

This is a sample syllabus only. The instructor may make changes to the syllabus in future courses.

Infant Development PY420

Instructor:	Dr. Maria Hopkins
Meeting Times:	Tuesdays & Thursdays – 11:00 am -12:15 pm
Meeting Location:	CH 320
Office Hours:	Wednesdays 11:10 am - 12:30 pm; or by appointment
Office Location:	Campbell Hall 415
Phone:	(205) 975-9456
Email:	mhopkins@uab.edu
Required Textbook:	Dana Gross (2011). <i>Infancy: Development from birth to age 3, Second Edition</i> , United States: Pearson.

Course Rationale:

The goal of the course is to review contemporary theory, research, and methods relevant to understanding infant development. The course focuses on both normative and atypical development because an understanding of one enriches an understanding of the other. Individual differences, sociocultural diversity, and a historical perspective on the study of all these themes will be emphasized throughout. Topics will include: Genetic and environmental influences on development & temperament; Neurodevelopment & Risk, Resilience, & Intervention; Sensory development ; Cognitive development; Social cognitive development, joint attention; Language development; Emotion & emotion regulation; Social Interaction; Precursors to attachment.

Course Objectives:

1. Gain knowledge about theory and research in infant development.
2. Make connections between theory, research, and practice, and consider the implications of research for interventions, education, and policy regarding infants.
3. Develop critical reading and writing skills through reading assignments, writing assignments, and discussions of theoretical material, and current research findings.
4. Develop effective oral communication skills to teach others about the information learned in class.

Course Structure:

This course is a seminar; thus, student preparation and participation are key to its success. Class sessions will consist of mini-lectures by the instructor, group discussion, and student presentations. Preparation for class includes reading the assigned articles, and critically evaluating them prior to class on assigned weeks, and coming prepared for high quality discussion every week.

Course Requirements:

(1) Tests. There will be 2 tests given over the course of the semester. Tests will be administered in class, as marked on the syllabus, and will take the class time to complete. Two tests are non-cumulative, and cover textbook chapters and lectures as documented in the course schedule. Tests will consist of multiple choice and short essay questions and include material from the text, class assignments, and lecture. **Please bring a #2 pencil with you to class on test days.**

- a. Make-up exams will not be given, except in the case of *extreme emergency* (i.e., medical emergency or family death), and if possible, should be arranged prior to

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missing the scheduled exam time. Be aware that I will require you to document the cause of any unforeseen rescheduling of exams.

- b. Make-up exams will be difficult and will only be given within a week of the exam date. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor to set-up an appropriate time to take the exam.

(2) Student presentations. Each student will give one presentation during the semester. The presentation will be planned for a professional audience and should emphasize the most important facts, practical advice, useful resources, and research/theory, if appropriate. Possible topics include:

- Colic
- Infant nutritional needs
- Breastfeeding
- Baby Wise, Attachment Parenting or other "controversial" parenting methods
- Infant sleep issues and methods
- Baby Wearing
- The NICU; context and services
- Recognizing signs of and identifying services for various developmental delays
- Postpartum depression
- Fathers' involvement
- Toy selection for infants
- Toilet training
- The Mozart Effect
- Parental leave policies
- Prenatal care
- Homebirth, water birth, or other options for birthing
- Doulas
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome
- Transition to parenting: family adaptation
- Sibling response to the birth of an infant
- Maternal work: effects on children
- Maternal work: social policies and their effectiveness
- *I will consider other topics that you propose as well*

You will list your top 3 choices by September 3. Topics will be assigned on September 5. Students will be asked to provide one another with written feedback about the quality of the presentations (both content and delivery). This can be anonymous if you wish. The presentation is described in detail below.

This presentation should be no more than 15 minutes long with time allotted for a couple of questions/answers and/or guided discussion about the topic. Other classmates will not have read up on the topic, so you are responsible for teaching them about it. The focus should be on clearly explaining the most relevant facts and providing practical advice and resources. Provide your classmates with a handout that would be appropriate for new parents (e.g., summary of relevant information, good websites, relevant organizations, local resources). The purpose of this assignment is to allow students an opportunity to practice translating scientific information into an engaging and useful format for a lay audience. You may also focus on relevant theory, empirical research results,

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and policy implications where relevant. Be sure to prioritize the information that you think is most important for your colleagues to learn in the allotted time period. The purpose of this assignment is to allow students an opportunity to practice their presentation and teaching skills and to expose you to a variety of applied issues relevant to development during infancy. **You must turn in a copy of any visual aids, the handout and references at the beginning of your presentation.**

