

**PSCH 320 – Developmental Psychology**  
Asynchronous Delivery Spring 2021

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Instructor:	Kate Zinsser, Ph.D.	Office:	via Zoom
Phone:	n/a	Office Hours:	Thursdays 2-3pm
Email:	kzinsser@uic.edu*		

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T.A.:	Amber Singh	Groups	1 - 10
Email:	asing32@uic.edu	Office Hours:	via Zoom

T.A.:	Kay Thursby	Groups	11-18
Email:	kthurs2@uic.edu	Office Hours:	via Zoom

**Course Description:**

This course is designed to provide you with an overview of the theory and research on broad aspects of human development including physical, cognitive, and social emotional development across the lifespan. We will use a mixture of lecture, discussion, hands on activities, and multimedia presentations.

By the end of this course you will be able to:

1. Describe key developmental processes and events which affect lifespan development
2. Examine development through an ecological lens and explain the relative role of context in human development
3. Apply developmental psychology values, methods, and approaches when studying real-life situations.

**METHOD OF INSTRUCTION**

Our class will take place asynchronously, meaning our course does not have required synchronous (live) class sessions for you to attend. Instead, all class material has been developed ahead of time. Course content will be made available to you on a weekly basis. You can select the days and times that are most convenient for you to complete the weekly tasks, as long as you complete specific tasks by the specified due dates (see Course Schedule).

Because this is a three-credit class, you should expect to spend 6-9 hours each week engaging with class material. This will involve viewing recorded lectures and related videos, reading assigned material, posting in discussion boards, studying the material, completing activities, writing assignments, and unit quizzes. Students will be responsible for all material presented in lecture, through class discussions and activities, and in assigned readings.

Students will be expected to synthesize and integrate course materials in a manner fitting with an advanced college student. Learning to read and understand scientific texts is an important skill. I do not, however, believe it is necessary for you to spend hundreds of dollars on text books to learn at this advanced level. Instead, I have created a reading list that is 100% free and all readings will be provided to you through Blackboard. Students should expect to spend 3-4 hours each week reading and preparing for class. In lieu of readings some weeks, we will listen to podcasts from social science programs or watch short documentary clips. These files can be watched or listened to directly on Blackboard or you are welcome to search for and access them via your preferred podcast app to listen on the go.

## COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR INSTRUCTIONAL TEAM

**Seeking Support:** Your instructional team includes Dr. Zinsser, Amber, and Kay. We care about your success in the class, and we care about you. Please reach out to Amber and Kay via email, and visit Dr. Zinsser during her virtual drop-in hours with questions, concerns, or if you need help or support. Do not wait until the last minute to reach out, as we will be limited in how we are able to respond to your needs.

**Email Communication with the Teaching Assistants:** You can reach out to Amber and Kay via email. They will do their best to respond to your emails in a timely manner (i.e., within 48 hours, not including weekends). Please always include “320” and a brief description of your request/need in the subject line of the email. TAs will be assigned based on your discussion group number so check on Blackboard during the first week to determine which TA you should contact with questions. Groups 1-10 should reach out to Amber and 11-18 should communicate with Kay

**Virtual Office Hours with the Teaching Assistants:** The TAs are available to meet with you by Zoom. Please email them to request an appointment. Please always include “320” and a brief description of your request/need in the subject line of the email. Check Blackboard for a schedule of open hours as well. You can attend drop in hours with either TA but it is always best if you try to coordinate to speak with the one in charge of your discussion group.

**Virtual Drop-In Hours with Dr. Zinsser:** You can visit Dr. Zinsser during her virtual drop-in hours with questions about course content, your research interests, post-grad plans, future career goals, or life in general. I would like to meet you, so I request that you come to my virtual drop-in hours instead of emailing. If you email me, I may forward the email on to the TAs. Virtual Drop-ins will be available most Tuesdays from 2pm-3pm via Zoom. For the vast majority of you, this time should be free on your schedules, however, if you cannot attend this drop in because of a synchronous class conflict, please email me to arrange a separate time. During this time, I will also read and respond to submitted reactions and reflections submitted each week. You can submit an anonymous [reaction or reflection](#) using the link on the left-side menu on our Blackboard page.

## GRADING

Grades will be determined using the following proportions.

