

Tompkins Cortland Community College  
**Master Course Syllabus**

**Course Discipline and Number: PSYC 205**  
**Course Title: Childhood Psychology**

**Year: 2023-2024**  
**Credit Hours: 3**

**Attendance Policy:** *To maintain good grades, regular attendance in class is necessary. Absence from class is considered a serious matter and absence never excuses a student from class work. It is the responsibility of all instructors to distribute reasonable attendance policies in writing during the first week of class. Students are required to comply with the attendance policy set by each of their instructors. Students are not penalized if they are unable to attend classes or participate in exams on particular days because of religious beliefs, in accordance with Chapter 161, Section 224-a of the Education Law of the State of New York. Students who plan to be absent from classroom activity for religious reasons should discuss the absence in advance with their instructors. See college catalog for more information.*

**Services for Students with Disabilities:** *It is the College's policy to provide, on an individual basis, appropriate academic adjustments for students with disabilities, which may affect their ability to fully participate in program or course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Coordinator of Access and Equity Services, to discuss their particular need for accommodations. All course materials are available in alternate formats upon request.*

### **Course Description**

The biological, cognitive, and social-emotional development of the child from birth to puberty will be examined from a social scientific perspective. Special attention will be given to recent, as well as seminal research and theories, and the scientific base of developmental psychology. PSYC 205 fulfills the SUNY General Education Social Science requirement. Prerequisites: MATH 090 and RDNG 116 if required by placement testing; PSYC 103; prior completion or concurrent enrollment in ENGL 101. 3 Cr. (3 Lec.) Fall and spring semesters.

### **Course Context/Audience**

PSYC 205, a required course in the Liberal Arts and Sciences Childhood and Early Childhood Teacher Education Transfer degree programs, is part of the Liberal Arts Social Science curriculum. Students can use the course to fulfill a social sciences elective requirement for the Liberal Arts and Sciences-Social Science A.S. degree. It will transfer to four-year programs as a social science or psychology elective. The course is also appropriate for parents, individuals about to be parents, and those currently in or planning to pursue a career with children.

### **Basic Skills/Entry Level Expectations**

**Writing:** WC College level writing skills are required. See course co-requisites or pre-requisites.

**Math:** M2 Completed MATH 090 (if needed) - Course requires only the use of basic mathematical skills.

**Reading:** R4 Before taking this course, students must satisfactorily complete RDNG 116 or have assessment indicating that no reading course was required.

### **Course Goals**

As a result of successfully completing this course, the student should be able to:

1. Explain children's behavior from at least five major theoretical positions: Psychoanalytic (e.g. Freud, Erikson, Ainsworth), Cognitive (e.g. Piaget, neo-Piagetian theories), Behaviorism and Social Learning Theory (e.g. Skinner & A. Bandura), Biological oriented theories such as Behavioral Genetics (e.g. Scarr, Plomin) and Contextual or Ecological theories (e.g. Bronfenbrenner).
2. Demonstrate a deep understanding of the child's development in the following areas: physical, cognitive, language, social-emotional and moral or spiritual development.

3. Understand and demonstrate the proper use of the scientific method i.e. know how research is conducted in the social sciences; be able to apply the results of research and understand the role of "skepticism" in the scientific study of human behavior.
4. Develop criteria to evaluate information about child development and related human development issues and to think critically about all information.
5. Summarize and evaluate a primary research article in the field of Child Development.

