



MARTHA BRADLEY EVANS
Center for Teaching Excellence

THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

EDPS 6050/7050 (3.00 credit hours)
Department of Educational Psychology
Life Span Development Syllabus
Fall Semester 2024
Online

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Office Hours: by appointment on Zoom (please email)

Office Location: Zoom/virtual

Teaching Assistant: Anna Tamasi (anna.tamasi@umail.utah.edu)

Required Materials

- Sigelman, C. K. & Rider, E. A. (2021). *Life-span human development* (10th Ed.) Cengage.
 - There will be the inclusive access option for this material. More information, including the opt out process, can be found here:
<https://www.store.utah.edu/inclusive-access>
- Supplemental content (e.g., articles, videos, etc.) may be listed on and can be downloaded from Canvas

Course Description

Welcome to the Fall 2024 Life Span Development course! This course is intended to provide students with a broad overview, critical discussion, and analysis of human developmental theories as they pertain to human development across the lifespan. The course will explore human development through a chronological approach. A variety of influential life span development theories will be examined across multiple topics, with the goal of providing a framework for comparing various theories. The course is also partly designed to incorporate activities and readings that cognitively challenge societal norms and standards. Additionally, the course will consist of lectures and other independent activities. In the event of modifications to the syllabus, students will be provided advanced notice of such changes in class and via electronic communication (e.g., Canvas or email).

Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, students will:

- Understand the nature and needs of persons at all developmental levels and in multicultural contexts.
- Have a working familiarity with the primary theoretical approaches in the field of developmental psychology.
- Identify research methods for evaluating developmental theories.

- Identify criteria that distinguish sound theories from flawed theories and utilize those guidelines to critically evaluate other theories.
- Compare and contrast developmental theories regarding their views of current issues impacting children, adolescents, and adults.
- Apply human development knowledge to practice.

Teaching and Learning Methods

This class will be conducted completely online, with occasional options to join live virtually. There will be a mix of recorded lectures, online discussion postings/responses, presentations, and papers. Details of all activities can be found in the pages that follow. Education should be a mix of critical thinking skills, applied knowledge, and formal evaluation. This course includes various activities and assignments to meet the needs of learners with various skill levels and preferences. Course development is an ongoing experience. As such, I will seek feedback from students to create a rewarding online learning experience.

Course Policies

The course has various policies to adhere in order to create a satisfactory learning experience. Please review the following guidelines:

1. Please be proactive and communicate your needs in a timely fashion. I will be happy to work with you.
2. As a graduate student, it is your responsibility to manage your schedule. I will not be checking/mandating attendance. However, you are expected to complete all assignments by their respective due dates.
3. In the event of an emergency or unexpected event that prevents you from completing an assignment by the due date, please inform me and the course Teaching Assistant via email as soon as you are able. I will work with you to provide extra time as needed.
4. Unless otherwise indicated, complete and submit all assignments via Canvas. Assignments that are emailed to the instructor or TA will not be accepted. Please label your files as follows,
 - a. **“Last name.first initial_Assignment Type” (e.g., Weeks.S_Final Paper).**
5. Please email both the instructor and TA on any communication (comments, questions).
6. You will be responsible for watching the weekly lecture recording on your own time.
7. Due to the online nature of this course, it is expected that you conduct yourselves as you would in an in-person class. For all asynchronous work (e.g., discussion postings), please practice appropriate netiquette. For more information on netiquette guidelines, please see: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

Assignments

Given the online format of this class, this course will include multiple short tasks that are designed to be interactive and somewhat unique.

1. **Syllabus Quiz (15 points)**

Within the first week, you will read the syllabus and watch the course overview video. You will then take the *open-note* syllabus quiz to ensure understanding. Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns about the syllabus because we do not have an opportunity to discuss the requirements live.

2. **Weekly Discussion Postings & Responses (5pts each – 3pts for initial post, 1pt for each response to a peer)**

Each week, you will be asked to respond to 2-3 discussion prompts related to videos, articles (peer reviewed or current events), group presentations, and/or the weekly lecture that are assigned for the week. Postings should be substantive and be no less than 1 paragraph each. Please refrain from using the phrase “according to the book/article/video.” I want to know your thoughts! You will also be asked to respond to 3 of your peers’ original postings. These responses are also to be substantive (2-3 sentences) and respond to the content of the post. “Nice post” is not a substantive response.

30 min OPTIONAL live virtual discussions will be offered a few times throughout the semester at the time of the class, if it were to happen synchronously. If you participate in the live discussion, you can forgo the Canvas posts that week. Participation is required during the live discussion.

