EDHD 420
Cognitive Development & Learning
Spring 2015
Section 0101 Monday/Wednesday 9:30-10:45am
Section 0201 Monday/Wednesday 11:00am – 12:15pm
ARC 1105

Instructor: Richard Prather
Office Hours: Tuesday 11-12. Benjamin Building 3304S
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Textbook

GRADE SUMMARY
Class participation: 20%
Exam I: 22.5%
Exam 2: 22.5%
Final Exam: 35%

Major Scheduled Grading Events
Exam 1 Monday February 23rd
Exam 2 Monday April 6th
Final Exam – Section 0101: Wed May 20th, 8 – 10am,
Section 0201: Sat, May 16th, 8-10am,

COURSE DESCRIPTION
The aim of this course is to present the major theories, issues, and areas of research in cognitive development. An emphasis will be made on the application of these concepts to education. The course will begin with discussions of theoretical frameworks for studying cognitive development. The second part of the course will focus on specific areas of cognitive development, including memory, reading, mathematics and language skills. In addition to learning content relevant to Cognitive Development, students will gain experience presenting, writing and evaluating research.

Course Structure and Readings: This class will include a mixture of lecture and discussion. Students are strongly encouraged to make comments, ask questions, and raise issues for discussion during the entire class period. The readings for this course consist of chapters from Bjorklund (2012) and other book chapters and journal articles related to each weekly topic. The readings will be made available through the University’s Blackboard website, https://elms.umd.edu or class email list. If you prefer to make Xerox copies of the readings, please let the instructor know and the readings will be placed in the EDHD mailroom. Also, please let the instructor know if you have trouble accessing any of the readings.

COURSE GOALS
By the end of this course, students should be able to

• Develop the ability to critically evaluate scientific research and interpret research findings.

• Understand theoretical perspectives in cognitive development, including their strengths and weaknesses.
• Recognize the importance of the interaction between children and their environment, and how children’s thinking and learning change with age and experience.

• Appreciate that scientific research in cognitive development has implications for applied issues relating to education.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & ASSESSMENT

I. Class Participation: The entire class is responsible for reading the assigned materials closely and thoughtfully before each weekly meeting. The success of this course, in a large part, relies upon each student’s class participation. If you are unable to attend a class, please inform the instructor as soon as possible. Classroom participation is worth 20% of the final grade. Points will be assigned based on demonstration of coming to class prepared to ask questions, raise issues, contribute to the discussion, and contribution of discussion questions.

   o Discussion Questions: To facilitate class discussion, each student should write two questions on the week’s reading and topic. The questions should be thought provoking and identify issues or concerns that could be covered in the class discussion. The questions could also attempt to integrate material from other readings from the class, topics from other courses, or from specific research interests. These will contribute to the class participation portion of grading and will be handed in at the end of each class period.

II. Exams 1 & 2: Students will be given in class exams. The exam will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. Each exam is worth 22.5% of the final grade.

III. Final Exam: The final exam will be cumulative and is worth 35% of the final grade.

Note: Readings may change or be added during the semester. Changes will be announced in class or by email.

CLASS SCHEDULE
Most weeks will include 2 lectures on the same topic. If two topics are listed the first topic will be covered the first day, the second on the second day. For weeks with an exam one day will be devoted solely to the exam.

Week 1 1/26
Introduction to Theories of Cognitive Development

Bjorklund, Chapter 1: An Introduction to Cognitive Development
Bjorklund, Chapter 5: Thinking in Symbols: The Development of Representation (pp 160-185)
Bjorklund p.129 - 146
Week 2 2/2  
Perceptual Development  
Bjorklund, Chapter 4: Infant Perception and Cognition (pp: 102-106; pp. 129-146)  

Week 3 2/9  
Language & Reading  
Bjorklund, Chapter 9: Language Development (pp 348-394).  

