

**PSYCHOLOGY 153
LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENT**

Summer 2019
Monday - Friday 3:15 – 4:50pm
TBD

Professor Rebecca Ryan
301G White Gravenor
rmr64@georgetown.edu
Office Hours: T/TH 3:30 – 5:00 am or by appointment
Course web page: Access via Blackboard
(<https://campus.georgetown.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>)

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Course Description

In this course, we will explore the biological, cognitive, emotional and social changes that humans experience across the lifespan from birth through old age. We will address questions such as: “Is development continuous or discontinuous?” “Are we the product of our nature or our nurture?” “Do all people follow a similar trajectory or is human development marked by diversity?” The broad aim of the course is to answer, in different ways, the fundamental question: “How do we become who we are?” We will draw broadly on the bioecological model, which conceptualizes development as a dynamic interplay between a person’s biological dispositions and the system of relationships in his or her environment, and specific theories from developmental, social, and cognitive psychology. Using these frameworks, and an understanding of major developmental milestones of each age period, we will investigate the development of identity, intelligence and cognition, language, morality, personality, and close relationships. Special attention will be paid to the parts parents and socioeconomic contexts play in those processes.

The course will follow the chronological sequence of development through seven major age periods: infancy and toddlerhood, early childhood, middle childhood, adolescence, emerging and early adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood. This approach allows us to explore how different domains of development evolve simultaneously and impact one another. It also has the advantage of imitating how development actually occurs in life. However, chronological organization requires that you apply theories covering several age periods to each and remember earlier milestones when considering the period under study. As in life, to understand the present one must understand what came before.

Course Goals

- Know the major developmental milestones distinguishing each developmental period;
- Understand the impact of genetic and environmental factors on biological, cognitive, and psychosocial development across the life span;

- Grasp, evaluate, and compare the major theories of human development that guide research in the discipline;
- Apply those theories to understanding everyday developmental phenomena, including your own developmental process;
- Distinguish between the research designs used to study development and compare their relative strengths and weaknesses;
- Gain an understanding of the field of developmental psychology and of how developmental psychologists conceptualize and conduct research.

These goals map onto the following *Departmental Learning Goals*: Goal 1(1-4), Goal 3 (a-f). See <http://psychology.georgetown.edu/undergraduate/handbook/> for details.

Course Requirements

- (1) **Lectures.** Students are expected to attend all lectures and complete all assigned readings prior to lecture to facilitate lecture comprehension, class discussion, and class activities. If you must be absent, please provide a valid excuse (e.g., a medical emergency or note from the Dean). Note, 6 or more unexcused absences will guarantee you a failing grade.
- (2) **Exams:** There will be three exams in this course, all of which are required. Each exam will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions derived from the textbook, all other assigned readings, and class lectures. The first two will cover material from specific sections of the course. The third, and final, will cover material from the whole semester.

Required Texts

Berger, K. S. (2019). *Invitation to the Lifespan, 4th Edition*. New York: Worth. (“Berger”)

Other Readings (Articles will be posted on Blackboard)

Selected chapters from Karen, R. (1998). *Becoming Attached: First Relationships and How They Shape Our Capacity to Love*. New York: Oxford University Press. (“Karen”)

Articles relevant to specific topics; see class schedule below.

Class Outline and Readings

1. Introduction/Class Overview

Berger, Chapter 1, pp. 3-22

2. Theories of Development

Berger, Chapter 2

Karen, Introduction

3. Nature and Nurture: Epigenesis and the Bioecological Model

Berger, Chapter 3 (review Chapter 1, pp.7-22)

National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. Early Experiences Can Alter Gene Expression and Affect Long-Term Development, Working Paper #10. (on Blackboard)

4. Research Methods for Developmental Psychology

Berger, Chapter 1, pp. 22 - 33

Duncan, G., Magnuson, K., & Ludwig, J. (2004). The endogeneity problem in developmental studies. *Research in Human Development, 1*(1&2), 59-80.

The First Five Years: Foundations of Development

5. Prenatal Development and Birth Outcomes

Berger, Chapter 4: pp. 93 – 116

6. Socioemotional foundations: Attachment

Berger, Chapter 7, pp. 189 - 199

Karen, Chapter 10

7. Socioemotional foundations: Parenting

*Weaver, . . . , & Meaney, 2004. Epigenetic programming by maternal behavior. *Nature Neuroscience, 7*, 8, 847-854.

*This article is difficult. Just read to get the overall point. Do not worry about the biological details.

Karen, Chapter 13

8. Socioemotional foundations: Temperament

Berger, Chapter 7, pp. 181-189

Karen, Chapter 21

9. Socioemotional foundations: Attachment, parenting and temperament

Gallagher, K. C. (2002). Does child temperament moderate the influence of parenting on adjustment? *Developmental Review*, 22, 623 – 643.

Barry, R. A., Kochanska, G., & Philibert, R. A. (2008). G X E interaction in the organization of attachment: mothers' responsiveness as a moderator of children's genotypes. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 49(12), 1313-1320.