#### Course Objectives/Topics

Objective/Topic	# Hours
Topic 1: Introduction, Developmental Theories and the Scientific Method Learning Objectives: At the end of this module, students should be able to 1. Explain children's behavior/development from at least five major theoretical positions, Psychoanalytic, Cognitive, Behaviorism, Contextual/Ecological and Biological or Behavioral Genetic; 2. Know the theorists and all the terms of the theories and be able to apply them appropriately; explain and use the scientific method and be able to apply results of research to everyday life.	6 Hours
Topic 2: Biology of Development Learning Objectives: At the end of this module, students should be able to 1. Describe conception; 2. Discuss multiple births, including the degree of genetic overlap in monozygotic and dizygotic twins; 3. Define and give examples of genotype and phenotype; 4. Describe methods used in the study of behavioral genetics; 5. Define and give an example for reaction range, genotype-environment interaction, genotype- environment correlation (or covariance), and niche-picking; 6. Discuss the relative contributions of heredity and environment to obesity, temperament, intelligence, longevity, and schizophrenia.	2-4 Hours
Topic 3: Infant Development Overview: Covers the period of infancy from birth to about age two. Please note that it is optional to cover pregnancy and prenatal development. Infancy topics: the birth process, the newborn, how physical development takes place, growth of the body, brain, nutrition in infancy, early sensory capacities, motor development of infants and toddlers, SIDS, the approaches to studying cognitive development, infant's learning, development of language, competent infants, play between parents and their infants, early personality development and social development, factors involved in personality development, relationships with other children, and the impact of early day care. Recent research on infant development should always be incorporated. 3-A. Birth: After completing the study of birth, the student should be able to: 1. Describe the stages in the birth process; 2. Describe the methods of childbirth, and cite the advantages and disadvantages of each; 3. Describe typical reactions to childbirth by mothers and fathers; 4. Identify birth complications; 5. Distinguish between the concepts of prematurity and "small-for-date"; 6. Discuss the causes and consequences and prevention of low-birth weight babies; 7. Explain the states of the newborn; 8. Explain the procedures and purposes of the APGAR and Brazelton neo-natal assessment procedures. 3-B. Infancy - Physical Development in Infancy: After completing the study of physical development in infancy, the student should be able to: 1. Define and give examples of the cephalocaudal and proximodistal principles of development; 2. Describe how the environment influences brain development; 3. Explain the function of reflex behaviors and the significance of the disappearance of many of them during infancy; 4. Describe the early sensory capabilities of infants. 3-C. Infancy - Cognitive Development during Infancy After completing the study of cognitive development in infancy, the student should be able to 1. Describe the learning capabilities of infants in terms of habituation, classical and operant conditioning; 2. Define intelligence and discuss how the psychometric, Piagetian, and information-processing approaches explain and measure infant intelligence; 3. Discuss why psychometric tests of infant intelligence are generally poor predictors of later intellectual functioning; 4. Define the Piagetian concepts of sensory motor stage, object permanence, schema and circular reactions; 5. Outline the six subs-stages of sensorimotor stage and the development of object permanence; 6. Describe the progression of language development during infancy; 7. Compare and contrast two major theories of language development; 8. Describe how toddlers display competence, and explain how parent's child-rearing styles affect children's intellectual, social and emotional competence. 3-D. Infancy - Social Emotional Development After completing the study of social emotional development in infancy, the student should be able to: 1. Discuss the situations between child and care taker that	10-12 Hours

