

**Psychology 380**

Proseminar: Developmental Section

Fall 2005

Sara Burchard, Instructor

**Course Description:** This graduate course is designed to introduce students to some of the major current issues, questions, methods, and active content areas within the discipline of Developmental Psychology. The seminar will examine the strategies employed in developmental research to address questions in the field and how that relates to the public knowledge base and social policy. The seminar will examine current issues and empirical directions within the field by reading and discussing recent research and review articles. Major themes that the seminar addresses are:

- causes and processes involved in behavior change and development
- models of development
- individual differences
- continuities and discontinuities in development
- contextual issues including historical cohorts
- ethnic, minority and cultural differences and developmental similarities
- risk and resiliency in development
- the interface between developmental psychology and social policy

**Course Format:** This course is a seminar format and consists of group discussions of assigned readings and student presentation. In order for students to benefit from the class meetings and to be able to participate actively in them, a thorough and thoughtful reading and review of all assigned articles prior to class is essential and expected of all participants. Short, weekly, written assignments (one or two pages) are assigned to assist students to prepare to be active participants in the seminar discussions. A short paper in an area of student interest or a final take-home examination given at the end of the last seminar meeting will serve as the “final exam”. The content of the final exam will be determined in consultation with the seminar participants.

**Course Requirements:**

1. **Class participation** – attendance at all classes and active participation in discussions of assigned articles and discussion questions.
2. **Preparation and informal presentation of one research article** assigned by the instructor to serve as a vehicle for “reinstatement” of article content for classmates and subsequent discussion. The presenter will provide a written, short summary for classmates and will be responsible to lead class discussion of the article. The presenter is also thoroughly familiar with the article in order to answer questions and can relate the material to the issues addressed by the group’s assigned readings under discussion. Students will have some latitude in selecting the article. Presentation and discussion will probably be limited to about 20 minutes.

3. Short written assignments – will be given each week that relate to the readings or issues the group will be discussing. These will be due at the next class session, should be typewritten, double spaced and no longer than one or two pages(back to back). They should reflect thoughtful consideration of the questions based on careful examination of the reading assignment. The purpose of these assignments is to help prepare students to participate actively in the discussions and to better acquaint the instructor with student views and interests in the material.
4. Paper or Final Exam – Take Home. Content and format to be determined in conjunction with students. Typewritten – no more than 7-8 pages.

**Required Readings:** Readings will be available for copying in a file on the shelves located in the space next to the Psych 1 office. The instructor reserves the right to make minor alterations in reading assignments as presented in the course syllabus. Students are encouraged to make suggestions for readings and/or topics.

### **Course Grading:**

1. Class participation = 30% of grade
2. 6 written 1-2 page assignments = 30 % of grade
3. 1 article presentation = 15 % of grade
4. Final Exam/Final Paper = 25% of final grade

#### **Basis for Assigning Grades:**

90% + = A

80% + = B

70% + = C

#### **Progress Feedback:**

Written assignments will be returned weekly.

Oral: Students will receive a short written feedback form with grade.

Other: Students are welcome to meet with the instructor to discuss their performance.

PROSEMINAR: DEVELOPMENTAL SECTION  
Psych 380 Room 100 Dewey Hall  
Fall 2005

Mon. 9:00-11:45

Instructor:  
Sara Burchard

### DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY SYLLABUS

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
8.	10/19/05	Introduction to Developmental Psychology	Rutters: Ch.1,2
9.	10/26/05	Mechanisms for Change: Understanding the interplay Of Nature/Nurture	Gottlieb 2000 Bouchard 2004 Rutter 2002 Whitfield/McClearn '05 *Written Assmt #1
10.	11/2/05	Evolutionary Psychology & Core Knowledge Areas: Early Infant Abilities	Geary&Bjorkland '00 Tomasello '00 Wynn 1995 Baillargeon 2000 Spelke 2000 Written # 2
11.	11/9/05	Contexts for Development: Parents, Peers, & Neighborhoods...	Collins et al.'00 Steinberg et al. '98 Dodge & Petit,'03 Leventhal 2004 Written #3
12.	11/16/05	Contexts for Development: Lifespan, History, Cultural; Culture, Ethnicity, SES	Elder 1998 Werner 1990 Evans 2004 Lillard Written Wk #4
13.	11/30/05	Risk and Resiliency	Hill et al. '03 Rutter et al. '04 Gutman et al. '03 Masten '01 Written Wk #5