(3) Writing Log. Throughout the semester you will complete a writing log. The topics are listed below. As you can see, this writing log gives you an opportunity to explore personal feelings and past experiences. The inherent nature of studying prenatal and infant development often lends itself to self-discovery and self-reflection. In addition, each topic relates generally to the infant topics under discussion and will stimulate your personal investment in the experiences being studied. There are 5 topics. You will receive up to 20 points for each topic.

a. LOG #1

1. What about infants are you most curious about? What kind of contact or interaction have you had with any infants up till now? Please share their ages and the circumstances involved. Describe the nature of the experiences you see yourself having with infants in the future (i.e. parent, educator, etc.).
2. What fascinates you most about the human reproduction process in general? What feelings do you have about contributing to conception and become a biological parent? If you are one already, reflect back. What choices would you make about contraception? What about for your potential partner (male/female)? Who do you think should be responsible for it?
3. What would you do if you were found infertile? Or if your partner were found infertile? Would you consider alternative paths to conception? Please share your choices and reasoning, also considering as well, if these circumstances may involve close relatives. Answer the following questions with your thoughts:
Is it o.k. to have IVF?
If you conceive a child from a donated sperm or ovum, would you tell him/her?
If you are a woman, would you allow to be fertilized by another man's sperm other than your husband's?
If you are a man, would you allow your wife to be fertilized by another man's sperm?
If you are a woman, would you consider having another woman (surrogate) implanted with your fertilized egg?
Do you think it is o.k. for a woman to donate her egg / would you donate your egg?
Would you give another couple your frozen fertilized egg?
Is it o.k to donate sperm, to freeze sperm?

b. LOG #2

1. Share characteristics of your mother's pregnancy up until your birth. Find out about your own childbirth and gestation. What does she remember about her pregnancy with you? Describe your mother's exposure to or avoidance of any teratogens during your prenatal development. Also discuss her level of stress, participation in exercise, and whether she received emotional support during her pregnancy. How long was her pregnancy, and how did she feel, physically and emotionally?
2. Describe the birthing experience, type and location (what country, city, hospital?) Did she follow the "textbook" process during her labor and delivery experiences, i.e. water breaking, anesthesia, episiotomy, vaginal, etc.? Did the delivery go smoothly, or were there any concerns or medical interventions? What did you find out that you didn't know already?

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3. Describe yourself at birth (weight, length, hair, anything else you can find out about your appearance at birth). If you know your Apgar score, what was it? If not, describe what you have been told about your condition at birth.

c. LOG #3

1. What influenced your parents' (typically the mother's) decision on how to feed you at birth? Were you fed breast milk or formula or both? If so, for how long? How does knowledge of your early feeding practices influence what you will choose to do with your children? Or what you already chose to do with your children?
2. Talk about early milestones (smiling, crawling, walking, talking, etc.) if there are records of those, or if your parents remember. Were your milestones generally on time? Were there any developmental or health concerns during the first couple of years? How were you described as a newborn and what were your sleep patterns like? How was your family's adjustment to you?
3. Who cared for you when you were born and in the first 3 years? Was your mother or father or someone else your primary caregiver? How did your parent(s) make these decisions? Were they happy with the care you received, and would they do it again the same way? How have your infant caregivers shaped your childhood? If you have a child, how will you care for your newborn infant? Will you have the mother stay home? Only for a few months? Or what did you already choose to do with your children?

d. LOG #4

1. To whom were you most securely attached by around 6-8 months of age, and how did that attachment develop? How would you characterize the quality of your attachment with that person given what you are learning about attachment and what specifically leads you to categorize it as such? If you were around both parents during infancy, how did the attachments differ? Did you have secondary attachments to anyone else during your first year or two?
2. What were the pros and cons of growing up with or without siblings? If you had siblings, describe your relationships with them, and how you believe your own birth order influenced your development, if at all. If you did not have siblings, describe your closest relationship(s) with peers or children in your extended family.
3. What do you recall about your parents' relationship with each other during your childhood (whether they were together or not)? How did the situation positively and/or negatively impact your development (relationship with parent/s and siblings, relationships with step-parent/s, self-esteem, sense of security, school, etc.)?

e. LOG#5

1. Describe how your cultural, ethnic, geographical, or religious background shaped the caregiving you received as an infant. What unique customs or traditions were involved during your infancy? Describe any cultural, religious, or holiday rituals/traditions that were especially meaningful in your early environment. Also include any sayings or stories that you heard repeatedly from your caregivers as they tried to pass on their knowledge, values, and customs. In what ways do you think it was different from what you consider to be the "average" American childhood?
2. Imagine that you or your life companion has just become pregnant. What do you expect will be the most dynamic changes in your life? What would you look forward to about the pregnancy/ parenthood? If you were able to pass on any experience, wisdom, or trait to the

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children in your life (your own, your relatives' or friends' children, the children you teach, etc.), what would you want to teach them? What do you consider to be the most important experiences a parent can give to an infant? Share any personal experiences you find significant.

