

# PSY 322: Understanding Human Development

Spring 2016

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**Office Hours:** T/R 12:45-1:45 and 3:15-4:15 (Rockwall); W 10-11 (Virtual)

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**Required Textbook:** Essentials of Life-Span Development (4th edition) by John W. Santrock. (ISBN: 978-0077861933)

**eCollege:** Course materials, including an electronic version of the syllabus and supplementary information, will be posted on eCollege.

**About the Course:** Understanding Human Development is a developmental psychology course that examines the changes, both growth and decline, across the human lifespan from conception to death. It includes physical, cognitive, and socioemotional changes that help to shape our lives. Topics include the importance of the prenatal environment on development, formation of language, self-esteem and identity, romantic relationships, retirement, and dying. What you will find is that our journey through life is incredible –from learning to walk to compensating for physical declines in later life.

**Course Philosophy:** I believe that courses should be both educational and enjoyable. This course is informative. You will learn how a being grows from a few cells to a walking, talking individual that eventually forms an own identity and pursues one's own dreams! What can be more fascinating? ☺

## Course Objectives:

1. Understand the physical, cognitive, and socioemotional changes that occur across the eight major stages of development – prenatal, infancy, early childhood, mid-late childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood
2. Recognize the importance of lifespan development research along with understanding how this research is conducted, including research methodology and ethical issues
3. Identify the impact of culture and diversity on development
4. Further develop communication skills to discuss and critique psychological research
5. Relate knowledge learned in this course about human development to the real world

**Course Assignments:**

- 1) **Content Exams** – Three content exams will be administered. I will take the best two out of the three exams. Content exams are worth 20% each (or 40% total). Testing has shown to improve the long-term retention of information (Roediger & Karpicke, 2006). Think of tests as learning opportunities. I will provide review questions to help you prepare for the exams so that you can test yourself.
- 2) **Cumulative Final** – a final exam covering the entire course will be administered during finals weeks. This final will assess your knowledge of the course content. It is worth 30%.
- 3) **Older Adults & Media Assignment** – Students will select an example of the portrayal of older adults (age 60+) in the media (e.g., movies, TV, music, comic). Students will provide a summary of the example (e.g., describe and provide the comic, describe an older character in the movie and a particular action performed by that character, etc.). You will relate the example to knowledge from the text about late adulthood, including physical, cognitive, and/or socioemotional issues. In particular, you will be assessing whether the example is a true representation or an exaggeration of physical, cognitive, and socioemotional changes in older adulthood. Students should be prepared to discuss this assignment. Additional information about this assignment can be found on the eCollege website. This assignment is worth 10%.
- 4) **Culture Website** – Groups will create a website on a topic of lifespan development and cultural issues. Each group will present on a unique topic (i.e., no duplication of topics between groups). For example, a group might research cultural differences in expressing grief; emerging adulthood across cultures; perceptions of older adults among eastern vs. western cultures; cross-cultural differences in parenting styles, etc. Additional information about this assignment can be found on the eCollege website. This assignment is worth 20%.
- 5) **Research Exposure** – All students will be exposed to laboratory-based research either by a) participating in research studies within the Psychology participant pool, or, b) writing a summary on a research article related to developmental psychology. You must participate in four hours of ONLINE research studies by signing up for studies via the Experiment Management System, or complete an equivalent number of reading summaries, with one summary equaling 1 hour of research participation. **Failure to complete the research exposure requirement results in a deduction of one full letter grade at the end of the term.** You may do a combination of research study participation and research summaries (e.g., two research credit hours and two research summaries). *\*Face-to-face research studies are offered in Commerce; if you attend both the Rockwall and Commerce campus, you can participate in lab studies in Commerce.*

**Grade Distribution:**

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percent</u>
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 60

## Course Policies

**University Codes of Conduct:** A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained. “All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment” (Code of Student Conduct’ from online Student Guide Handbook)

**Plagiarism:** Texas A & M University-Commerce views plagiarism as a serious offense. Plagiarism occurs when individuals take ideas and/or words from another source and claim these ideas as their own without giving credit to the original author(s). This can include copying words from an Internet website, reading an article and taking the authors ideas without giving them credit, or writing work that is remarkably similar to other written work (e.g., Changing words to synonyms is still plagiarism). If any written work contains ideas that are not your own, you need to give credit to the author(s) by including citations. Instructors are obligated to report instances of plagiarism to university officials. Please refer to the American Psychology Association (APA) manual for instructions on citing materials. When in doubt, ask me. Ignorance will not be tolerated as an excuse for plagiarism. Acts of plagiarism on any written assignment, including discussion postings, will result in severe consequences, including the possibility of receiving a zero in the course. Acts of plagiarism will be reported to the department head.

**Scholarly Expectations:** All works submitted for credit must be original works created by the scholar uniquely for the class. It is considered inappropriate and unethical to make duplicate submissions of a single work for credit in multiple classes, unless specifically requested by the instructor. **Attendance:** Research has shown that class attendance is critical to learning. The instructor may drop a student from the course if the student has **4 or more unexcused absences**. Please note that absences will only be excused with documented proof (e.g., doctor’s note). Arriving late to class may also count as an absence.