<p>are involved in the development of trust or mistrust and autonomy or shame and doubt, according to Erikson. 2. Identify typical emotions of infants and explain how they express them. 3. List and explain the aspects of temperament identified in the New York Longitudinal Study and describe the three patterns of temperament observed in the children involved in that study. 3-E. Infancy - Effects of Temperament After completing the study of the effects of temperament in infancy, the student should be able to: 1. Explain the goodness of fit mode; 2. Describe four patterns of attachment (Ainsworth) and explain the long-term implications of each pattern for children's development; 3. Discuss factors that influence the impact of non-maternal care on mother-infant attachment patterns; 4. Define stranger anxiety and separation anxiety and describe how these two factors impact the infant.</p>	
<p>Topic 4: Early Childhood Development Early Childhood covers the period of early childhood, children who are between the ages of two and half to six. Topics include physical growth and change, motor development, health, child abuse and neglect, aspects of intellectual development, influences on cognitive development and the widening environment of preschool children, such as nursery school, kindergarten and certain aspects of the media. In addition theories and research concerning important personality developments in early childhood such as preschool children's notions of gender, child-rearing practices, preschoolers relationships with other children, the nature of play and some specific developmental issues such as pro-social behavior, aggression and fearfulness will be covered. 4-A. Early Childhood - Physical Development After completing the study of physical development in early childhood, the student should be able to: 1. Discuss the general course of physical growth during early childhood, noting gender differences in growth patterns. 2. Identify ways of encouraging healthy eating habits in children. 3. Describe the health status of children during early childhood and discuss how poverty adds to the risk. 4. Describe four types of sleep-related problems children may experience. 5. List, in terms of motor development in early childhood, skills children acquire as the result of improvements in large and small muscle and eye-hand coordination. 6. Discuss causes of child abuse and neglect in terms of the characteristics of the abuser or neglecter, the victim, the family, the community, and the larger culture using Bronfenbrenner's model of human development. 7. Evaluate the long-term effects of abuse and neglect and the effectiveness of prevention and intervention programs. 4-B. Early Childhood - Cognitive Development After completing the study of cognitive development in early childhood, the student should be able to: 1. Describe the major features of Piaget's preoperational stage. 2. Evaluate Piaget's theory. 3. Describe the course of language development during early childhood, and compare and contrast the use of private speech with the use of social speech. 4. Describe the features of intelligence tests used during early childhood. 5. Discuss how a child's intellectual development is affected by the child's personality development and experience with different types of parent-child interactions. 6. Evaluate the effects of group experiences in day care, preschool, and kindergarten on children's intellectual development. 7. Identify characteristics of good day-care programs. 8. Describe the influences of television and other interactive electronic media on children's intellectual development. 4-C. Early Childhood - Social Development After completing the study of social development in early childhood, the student should be able to: 1. Discuss the development of the self including the self-concept, self-definition, and self-esteem. 2. Explain Erikson's third crisis. 3. Describe gender, gender identity, and gender roles. 4. Define identification, and compare and contrast psychoanalytic and social-learning theory positions on its development. 5. Discuss four theoretical interpretations of gender-role acquisition. 6. Identify factors influencing pro-social and aggressive behavior. 7. Discuss how different parental child-rearing practices affect children's personality development (Baumrind). 8. Describe sibling relationships from research. 9. Describe the significance of various types of play in personality and cognitive development.</p>	<p>10-12 Hours</p>
<p>Topic 5: Middle Childhood Development Middle Childhood covers the school-age child from about age 6 to 12 or the beginning pubescence period. Topics covered include physical, cognitive, social and moral development in middle childhood. Physical development looks at body growth, brain development and the individual influences on motor skills. It is optional to cover physical development in middle childhood. Cognitive development during middle childhood is covered by examining various approaches, namely, the Piagetian, Information-Processing and psychometric view. Psychosocial development during middle childhood examining the developing self, the child in the context of the family, research on siblings, peers and friends and mental health in middle childhood, especially stress and resilience as well as</p>	<p>8-10 Hours</p>