3. With the course coming to an end, what significant aspects will you take away with you? What did you learn from this assignment? Did anything surprise you? Reflect on what you have learned about infants, about yourself.

(4) Developmental Observation It is fascinating to observe children and to understand their developmental journey! Life begins as a tiny speck, and after a period of miraculous biological transformation in the womb, the amazing newborn baby enters this world ready to experience whatever the world around has to offer! Each individual child's developmental track is unique. Children with atypical developmental characteristics may differ from normal course of development depending on the unique characteristics of the child. The purpose of developmental observation assignment is to synthesize and apply the theoretical concepts of child development to acquire an understanding of the developmental characteristics of a child in the biological, cognitive, language, and social domains of development. The observation assignment has two components:

- a. *Observation:* Observe and/or interview a child (newborn – 3 years) for 1 ½ hours in a home, school or any other community organization serving children. Record your observations based on the guidelines provided. If the child can talk, interview the child asking age appropriate questions. In your interview, **as appropriate**, you may ask the child about his or her likes, dislikes, interests or hobbies, role models, hopes and fears, attitude towards parents, teachers, school, and friends. Recognize atypical developmental characteristics, if any.
- b. *Written Report:* Write a written report following the guidelines provided. The developmental observation assignment is graded according to the following criteria:
 - *Information processing skills:* Effectively interprets and synthesizes information obtained through the observation.
 - *Knowledge of child development concepts:* Able to access, process, and utilize child development knowledge.
 - *Evaluation of observation:* Effectively identifies and explores problems, situations, questions, and issues.
- c. *Guidelines and Format for Developmental Observations Report*
 - **Cover page 1 point**
 - Your name; Title of the Assignment
 - Age of the child; Gender of the child
 - You can attach the picture of the child on the front cover if you like.
 - **Introduction 4 points**
 - Name of the child, age and gender
 - Family characteristics: Social and cultural contexts (Bronfenbrenner, Vygotsky)
 - Siblings and their ages
 - Cultural background and socioeconomic status
 - **Developmental characteristics 20 pts.**

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- Describe the child's physical characteristics and motor abilities.
- Identify any problems or issues, if any.
- Child's approximate height and weight
- Does the child appear healthy or not? What makes you think so? Child's nutritional habits and eating patterns
- Child's sleeping patterns
- Child's movement and activities:
 - For infants (newborn – 6 months), check for newborn reflexes.
 - How does the child move or how does the child use his/her body?
 - Does the child appear to be comfortable with his/her physical abilities?
 - Does the child prefer mostly high energy activities or quiet activities?
 - Give examples of child's gross motor skills – are they age appropriate?
 - Give examples of child's fine motor skills – are they age appropriate?
- **Cognitive domain 20 points**
 - According to Jean Piaget's cognitive development stages, which stage would you place the child? Why? Give two examples to support/explain your answer.
 - For younger children, which stage of the sensorimotor intelligence does the child display? Support your answer.
 - What types of play does the child engage in?
 - Measure the child's ability to follow eye gaze, joint attention and discuss the response.
 - Test the child's object permanence abilities. Include the child's response.
 - Test the child's theory of mind abilities and discuss the child's responses.
- **Language Domain 20 points**
 - Describe the child/ language and thinking abilities.
 - Measure the child's receptive and perceptive language and discuss your findings.
 - Is the child using symbolic gestures? If so, describe.
 - Ask age appropriate questions as applicable. Include the child's responses.
 - What is your conclusion about the child's language development?
- **Social and emotional domain 20 points**
 - Describe the child's temperament characteristics.
 - Makes friends easily; shy or quiet; cooperative or prefers to be alone.
 - How does the child communicate his/her wants or needs?
 - How does the child relate and interact with other people? Give two examples of child's interactions with family members/peers and friends/teacher/coach, or with you.
 - Which stage would this child be according to Erik Erikson? Give one reason for your answer.
 - Does the child's behavior reflect any specific gender characteristics? Give two examples to support your answer.
 - Describe the child's attachment.
- **Conclusion 10 points**
 - Write a brief conclusion about the child's developmental characteristics. Make sure to connect to theories/research discussed in the course. You may also ask parents/caregivers/teachers for their comments about the child.
- **Spelling, Grammar, Following Directions 5 points**
- *Please note : If you observe a child with atypical characteristics then apply relevant concepts, as appropriate.*