**Make-up Exams:** **No make-up exams will be given.** Each student gets to drop one of the three context exams.

**Late Work:** I have a strict late work policy for the older adult and culture website project. If a late assignment is turned in within 24 hours of the due date, a one-grade step penalty will be imposed. If the assignment is turned in between 24-48 hours of the due date, a two-grade step penalty will be imposed. If the assignment is submitted more than 48 hours late, it will automatically be scored as a zero (i.e., no credit granted). \*\*Please note that computer issues will not be considered as an excuse for failing to submit any assignment on time. It is the student’s responsibility to make sure that assignments are turned in on time. Therefore, do not wait until the very end to complete an assignment.\*\*

**Extra Credit Opportunities:** You may earn extra credit by summarizing up to THREE journal articles published within the last five years. Each journal article summary counts as one extra credit point. Please note that **I do not bump up grades**. For example, if you earn an 89 in the course, you will receive a B.

This is your opportunity to bump up your own grade and learn more about cutting edge research! ☺ I strongly encourage you to take advantage of these extra credit opportunities.

**Etiquette/Netiquette:** Offensive language in class and aggressive correspondence online will not be tolerated. Students are expected to be respectful of others' opinions when communicating. Rule of thumb: Just be nice and courteous. ☺

**Class Conduct:** Please remember to turn off your cell phone or set it to silent (not vibrate). If you are expecting an urgent call (e.g., family member is having surgery, partner serving overseas is expected to call, etc.), please let me know before the class starts about the issue and we can make arrangements. **Text messaging and instant messaging are prohibited.** If you bring a laptop to class, you must limit it to class-relevant use (e.g., typing notes). *I will ask you to leave the classroom if you are engaging in off-task behaviors. Furthermore, I expect you to arrive to class on time and stay the entire time.* If you have a reason that you need to leave or arrive early, you must clear it with me beforehand.

**Technical Support:** This course is supported by Texas A&M University–Commerce through the eCollege course management system. There is a Student Orientation Tutorial in eCollege if you are unfamiliar with it. If you have technology questions please contact the eCollege HelpDesk, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by clicking the HelpDesk link in the Help pages in eCollege or by sending an email directly to helpdesk@online.tamuc.org. You may also reach the HelpDesk by calling (toll-free) 1-866-656-5511.

**Students with Disabilities:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services, Texas A&M University-Commerce, Gee Library, Room 132, Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835; Fax (903) 468-8148; StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu.

## **TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
1/19 (T)	Syllabus/Introductions	No Reading	
1/21 (R)	Lifespan Perspective Introduction	Ch. 1	
1/26 (T)	Biological Beginnings	Ch. 2	
1/28 (R)	Infancy – Physical & Cognitive	Ch. 3	
2/2 (T)	Infancy – Socioemotional	Ch. 4	
2/4 (R)	Early Childhood - Physical & Cognitive	Ch. 5	
2/9 (T)	Early Childhood – Socioemotional	Ch. 6	
2/11 (R)	<b>Exam 1</b>	--	In-class exam over chapter 1-6
2/16 (T)	Middle Childhood - Physical & Cognitive	Ch. 7	
2/18 (R)	Middle Childhood – Socioemotional	Ch. 8	
2/23 (T)	Adolescence - Physical & Cognitive	Ch. 9	
2/25 (R)	Adolescence – Socioemotional	Ch. 10	

3/1 (T)	Early Adulthood - Physical & Cognitive	Ch. 11	
3/3 (R)	Early Adulthood - Physical & Cognitive, Cont.	Ch. 11	
3/8 (T)	Early Adulthood – Socioemotional	Ch. 12	
3/10 (R)	<b>Exam 2</b>	--	In-class exam over chapters 7-12
3/15 (T)	Spring Break		
3/17 (R)	Spring Break		
3/22 (T)	Website Project– Day 1	--	Locate research articles, create Wix account, and begin working on Culture Website
3/24 (R)	Website Project– Day 2	--	Continue working with your group on the assignment.
3/29 (T)	Website Exhibition	No Reading	Website project (due at 2 pm)
3/31 (R)	Middle Adulthood - Physical & Cognitive	Ch. 13	
4/5 (T)	Middle Adulthood – Socioemotional	Ch. 14	
4/7 (R)	Late Adulthood - Physical	Ch. 15	
4/12 (T)	Late Adulthood - Cognitive	Ch. 15, cont.	
4/14 (R)	Late Adulthood – Socioemotional	Ch. 16	
4/19 (T)	Death & Dying	Ch. 17	
4/21 (R)	<b>Exam 3</b>	--	In-class exam over chapters 13-17
4/26 (T)	Older Adult and Media assignment preparation	--	
4/28 (R)	Older Adult and Media Exhibition	--	Older Adult and Media project (due at 2 pm to dropbox)
5/3 (T)	Older Adult and Media Exhibition, Cont.	--	
5/5 (R)	Course Wrap-Up/Reflections	No Reading	Extra credit assignments due by 5 pm
TBA	<b>Cumulative Final Exam</b>	--	In-class exam over chapters 1-17