<b>10%</b>	Leading Discussion (twice)
<b>16%</b>	Discussion engagement (8 of 10 threads)
<b>20%</b>	Activities (4 activities, 5% each)
<b>36%</b>	Unit Quizzes (3, optional final)
<b>2%</b>	Syllabus Quiz
<b>16%</b>	Observation paper
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<b>100%</b>	

Final grades will be assigned according to the following scale. Grades will **not** be rounded:

A = 89.90-100%      B = 79.90-89.89%      C = 69.90-79.89%      D = 59.90-69.89%      F < 59.9%

**Late Work Policy:** *All late assignments will be subject to an automatic 10% penalty (so a paper that originally would have earned a 90% will only earn 80%). Additional points may be deducted for assignments more than one day late. **Late work will not be accepted after April 23<sup>rd</sup>.***

## ASSIGNMENTS

This course is organized into weekly modules that begin on Monday and conclude on Sunday. Most assignments are due by Sunday at 11:59pm. The exceptions are 1) multi-part assignments that require allowing time for peers to read and respond to your work; and 2) Quizzes which close on Fridays so as to ensure that students can receive help in a timely manner if technological issues arise.

### **Leading Small Group Discussions (10% total, lead twice, 5% each)**

Everyone will be assigned to small groups of 8-10 students and it is in these groups that we will complete most of our engagement activities. Each member of the discussion group will help initiate and lead discussion twice during the term. During each week you are leading, you will be expected to thoroughly read the assigned articles and post three engaging questions to prompt discussion in your group as separate threads. This means that there should be at least six threads for each discussion (3 questions/prompts from each of two leaders). Depending on group size there may be additional leaders in a given week. Leaders are not expected to coordinate their questions with other leaders, but you are welcome to do so (e.g., each leader focuses on a specific reading or topic).

Leaders initiating discussion threads should use open ended questions that prompt their classmates to compare, contrast, analyze or extend class material. Most discussion threads will be inspired by course readings and other content, but leaders are welcome to incorporate other related content and relevant current events.

Example starting places for your questions may include:

- Are there parts of an argument in a reading that especially appeal to you? Are highly relevant to you personally? Or with which you disagree?
- How can the information be used to support healthy development or public policy?
- For empirical studies: Are the measures and design appropriate for the questions being studied? Are the conclusions justified?

By responding back to and continuing discussion within at least two of their threads, Leaders will earn an additional 2 engagement points (see below). Posts that draw comparisons and identify similarities across posts are also welcome.

Determine your assigned weeks by looking your name up in the Group # Assignment table on Black Board. Plan ahead and make sure you know which weeks you are responsible for posting the initial questions.

**Deadline for Initial Posts by Leaders: 11:59pm on Tuesday of the assigned week.**

### **Engagement in Small Group Discussion (16% Total (2% per 8 Discussions))**

In addition to the introductory discussion (D0 which is ungraded), students are required to participate in 8 of the 10 discussions throughout the semester. That means that you can skip two weeks without penalty but missing more than two or not fully participating in two or more weeks of discussion will result in lost points. There are no discussions during weeks when other assignments or assessments due. Discussions points cannot be made up after the posting deadline has passed.

Participating in a discussion entails replying to at least two of the threads created by the leaders for that week. Please make your first post in response to a thread that does not yet have any replies. Substantive responses contribute to our co-learning environment and go beyond statements of agreement. Students' responses to discussion may aim to provide additional support or evidence of a phenomena, connect the discussion to a prior topic or another thread in the same week, or extend other students' comments by identifying alternative hypotheses or explanations.

Discussion boards are a significant part of our learning community, and as such must be supportive and safe space. Posts should express understandings based on lectures and readings, even if relaying personal anecdotes. Comments that are solely based on your own experience or hearsay do not deepen our collective knowledge.

Like good scientists, we must all be open minded and prepared to take risks and learn. A student may inadvertently post a perspective based on false or inaccurate information. In our learning community, this student should welcome and seek out additional reliable information to inform (and possibly refute) their perspective. Above all else, discourse in the discussion threads should be respectful. Developmental psychology is inherently personal. We are all developing at every minute. Our comments and discussions should come from a place of respectful curiosity grounded in scientific inquiry and evidence.

**The deadline for the minimum responses to small group discussion is 11:59pm on the Sunday of a given week.** Students are welcome, however, to continue corresponding on these threads throughout the semester.

**Please use the following rules of netiquette as you post to online discussions and send messages to your instructor and fellow students in the course.**

1. Use professional language. Always be considerate and constructive in your communications with the instructional team and other students. Include a greeting and a sign-off in your emails. Leave text messaging abbreviations out of messages and posts.
2. Try not to use all caps. It can come across as shouting to the reader. Instead, use bold, *italics*, "quotes," or other formatting to emphasize a word or phrase.
3. Use proper language and titles. Do not use any slang or profanity. Even if a word is one you consider to be, "not so bad," it could be offensive to others.
4. Review posts and messages before posting. Before you post, check for grammar and spelling errors. Also be sure to read for if the message you are trying to communicate is clear.
5. Ask for clarification. If you do not understand a post from your peers, or communications from the instructional team, ask for clarification. Everyone is doing their best to word their posts and messages as clearly as possible. In an online environment, though, some things can be lost in translation. If you're not sure of what is being asked of you or shared with you, kindly ask for clarification.