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Course Grade:

Your final grade and course assignments will be graded on the following scale and the grades will be calculated according to the percentages below:

Grading Scale	Grading Breakdown		
A=500-450 points	Exams	2@100 points each	(200 points)
B=449-400 points	Writing Log	5 @ 20 points	(100 points)
C=399-350 points	Child Observation	100 points	(100 points)
D=349-300 points	Presentation	100 points	(100 points)
F=< 300 points	<u>TOTAL</u>		<u>500 points</u>

Dropping and Withdrawing:

The Office of the Registrar has set the last day to drop this course without paying full tuition and fees as September 3rd, 2013. The last day to withdraw from this course with a grade of “W” is October 25th, 2013.

Severe Weather:

In the event of severe weather, the official source for UAB closing is WBHM, 90.3 FM.

Academic Integrity Policy:

“The Department of Psychology considers academic dishonesty to be a very serious matter. Cheating devalues the honest efforts of other students, consumes enormous amounts of faculty and staff time, and is never justifiable. The undergraduate catalog presents the university’s policy on Academic Misconduct, which the Department scrupulously follows. Note that academic dishonesty can take various forms, including cheating on an exam, assisting someone else in cheating, and plagiarizing or presenting someone else’s written material as your own. The Department routinely uses sophisticated mathematical and computer-based techniques to detect cheating and plagiarism in its classes. Students may be asked to present evidence of independent scholarship or re-take an exam if cheating or plagiarism is suspected. In general, the Department of Psychology will seek the most severe penalty for acts of academic misconduct that are detected. First offenses typically result in an “F” in the course. Second offenses typically result in expulsion from the university. For further details, consult the catalog.”

Disability Related Accommodations:

If you are registered with Disability Support Services, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss accommodations that may be necessary. If you have a disability but have not contacted Disability Support Services, please call 934-4205 or visit DSS at 516 Hill University Center.

<i>Week</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Assignment</i>
1	Tue	Aug 27	Introduction		
	Thu	Aug 29	Historical Perspectives on Childhood	Chapter 1	
2	Tue	Sep 3	Genetics, Conception & Prenatal Development	Chapter 3	Presentation Topics
	Thu	Sep 4	Genetics, Conception & Prenatal Development	Chapter 3	
3	Tue	Sep 10	Birth and the Newborn	Chapter 4	Log #1
	Thu	Sep 12	Birth and the Newborn	Chapter 4	
4	Tue	Sep 17	Physical Growth, Health & Nutrition	Chapter 5	
	Thu	Sep 19	Physical Growth, Health & Nutrition	Chapter 5	Log #2
5	Tue	Sep 24	Sensation, Perception, & Motor Development	Chapter 6	
	Thu	Sep 26	Sensation, Perception, & Motor Development	Chapter 6	
6	Tue	Oct 1	Cognition, Learning, & Intelligence	Chapter 7	Log #3
	Thu	Oct 3	Cognition, Learning, & Intelligence	Chapter 7	
7	Tue	Oct 8	Midterm Exam		Midterm Exam
	Thu	Oct 10	Presentations		Presentations
8	Tue	Oct 15	Presentations		Presentations
	Thu	Oct 17	Presentations		Presentations
9	Tue	Oct 22	Presentations		Presentations
	Thu	Oct 24	Presentations		Presentations
10	Tue	Oct 29	Language & Communication	Chapter 8	
	Thu	Oct 31	Language & Communication	Chapter 8	
11	Tue	Nov 5	Relationships & Social Development	Chapter 9	
	Thu	Nov 7	Relationships & Social Development	Chapter 9	Log #4
12	Tue	Nov 12	Temperament, Emotions & The Self	Chapter 10	
	Thu	Nov 14	Temperament, Emotions & The Self	Chapter 10	
13	Tue	Nov 19	Childcare & Early Intervention	Chapter 11	Log #5
	Thu	Nov 21	Child Observations/Writing Day		
14	Tue	Nov 26	Thanksgiving Break		
	Thu	Nov 28	Thanksgiving Break		
15	Tue	Dec 3	Childcare & Early Intervention	Chapter 11	
	Thu	Dec 5	Music, Media, & Computers	Chapter 12	Observation Paper
16	Fri	Dec 10	Final Exam 10:45 am-1:15 pm		Final Exam