Week 4 2/16  
Language & Reading  
Bjorklund Chapter 11: Schooling and Cognition, (pp. 443-459)  

Week 5 2/23  
Exam 1  
Mathematics I  

Week 6 3/2  
Mathematics II  
Bjorklund Chapter 11: Development of Academic Skills, (pp. 459-480)  

Week 7 3/9  
Mathematics III  

Week 8 3/23  
Memory & Learning  
Bjorklund, Chapter 7: Learning to Think on Their Own: Executive Function, Strategies, and Problem Solving (pp: 251-265)  

Week 9 3/30  
Memory & Learning  
Bjorklund, Chapter 8: Memory Development (pp 320-346).  

Week 10 4/6  
Exam 2  
Problem Solving  

Week 11 4/13  
Problem Solving II  

Week 12 4/20  
Decision Making  

Week 13 4/27
More on Methods: Neuroscience & Mathematical Models
Smith & Thelen. (2003) Development as a Dynamic System

Week 14 5/4
Special Cases: Atypical Development

Week 15 5/11
Final Review

Final Exam - Section 1: Wed May 20th, 8 – 10am
Section 2: Sat, May 16th, 8-10am,

BLACKBOARD
We will be using the University's Blackboard, https://elms.umd.edu. The syllabus, additional readings, and announcements will be posted on Blackboard. Students can login to the website using your University ID and Password. Please let the instructor know if you have trouble accessing the course website.

CLASS POLICIES

Academic integrity: The University of Maryland, College Park has a student-administered Honor Code and Honor Pledge. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/whatis.html. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. The code prohibits students from cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism. Instances of this include submitting someone else's work as your own, submitting your own work completed for another class without permission, or failing to properly cite information other than your own (found in journals, books, online, or otherwise). Any form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and any sign of academic dishonesty will be reported to the appropriate University officials.

Special needs: If you have a registered disability that will require accommodation, please see the instructor so necessary arrangements can be made. If you have a disability and have not yet registered with the University, please contact Disability Support Services in the Shoemaker Building (301.314.7682, or 301.405.7683 TTD) as soon as possible.

Religious observances: The University of Maryland policy on religious observances states that students not be penalized in any way for participation in religious observances. Students shall be allowed, whenever possible, to make up academic assignments that are missed due to such absences. However, the must contact the instructor before the absence with a written notification of the projected absence, and arrangements will be made for make-up work or examinations.

Course evaluations: As a member of our academic community, students have a number of important responsibilities. One of these responsibilities is to submit course evaluations each term though CourseEvalUM in order to help faculty and administrators improve teaching and learning at Maryland. All information submitted to CourseEvalUM is confidential. Campus will notify you when CourseEvalUM is open for you to complete your evaluations for fall semester courses. Please go directly to the website (www.courseevalum.umd.edu) to complete your evaluations. By completing all of your evaluations each semester, you will have the privilege of accessing online, at Testudo, the evaluation reports for the thousands of courses for which 70% or more students submitted their evaluations.
Missed single class due to illness: Once during a semester, a student’s self-authored note will be accepted as an excuse for missing a minor scheduled grading event if the note documents the date of the illness, acknowledgement from the student that information provided in the note is correct, and a statement that the student understands that providing false information is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Students are expected to attempt to inform the instructor of the illness prior to the date of the missed class.*

Major scheduled grading events: Major Scheduled Grading Events (MSGE) are indicated on the syllabus. The conditions for accepting a self-signed note do not apply to these events. Written, signed documentation by a health care professional, or other professional in the case of non-medical reasons (see below) of a University-approved excuse for the student’s absence must be supplied. This documentation must include verification of treatment dates and the time period for which the student was unable to meet course requirements. Providers should not include diagnostic information. Without this documentation, opportunities to make up missed assignments or assessments will not be provided.

Non-consecutive, medically necessitated absences from multiple class sessions: Students who throughout the semester miss multiple, non-consecutive class sessions due to medical problems must provide written documentation from a health care professional that their attendance on those days was prohibited for medical reasons.

Non-medical excused absences: According to University policy, non-medical excused absences for missed assignments or assessments may include illness of a dependent, religious observance, involvement in University activities at the request of University officials, or circumstances that are beyond the control of the student. Students asking for excused absence for any of those reasons must also supply appropriate written documentation of the cause and make every attempt to inform the instructor prior to the date of the missed class.