### **Activities (20%)**

This course undervalues memorization and is more heavily weighted towards supporting your ability to apply the knowledge you are gaining about human development into the real world. To that end, we have several opportunities to dive deeper and practice using our newfound skills in interpreting behavior across the lifespan. Four activities, each worth 5% of your final grade, will help you practice these skills and give your instructional team an indication of your mastery of the content thus far. Detailed instructions for each activity will be posted ahead of the due dates listed below. Traditionally, these would be in class activities completed in groups so students are welcome (but not required) to work with peers from their small groups on these assignments but all students must submit their own individual work for grading. In your Groups page, access tools such as Collaborate to host a video conference or send a group email to exchange ideas about these activities.

- **Observing Babies** –Initial Post 2/9/2021, Feedback on Peer's Observation 2/14/2021
- **Do Perfect Parents make Perfect Children?** – due Sunday 2/28/2021
- **Designing Playground Equipment** – due Friday 3/19/2021 (early due to Spring Break)
- Dissecting the literature on **Optimism and Outlook in Adolescence** – due Sunday 4/11/2021

### ASSESSMENTS

**Syllabus Quiz (2%).** Students will complete a short quiz about the syllabus and course procedures. This quiz will be administered through BlackBoard and will be “open syllabus” meaning that you are encouraged to use the syllabus while completing the quiz. Students are allowed to retake the quiz to improve their grade if they do not earn full credit the first time. This quiz will be available starting the first day of class and will close at 11:59pm on 1/24/2021.

**Natural-ish Observation Paper. (16%) Due 4/18/2021.** Students will write a 5-7 page paper applying what they have learned about developmental psychology to describe, analyze, and interpret the behavior of a real or fictional person. See Blackboard for detailed assignment instructions, formatting requirements, and the grading rubric. Students are encouraged to read instructions well ahead of time and begin planning their observation/viewing. These observations can be conducted at any point during the semester but the final paper must be turned in via SafeAssign on Black Board **by 11:59pm on 4/18/2021**

**Unit Quizzes (3 Quizzes, 12% each, 36% total).** There will be 3 non-cumulative open note quizzes throughout the course administered via Blackboard. Quizzes will open on Monday morning and close by midnight on the Friday of the weeks listed below. Quizzes are open note, but questions are primarily scenario based and require students to apply knowledge, not just regurgitate back memorized definitions. A typical quiz will consist of 30-40 multiple choice and matching questions. Students will be allowed ample time (e.g., 60 minutes) to complete the quiz. Timing accommodations registered with the Office of Disability Services will be made in Blackboard in accordance with the notice submitted by the student to Dr. Zinsser.

- **Unit 1** (Week 5) 2/8/2021 to 2/12/2021
- **Unit 2** (Week 10) 3/15/2021 to 3/19/2021
- **Unit 3** (Week 16) 4/26/2021 to 4/30/2021

### **Optional Final Exam (replaces lowest Exam grade, 12% if taken)**

There will be no opportunities to retake a missed exam, however student's missing an exam may make it up by taking the final exam. The final is mandatory for anyone who has missed an exam and will be cumulative. The grade earned on this will replace the 0 earned on a missed exam. Students who have not missed an exam but hope to improve their course grade are encouraged to take the final. The final cannot hurt your grade only improve it. There will be no other extra credit available for this course.

### Tips and Tricks for Online Test Taking

- Use a hard wired internet connection (not Wi-Fi). I recommend the library computers since they are also near the Blackboard help desk
- Use your first attempt early. Don't wait until Thursday night to start the exam for the first time as you will run out of time to re-take it if you need.
- Do not confuse “open note” with “I don't need to study”. These exams are intended to challenge your critical thinking skills and your application of knowledge. You need to already understand the material prior to starting the exam.

- Be organized, prepared, and mindful of the time. These exams include multiple choice and short answer questions but they are timed to be fairly succinct. Do not expect to have ample time to riffle through your notes or look things up in lecture slides.

## MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Your instructional team and The University of Illinois at Chicago is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that individuals with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities at UIC. If you face or anticipate disability-related barriers while at UIC, please connect with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at [drc.uic.edu](http://drc.uic.edu), via email at [drc@uic.edu](mailto:drc@uic.edu), or call (312) 413-2183 (voice) or (312) 413- 0123 (TDD) to create a plan for reasonable accommodations. In order to receive accommodations, you will need to disclose the disability to the DRC, complete an interactive registration process with the DRC, and provide me with a Letter of Accommodation (LOA). Upon receipt of the LOA, your instructional team will work with you and the DRC to implement approved accommodations.