3. **Quizzes (100 points)**

You will complete a total of 4 quizzes (25 points each) throughout the duration of the semester. Each of the quizzes will be completed on Canvas and will be available when the module opens and due the following Monday at 11:59pm. The quizzes will be multiple choice style and will cover content from the previous 3-4 weeks (e.g., Quiz 1 will include content from weeks 1-4, Quiz 2 will include content from weeks 5-8, and so forth). The quizzes are not timed, though you will only have 1 opportunity to complete the quiz.

4. **Presentation (50 points)**

During the first week of class, you will choose a Discussion Group and select a topic/week for your presentation. A key role of the discussion group is to provide an analysis, synthesis, and potential application of the theories covered in that week’s readings (both from the textbook *AND* online supplemental articles). An interesting approach could be to apply these theories to enhance human functioning related to your field, such as improving mental health, learning, or performance, or to address challenges like pathological behaviors or overcoming cognitive and physical limitations. Refrain from simply summarizing

the readings. Your presentation should focus on explaining your synthesis and application of ideas for each reading, and it should be no longer than 20 minutes. The format is flexible as long as it is delivered asynchronously online—this could be a video, a PowerPoint, or activities for classmates to engage in. Feel free to discuss your ideas with me in advance if you'd like. **Have your presentation posted by 4pm Tuesday the week of your presentation** (the time you would have presented had we held the class in person). You will also encourage discussion of these ideas online in the Discussion boards by posting one of the prompts for the week and responding to classmates.

5. **Final Paper (100 points)**

Developmental Autobiography: Throughout the semester, you will work to compose a developmental autobiography (please don't save this for the last minute). This assignment is due by 11:59pm on Friday December 13th. This paper should be approximately 5 pages in length (double spaced, adhering to APA guidelines) and will be assessed based on thoughtful inclusion of the required points described below, clarity and organization of writing, and absence of mechanical and grammatical errors. The intent of this assignment is for you to analyze, reflect, and connect personal experiences to psychological literature on human development. In doing so, the goal is to provide you with the opportunity to analyze your own developmental process and understand the relevance of developmental concepts learned in this course. By analyzing your own developmental process, it is intended that you build insight that is useful in your future endeavors as a practitioner. While this assignment will involve sharing content from your own life, the intent is not to be intrusive, or for you to feel uncomfortable. At the same time, if you prefer not to reflect upon your own experiences, you may choose to write about another person, or report on a published biography/autobiography. Should you choose either of these options please be sure to provide a pseudonym if choosing to write on another's experiences or a full reference for the (auto)biography.

Specific guidelines are as follows:

1. Part A- Your Developmental Process (2-2.5pgs): This first part of your paper should be a reflection of your life and related experiences. You may consider any of the thoughts/questions below in your response (Note: you are not required to answer all of these questions)
 - Describe your family structure. How many people were in your family during your childhood? Did your family structure shift or change (e.g., divorce of parents, addition of a sibling, death of a family member, etc.)
 - Were there any notable experiences during your early development? (e.g., your mother's pregnancy, your birth and infancy through toddlerhood?)

- What memories do you have of your childhood (e.g., did you attend preschool? elementary school? what play routines did you engage in?)
 - What were your experiences in middle childhood through pre-adolescence (e.g., what was school like for you? what activities did you engage in? what friendships did you form?)
 - What was life as an adolescent like? (e.g., what shaped your identity, did you experience a shift in friendships/relationships, were you involved in extracurriculars)
 - Reflect upon your life as a young adult (e.g., major accomplishments, changes, or setbacks you experienced; what supports (or lack of) were present in your life, what did your occupations look like? what about the decision to pursue post-secondary education)
 - If applicable, what has middle adulthood been like for you? (e.g., shifts in responsibility or roles, career changes, what brings you satisfaction?)
2. Part B- Connecting Your Experiences to a Lifespan Framework (1-1.5pgs): In this next section you should refer to content from lectures and/or the text as it includes information about themes in development. Please choose three of the following themes/issues and apply them to your life by answering the following questions (reach out if you want to use a theme not listed below): How have you demonstrated aspects of a given theme/dimensions? How have the dimensions, or a particular theme, been influential in your development?
- Sensitive periods and brain plasticity
 - Continuous/incremental change vs. discontinuous/stage-like change (consider transformative experiences as an example of discontinuity)
 - Cultural universality and cultural specificity
 - Bronfenbrenner's ecological model
 - Piaget's stages of cognitive development
 - Erikson's psychosocial stages
 - Theories of attachment
3. Part C- Stress and Resiliency (1-1.5pgs): The final section in your paper should discuss the impact of stress and the power of resiliency in your life experiences. In doing so, please respond to the following questions: What characteristics of your nature and nurture resulted in stressors? What characteristics of your nature and nurture resulted in buffers and ultimately resiliency against those stressors?