<p>Lawrence Kohlberg's work on moral development. 5A. Middle Childhood - Cognitive Development After completing the study of cognitive development in middle childhood, the student should be able to: 1. Identify the characteristics of Piaget's stage of concrete operations, and describe how the thinking of schoolchildren is different from preschoolers; 2. Describe the advances in children's memory that occur during middle childhood and identify the memory strategies children use; 3. Distinguish between aptitude and achievement tests; 4. Distinguish between individual and group intelligence tests and give examples of each; 5. Discuss how cultural differences may affect intelligence test scores, and explain the difficulties involved in designing culture-fair methods to assess children's intelligence; 6. Compare and contrast Sternberg and Gardner's theories of intelligence; 7. Summarize how language and communication ability continue to develop during middle childhood; 8. Identify ways in which parents can encourage reading and overall school achievement in their children; 9. Cite research results on the influences of the child, the family, parental attitudes and beliefs, socioeconomic status, the educational system, and the culture can affect school achievement; 10. Cite and describe ways of identifying and encouraging the development of giftedness, creativity and talent in school children. 5B. Middle Childhood - Social Emotional Development After completing the study of social emotional development in middle childhood, the student should be able to: 1. Trace the development of self perceptions through childhood (Erikson &amp; Harter); 2. Discuss the functions and influence of the family on a child's development during middle childhood, all issues: social economic status, divorce, nontraditional families, etc.; 3. Discuss the functions and influence of the peer group during middle childhood, all issues: prejudice, relational aggression bullying, etc.; 4. Outline the development of perspective taking skills; 5. Describe types of emotional disturbance that can occur during middle childhood; 6. Identify factors that enable resilient children to withstand stress. 5C. Middle Childhood - Moral Development After completing the study of moral development in middle childhood, the student should be able to: Understand and be able to apply Kohlberg's theory of moral development and any recent research on moral development.</p>	
<p>Topic 6: Child Development Research This topic includes the components of a primary research article, use of APA style and an overview of published research in the field of child development, etc.</p>	<p>1-3 Hours</p>

### General Education Goals - Critical Thinking & Social/Global Awareness

<p><b>CRITICAL THINKING OUTCOMES</b></p>	<p><b>HOW DOES THE COURSE ADDRESS THE OUTCOMES</b> (Include required or recommended instructional resources, strategies, learning activities, assignments, etc., that must or could be used to address the goal/outcomes)</p>
<p>Students will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ develop meaningful questions to address problems or issues.</li> <li>➤ gather, interpret, and evaluate relevant sources of information.</li> <li>➤ reach informed conclusions and solutions.</li> <li>➤ consider analytically the viewpoints of self and others.</li> </ul>	<p>Through critical evaluation of theory, textbook readings, lectures and classroom discussions, students will be able to address meaningful and relevant issues related to child development. Students will be able to understand and critically examine multiple perspectives including cross cultural aspects of child development; differing theories, and various media that depict children and families in other cultures. Students will be able to reach informed conclusions based on evaluations of primary research articles presented on topics in child development. Students will be encouraged to explore viewpoints of self and others through group discussions, review of scientific literature, and personal observations of childhood behaviors or experience as a virtual "parent".</p>

SOCIAL/GLOBAL AWARENESS OUTCOMES	HOW DOES THE COURSE ADDRESS THE OUTCOMES (Include required or recommended instructional resources, strategies, learning activities, assignments, etc., that must or could be used to address the goal/outcomes)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Students will begin to understand how their lives are shaped by the complex world in which they live.</li> <li>➤ Students will understand that their actions have social, economic and environmental consequences.</li> </ul>	<p>Students will be able to understand and critically examine multiple perspectives including cross cultural aspects of child development; differing theories, and various media that depict children and families in other cultures. Students will evaluate social, economic, and environmental consequences of personal actions through classroom discussion, journal writings, interactional media and group activities.</p>

### Instructional Methods

Classroom format: Lecture, Discussions, Small group work, Media: The Worlds of Childhood video series, Films on Demand, Observations of young children: particularly in the Early Childhood section (use TC3's daycare), Research project, On-line assignments, e.g., using scholarly electronic data bases, evaluating web sites, Virtual Child program.

On-line Format: Mini-lectures, Discussions, Reserve Readings (recent research), online assignments and response.

### Methods of Assessment/Evaluation

Method	% Course Grade
Tests (includes in-class, on-line and take home quizzes and exams),	10-80%
Special Projects	0-50%
Writing Assignments	20-50%
Summary of primary research article or research paper	10-20%
Attendance & Participation	10-30%

### Text(s)

Berk, Laura (2012). *Infants and Children: Prenatal Through Middle Childhood*, (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Allyn & Bacon: Pearson.

Note: Any developmental text that is scientific and up to date can be used. Either topical or chronological is acceptable.