### **Providing Feedback**

This is the first asynchronous offering of this course by this instructional team. We have been preparing for several months in the hope that your learning experience will be fulfilling and enjoyable. We are also making efforts to ensure that course material is accessible, equitable, and representative of the rich and diverse experiences of UIC students. At the same time, we know there are going to be places we can improve this course and we welcome your feedback. If there are suggestions for how to improve accessibility, or resources and imagery that you would recommend, please submit feedback using the courses [continuous improvement form](#) available on the left-side menu on our Blackboard page.

Use this form to submit suggestions for resolving glitches or improvements to make the class even better next time around. Do not use this form to request extensions or communicate about urgent matters with the instructional team. To the extent possible, we will implement recommendations this semester, but may not always be able to do so.

### **The Counseling Center**

Finally, life is stressful and we all need a little support sometimes. Students are encouraged to contact the [Counseling Center](#) (Suite 2010 Student Services Building) at (312) 996-3490 for assistance with any kind of psychological/life problem or crisis situation. I can help with referrals for students with particular counseling needs so please feel free to talk with me for help with anything. The Counseling Center provides free and confidential counseling services for all students. Learn more at <https://counseling.uic.edu/>

### **Campus Advocacy Networks**

Under Title IX, you have the right to an education free from any form of gender-based violence and discrimination. Campus Advocacy Network is a confidential, anonymous, and free resource that can provide information, advocacy services, and help you explore your options. Learn more at <https://can.uic.edu/>, or by contacting [can-appointment@uic.edu](mailto:can-appointment@uic.edu) or 312-413-8206.

### **Technology**

This course will rely heavily on the Blackboard both for communicating announcements and for collecting assignments. It is the responsibility of every student to learn how to access Blackboard

and post assignments properly. Should you have any technical difficulties, please contact the Instructional Technologies Lab: [blackboard@uic.edu](mailto:blackboard@uic.edu) or 312-996-9824.

Students must use their UIC email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. Professors are prohibited from communicating with you via any other email address so please ensure that messages are appropriately forwarded and that your inbox does not over fill.

### **Academic Integrity**

Students in this course are expected to behave at all times in a manner consistent with the UIC Honor System and Code (<http://www.uic.edu/depts/honorcode/code.html>). For all work, the name that appears on the paper must be the author's. If you are using someone else's work as a source, cite it. Please see details available at the website above. Violations of the Honor Code will not be tolerated in this course and will be immediately reported according to UIC procedures (<http://www.uic.edu/depts/dos/studentconduct.html>). The instructor reserves the right to use software to determine the extent to which the work is the student's. The instructor for this course reserves the right to enter a failing grade for any student found guilty of an honor code violation.

**Last day to add or make changes to 16-week course(s) via Student Self Service is January 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Last day for undergraduate students to withdraw from individual courses via college office is March 19<sup>th</sup>.**

### **Course Calendar Overview**

Start	End	Week	Period/Unit	Topic 1	Topic 2	Discussion	Activity	Assessment
1/11/2021	1/17/2021	1	Infancy	Intros & Orientation	Defining Development	DO - Intros		
1/18/2021	1/24/2021	2	Infancy	Theoretical Foundations	Pregnancy & Prenatal development	1		Syllabus Quiz Due Sunday
1/25/2021	1/31/2021	3	Infancy	Physical Development	Cognitive Development	2		
2/1/2021	2/7/2021	4	Infancy	Attachment	Temperament & Language	3		
2/8/2021	2/14/2021	5	Infancy	Observing Babies Assignment & Recap	-		Initial Observation & Feedback to Group	Unit Quiz
2/15/2021	2/21/2021	6	Early Childhood	Physical & Cognitive Development	Emotional Competence	4		
2/22/2021	2/28/2021	7	Early Childhood	Parenting	Friendship & Play	5	Perfect Parents Activity	
3/1/2021	3/7/2021	8	Childhood	Self-efficacy & theory of Mind	Gender & Stress	6		
3/8/2021	3/14/2021	9	Childhood	Positive Racial Identity Development	Family Structures & mental health	7		
3/15/2021	3/21/2021	10	Childhood	Risky Play & Unit Recap	<b>QUIZ 2</b>		Group Playground design activity	Unit Quiz
3/22/2021	3/28/2021	11		SPRING BREAK				
3/29/2021	4/4/2021	12	Adolescence	Physical & Cognitive Development	Identity, Peers, & Sexuality	8		
4/5/2021	4/11/2021	13	Adolescence	Parents & Delinquency	Optimism & Outlook		Optimism & Outlook	
4/12/2021	4/18/2021	14	Adulthood	Emerging Adulthood	Early Adulthood	9		Observation Paper
4/19/2021	4/25/2021	15	Adulthood	Middle Adulthood	Later Life	10		
4/26/2021	5/2/2021	16	Adulthood	Course Review & Evaluations				Unit Quiz
5/3/2021	5/7/2021			FINAL EXAM (Optional)				Optional Final

**\*Be sure to check the full course calendar on Blackboard. This is provided only as an estimate and dates may change.**