6. **Extra Credit**

You will have the opportunity to engage in the following extra credit assignments throughout the semester. There are a total of 30 extra credit points available (please choose between option 1 OR option 2), which will be added to the total

points earned at the end of the semester. As you will see below, all extra credit assignments will be accepted until 11:59pm on December 3rd
Options for extra credit are as follows:

- Option 1: Choose a peer-reviewed or current events article that pertains to a life span development theory or concept, and provide a 1-2 page summary (double spaced, adhering to APA guidelines). Your summary should include a thoughtful relation to course content, and may also include your impressions and reactions, a critique of the work or event, and/or how the information can be applied to your work as a practitioner. Each summary will be worth 10 points, and you may submit up to 3 summaries throughout the course of the semester.
- Option 2: Choose one of the following books or films from the list below and prepare a 3-5 page summary and critique (double spaced, adhering to APA guidelines). In your work, it is expected that you connect material from the book/film to what we have discussed in class. To receive credit your work should include a summary of the book/film in addition to a thoughtful integration tying in the content to at least 2 major theories or topics presented in the course. This option will be worth 30 points, and unlike option 1, only one book/film summary will be permitted for extra credit. Some ideas are included below, though this list is not exhaustive! If you have another book/film in mind, please submit it via email for approval.

*Note: The following list may include sensitive topics such as death & loss, school shootings, violence, trauma, etc. please be mindful of your own needs and view at your discretion.

Book Ideas (some are also movie options)	Film Ideas
Still Alice by Lisa Genova	Boyhood
19 Minutes by Jodi Picoult	Parenthood
The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini	Inside Out
Beloved by Toni Morrison	Moonlight
Go Ask Alice by Beatrice Sparks	Lady Bird
The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger	Big Fish
A Monster Calls by Patrick Ness and Siobhan Dowd	The Curious Case of Benjamin Button

Make-up Policy

Assignments are designed to give ample time for completion. However, please communicate with the instructor and TA in cases where you are unable to complete the

assignment in the allotted time. We will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodations in these cases.

Grading Policy (Evaluation Methods & Criteria)

Assignment	Due Date	Available Points
Syllabus Quiz	8/26	15 points
Discussion	Weekly (as outlined below)	75 points, 5 points each
Quizzes	9/16, 10/21, 11/11, 12/02	100 points, 25 points each
Group Presentation	Weekly (as outlined below)	50 points
Final Paper	12/13	100 points
Extra Credit	Last day to submit 12/3	30 points max

**Note: All assignments are due by 11:59pm on the assigned date, with the exception of Group Presentations, due by 4:00pm. Assignments will then be locked, and late submissions will not be permitted, unless otherwise approved. Please review the late/make up policy below.*

You will receive a final course grade based on percentages of points you've earned in each of the above assignments. The scheme for final grades is as follows:

A 93-100%	B- 80-82.9%	D+ 67-69.9%
A- 90-92.9%	C+ 77-79.9%	D 63-66.9%
B+ 87-89.9%	C 73-76.9%	D- 60-62.9%
B 83-86.9%	C- 70-72.9%	F 59.9%

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Activities & Assignments
Week 1: 8/20	Course Overview & An Orientation to Life-Span Development	Chapter 1 Lecture Videos 1 & 2 Discussion Post 1- 8/26 <i>Syllabus Quiz – 08/26</i> <i>Sign up for Group -08/26</i>
Week 2: 8/27	Genes, Prenatal Development, & Birth	Chapters 2 & 3 Lecture Video 3 Discussion Post 2- 09/02
Week 3: 9/3	Body, Brain, and Health	Chapter 4 Lecture Video 4 Group Presentation 1 – 09/03 Discussion Post 3- 09/09
Week 4: 9/10	Sensation, Perception, and Action	Chapter 5 Lecture Video 5

		Group Presentation 2 – 09/10 Discussion Post 4- 09/16 <i>Quiz 1- 09/16</i>
Week 5: 9/17	Cognition	Chapter 6 Lecture Video 6 Group Presentation 4 – 09/17 Discussion Post 5- 09/23
Week 6: 9/24	Memory & Learning	Chapter 7 Lecture Video 7 Group Presentation 5 – 09/24 Discussion Post 6- 09/30
Week 7: 10/1	Intelligence & Creativity	Chapter 8 Lecture Video 8 Group Presentation 6 – 10/01 Discussion Post 7- 10/07
Week 8: 10/8	Fall Break – No Class	
Week 9: 10/15	Language, Education, & Work	Chapter 9 Lecture Video 9 Discussion Post 8- 10/21 <i>Quiz 2- 10/21</i>
Week 10: 10/22	Self & Personality	Chapter 10 Lecture Videos 10 Group Presentation 7 – 10/22 Discussion Post 9- 10/28
Week 11: 10/29	Gender Roles & Sexuality	Chapter 11 Lecture Video 11 Group Presentation 8 – 10/29 Discussion Post 10: 11/04
Week 12: 11/5	Social Cognition & Moral Development	Development Chapter 12 Lecture Video 12 Group Presentation 9 – 11/05 Discussion Post 10- 11/11 <i>Quiz 3- 11/11</i>
Week 13: 11/12	Emotions, Attachment, & Social Relationships	Chapter 13 Lecture Video 13 Group Presentation 10 – 11/12 Discussion Post 11- 11/18
Week 14: 11/19	The Family	Psychopathology Chapter 14 Lecture Videos 14 Group Presentation 11 – 11/19 Discussion Post 12- 11/25