### Bibliography

Dixon, W.E. (© April 2002): Focus on 20 studies that revolutionized child psychology. SRCD Developments: Newsletter of the Society for Research in Child Development, 45, 1, 4.

Most revolutionary studies in child psychology were opined from more than 1,500 SRCD randomly selected, doctoral-level members. They were asked what studies published since 1950 deserve the title Most Revolutionary "in the field of child development. Here are the top 20:

1. Piaget, J. (© 1952). The origins of intelligence in children. New York: International Universities Press.
2. Vygotsky, L.S. (© 1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
3. Bowlby, J. (© 1969). Attachment and loss, Vol.1. New York: Basic Books.

4. Ainsworth, M.D.S., Blehar, M.C., Waters, E. & Wall, S. (© 1978). *Patterns of attachment*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
5. Chomsky, N. (© 1957). *Syntactic structures*. The Hague: Mouton.
6. Thomas, A., Chess, S., & Birch, H.G. (© 1968). *Temperament and behavior disorders in childhood*. New York: New York University Press.
7. Bronfenbrenner, U. (© 1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American Psychologist*, 32, 513-531.
8. Harlow, H., & Harlow, M. (© 1965). The affectional systems. In A. Schrier, H. Harlow, & F. Stoltz (Eds.), *Behavior of non-human primates*. New York: Academic Press.
9. Bandura, A., Ross, D., & Ross, S. (© 1961). Transmission of aggression through imitation of aggressive models. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 63, 375-382.
10. Gilligan, C. (© 1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
11. Bell, R.Q. (© 1968). A reinterpretation of the direction of effect in studies of socialization. *Psychological Review*, 75, 81-95.
12. Sameroff, A.J., & Chandler, M.J. (© 1975). Reproductive risk and the continuum of caretaker causality. In F.D. Horowitz (Ed.), *Review of child development research (Vol.4)*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
13. Hubel, D.H., & Wiesel, T.N. (© 1965). Receptive fields of cells in striate cortex of very young visually inexperienced kittens. *Journal of Neurophysiology*, 26, 944-1002.
14. Anastasi, A. (© 1958). Heredity, environment, and the question "How?" *Psychological Review*, 89, 976-984.
15. Baillargeon, R. (© 1987). Object permanence in 3.5 and 4.5 month-old infants. *Developmental Psychology*, 23, 655-664.
16. Baumrind, D. (© 1971). Current patterns of paternal authority. *Developmental Psychology Monographs*, 4 (1, part 2).
17. Werner, E.E., & Smith, R.S. (© 2001). *Journeys from childhood to midlife: Risk, resiliency, and recovery*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
18. Brown, R. (© 1973). *A first language: The early stages*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
19. Fantz, R.L. (© 1961). The origin of form perception. *Scientific American*, 204, 66-72.
20. Premack, D. & Woodruff, G. (© 1978). Does the chimpanzee have a theory of mind? *The Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 1, 515-526.

As of this writing it may important for professors of Child Development to be cognizant of trends in the field. The following may be useful:

R. Lerner's goodness-of-fit model: Lerner, R. M. (© 1993). Early adolescence: Toward an agenda for the integration of research, policy, and intervention. In R.M. Lerner (Ed.), *Early adolescence*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Heredity-environment interaction and development is where the field of human development is right now. A good overview of this work conducted with Plomin and others are:

Scarr, S. (© 1992). Developmental theories for the 1990's. *Development and individual differences*. *Child Development*, 63, 1-19.

## Other Learning Resources

### Audiovisual

Worlds of Childhood video series. (available from TC3 Library), Appropriate videos from Films on Demand

### Electronic

PsycARTICLES

### Other

National Association of Gifted Children: [www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org)

PBS: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/misunderstoodminds/>

U.S. Department of Agriculture: [www.keepkidshealthy.com](http://www.keepkidshealthy.com)

Pearson Virtual Child program or similar

Appropriate youtube videos and other films