10. Cognitive foundations: Early brain development

Berger, Chapter 5

Knudsen, E. I, Heckman, J. J., Cameron, J. L., & Shonkoff, J. P. (2006). Economic, neurobiological, and behavioral perspectives on building America's future workforce. *PNAS*, 103(27), 10155–10162.

11. Cognitive foundations: Early Learning and the home environment

Berger, Chapter 6, pp.155 – 168, Chapter 9, pp. 245 – 256

12. Early Learning and the Environment: Language

Berger, Chapter 6, pp.168 – 179, Chapter 9, 256 - 262

Goldin-Meadow, S. & Mylander, C. (1998). Spontaneous sign systems created by deaf children in two cultures. *Nature*, 391, 279-281.

Middle Childhood: The Transition to School

13. The Transition to School: Learning and Achievement

Berger, Chapter 12

Recommended (not required): Turkheimer et al., (2003). Socioeconomic status modifies heritability of IQ in young children. *Psychological Science*, 14(6), 623-628.

14. The Transition to School: The Role of Behavior and Emotions

Berger, Chapter 13, pp. 367 - 389

15. ****Exam 1**

Adolescence: A Risky Period

16. Puberty and the Start of Adolescence

Berger, Chapter 14, pp. 401-416

Ge, X. & Natsuaki, M.N. (2009). In search of explanations for early pubertal timing effects on developmental psychopathology. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 18, 327-331.

Mendle, J., Harden, K. P., Brooks-Gunn, J., & Graber, J. A. (2012). Peer relationships and depressive symptomatology in boys at puberty. *Developmental Psychology*, 48, 429 - 435.

17. Brain Development, Decision Making, and Risky Behaviors

Chapter 14, pp. 416 – 427; Ch. 15, 429 – 440; Ch. 16, pp.462-484

Steinberg, L. (2004). Risk-taking in adolescence: What changes, and why? *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1021, 51-58.

Casey, B. J. & Caudle, K. (2013). The teenage brain: Self control. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 22, 82-87.

Galván, A. (2013). The teenage brain: Sensitivity to rewards. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 22, 88-93.

Albert, D., Chein J. & Steinberg, L. (2013). The teenage brain: Peer influences on adolescent decision making. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 22, 114-120.

18. The “Me!” Generation (that means you)

Trzesniewski, K. H., Donnellan, M. B., & Robins, R. W. (2008). Do today's young people really think they are so extraordinary? An examination of secular changes in narcissism and self-enhancement. *Psychological Science*, 19, 181-188.

Roberts, B. W., Edmonds, G., & Grijalva, E. (2010). It is Developmental Me, not Generation Me: developmental changes are more important than generational changes in narcissism—Commentary on Trzesniewski & Donnellan (2010). *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 5(1), 97-102.

Emerging Adulthood: Roads Diverge

19. Emerging Adulthood and the Quest for Identity

Chapter 16, pp.457- 462; Chapter 17, pp. 500-513

Arnett, J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist*, 55, 469 – 480.

Arnett, J. (2013). Oh, grow up! Generational grumbling and the new life stage of emerging adulthood—commentary on Trzesniewski & Donnellan (2010). *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 5(1), 89-92.

20. Diverging Destinies

Berger, Chapter 19

Edin, K. & Kefalas, M. (2005). *Promises I can keep: Why poor women put motherhood before marriage* (Chapter 1). Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Furstenberg, F. (2008). The intersections of social class and the transition to adulthood. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development* 119, 1-10.

Adulthood and Beyond: Finding Meaning

21. Becoming Partners

Buss et al. (2001). A half century of mate preferences: The cultural evolution of values. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63(2), 491-503.

Recommended (not required): Eastwick, P. W. & Finkel, E. J. (2008). Sex differences in mate preferences revisited: Do people know what they initially desire in a romantic partner? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 94(2), 245-264.

22. Becoming Parents

Karen, Chapter 24

Champagne, F. A. & Meaney, M. J. (2006). Stress during gestation alters postpartum maternal care and the development of offspring in a rodent model. *Biological Psychiatry*, 59, 1227 – 1235.

Recommended (not required): Maestripieri, D. (2005). Early experience affects the intergenerational transmission of infant abuse in rhesus monkeys. *PNAS*, 102(27), 9726-9729.

23. Cognition in Late Adulthood: Decline or Depth?

Salthouse, T. A. (2010). Selective review of cognitive aging. *Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society*, 16, 754-760.

Berger, Chapter 21; Chapter 24

24. ****Exam 3**

Grading

The three midterms exams will be worth 30%, 30%, and 35% of your final grade each, for a total of 95%. Your highest scoring exam will count for 35% while the lower scoring exams will count for 30% each. Five percent of your final grade will reflect your attendance and class participation, which includes active involvement in discussion and/or classroom activities.

Honor Code

I expect all students to uphold the university's standards for academic honesty. Please take note of the honor pledge: *"In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: to be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together."*