11/26	Developmental Psychopathology	Chapter 16 Lecture Videos 16 Discussion Post 13- 12/02 Group Presentation 12 – 11/26 <i>Quiz 4- 12/02</i>
12/3	The Final Stages: Death & Dying	Chapter 17 Lecture Video 17 Discussion Post 14- 12/09 <i>*Last day to submit extra credit</i>
12/10	Finals Weeks – No Class	<i>Final Paper – 12/13</i>

Note: This syllabus is meant to serve as an outline and guide for our course. Please note that I may modify it with reasonable notice to you. I may also modify the Course Schedule to accommodate the needs of our class. Any changes will be announced in class and posted on Canvas under Announcements.

University Policies

1. **The Americans with Disabilities Act.** The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability & Access, 162 Olpin Union Building, (801) 581-5020. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability & Access.
 - o ***If in-class attendance is a necessary component of the course for pedagogical reasons (e.g., laboratories, studios, or artistic training), state it explicitly.***

Use this standard language: “Given the nature of this course, attendance is required and adjustments will only be permitted as required by Policy 6-100(III)(O). If you need to seek an ADA accommodation to request an exception to this attendance policy due to a disability, please contact the Center for Disability and Access (CDA). CDA will work with us to determine what, if any, ADA accommodations are reasonable and appropriate.

2. **University Safety Statement.** The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text

message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit <https://safeu.utah.edu>

- 3. Addressing Sexual Misconduct.** Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 383 South University Street, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

 - a. Lauren's Promise:** Lauren's Promise is a vow that anyone – faculty, staff, students, parents, and community members – can take to indicate to others that they represent a safe haven for sharing incidents of sexual assault, domestic violence, or stalking. Anyone who makes Lauren's Promise vows to: 1.) listen to and believe those individuals who are being threatened or experiencing sexual assault, dating violence or stalking; 2.) represent a safe haven for sharing incidents of sexual assault, domestic violence, or stalking; and 3.) change campus culture that responds poorly to dating violence and stalking. By making Lauren's Promise, individuals are helping to change campus cultures that respond poorly to dating violence and stalking throughout the nation.
- 4. Academic Misconduct Statement.** It is expected that students adhere to University of Utah policies regarding academic honesty, including but not limited to refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, misrepresenting one's work, and/or inappropriately collaborating. This includes the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools without citation, documentation, or authorization. Students are expected to adhere to the prescribed professional and ethical standards of the profession/discipline for which they are preparing. Any student who engages in academic dishonesty or who violates the professional and ethical standards for their profession/discipline may be subject to academic sanctions as per the University of Utah's Student Code: <https://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-410.php>
- 5. Drop/Withdrawal Policies.** Students may drop a course within the first two weeks of a given semester without any penalties. Students may officially withdraw (W) from a class or all classes after the drop deadline through the midpoint of a course. A "W" grade is recorded on the transcript and appropriate tuition/fees are

assessed. The grade “W” is not used in calculating the student’s GPA. For deadlines to withdraw from full-term, first, and second session classes, see the U's Academic Calendar.

6. Other important information to consider including:
 - a. Student Code: <http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>
 - b. Accommodation Policy (see Section Q):
<http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.php>

7. **Supports for Students.** Your success at the University of Utah is important to all of us here! If you feel like you need extra support in academics, overcoming personal difficulties, or finding community, the U is here for you. Please refer to the [Student Support Services page for the U](#) for updated information.

8. **Basic Needs Student Support Statement.** Success at The University of Utah includes learning about and using available resources. The [Basic Needs Collective](#) (BNC) is a coordinated resource referral hub. They educate about and connect students to campus and community resources to help them meet their basic needs. As a central location for resource referrals related to food, housing, health insurance, managing finances, legal services, mental health, etc., any student experiencing difficulty with basic needs is encouraged to contact them. Drop into their office located in the Union basement or schedule with them online for an in-person or virtual visit through their webpage: <https://basicneeds.utah.edu/>.