental videos posted on Bb Discussion Board	Discussion Board Post #2

Week 4	Social and Emotional Development of Infancy and Toddlerhood Exam 2	Read Chpt 7 Watch lecture videos and supplemental videos posted on Bb Critical Thinking Paper Exam 2	Critical Thinking Paper **Exam 2**
Week 5	Physical and Cognitive Development of Early Childhood	Read Chpts 8-9 Discussion Board	Discussion Board Post #3
Week 6	Social and Emotional Development of Early Childhood Exam 3	Read Chpt 10 Watch lecture videos and supplemental videos posted on Bb Exam 3	**Exam 3**
Week 7	Physical and Cognitive Development of Middle Childhood	Read Chpts 11-12 Watch lecture videos and supplemental videos posted on Bb Discussion Board	Discussion Board Post #4
Week 8	Social and Emotional Development of Middle Childhood Exam 4	Read Chpt 13 Watch lecture videos Exam 4 Adolescent Presentations	Adolescent Presentations Exam 4 ****Due Friday, 12/18

Subject to change notice

All material, assignments, and deadlines are subject to change with prior notice. It is your responsibility to stay in touch with your instructor, review the course site regularly, or communicate with other students, to adjust as needed if assignments or due dates change.

APPLY TO ONE OF OUR PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATE PROGRAMS!

The SIUE Department of Psychology has three graduate programs:

- The **Clinical Child and School Psychology** graduate program has two tracks:
  - Clinical Child Psychology Track. Students in this track receive a Master's degree in Clinical Child and School Psychology. About half of these students choose to then apply to a Doctoral program, and the other half choose to find a job right away. Students are prepared to work with families in private practice, hospitals, or community organizations. Our students have a very high success rate of getting into doctoral programs and finding jobs.
  - School Psychology Track. Students in this track receive a Master's degree in Clinical Child and School

Psychology, and then they typically stay at SIUE to receive a Specialist Degree in School Psychology. These students have a very high success rate of finding employment as school psychologists. In fact, there is a national shortage of school psychologists. Some students later choose to also pursue a Doctoral degree.
    - **See the VIDEO:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQyRMRTYEDQ

- The **Clinical Psychology** master's program "is one of the strongest clinical training programs in the St. Louis region. It prepares students for careers in mental health organizations or further graduate education in a clinical PsyD or PhD program, a counseling PhD program, or related doctoral study. Many graduates obtain positions in community mental health centers, state hospitals, research institutions, private hospitals, and other agencies that provide psychological services."
    - **See the VIDEO:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQ3n6O7xaIE

- **The Industrial/Organizational Psychology** master's program "offers a rare blend of the scientist-practitioner model, requiring students to complete both a research-based thesis and required field hours of practicum…Research experience is directed at conceptualizing and solving applied organizational problems. Required practica, which are available throughout the St. Louis area, are oriented toward giving students applied, realistic skills and experiences to develop viable and effective performance in an organizational context."
    - **See the VIDEO:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j5NfzF-b3K4

You can learn more about all of these programs here: https://www.siue.edu/education/psychology/graduate/