

Fall 2015

## PSYC 6101

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**PSYC 6101: Fundamentals of Applied Developmental Psychology I—  
Theories of Human Development  
Fall, 2015**

Dr. Laura Scaramella  
GP 2076a  
280-7481

Class meeting date: Tuesday/Thursday  
Class meeting time: 9:30am – 10:45am  
Office hours: M, W, F 9:00-11:00a

**Overview**

This class provides a general introduction to core concepts in theoretical approaches to the study of Human Development. First, the predominant world-views or paradigms that provide the foundation for all approaches to the study of human psychological development will be considered. Next, examples of these general world-views will be evaluated. World-views have distinct perspectives on a number of core theoretical issues (e.g., nature-nurture and continuity-discontinuing controversies); these issues will be discussed in detail. Theories will be discussed in the context of existing developmental research. The goal this class is to provide students with a solid understanding of the mechanics of theory in order to critically evaluate and test existing theory.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

- To understand core principles of developmental theories.
- To acquire a general knowledge base of human growth and development.
- To understand the role of theory in affecting the design, implementation, and interpretation of research.
- To be able to apply a broad based theoretical approach to the conceptualization of a research question.

**Attendance Policy**

Attendance is mandatory. Any schedule conflict must be reviewed prior to class. Also, class begins promptly at 9:30, please do not be late.

**Academic Dishonesty Policy**

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic misconduct or cheating will not be tolerated and will be reported to the appropriate academic personnel.

**Text and readings**

Course readings are primarily derived from selected readings and no textbook is required. Copies of the selected readings are available on Moodle for download. Please read all articles prior to class.

**Evaluations**

Students will be expected to read all of the assigned material and participate regularly in class discussions. All material for a particular week should be completed by the Tuesday class day. Whatever material is not discussed on Tuesday will be discussed on Thursday. In order to make the class more tailored to students' specific research interests, each student will select an article and

lead the discussion of that article on student selected reading days. Students will provide a written summary of their selected article and summaries of what is required for each assignment are provided below.

Grades are based on the following:

- 1) Participation. All students are strongly encouraged to ask questions about the material covered or how the material applies to their particular research interest. Students are not evaluated based on the content of their comments or questions, rather evaluations are based on whether or not students actively participated in class discussions. Participation is graded each week. Participation does matter!
- 2) Student selected reading & summary. Each student will be required to select a reading to be discussed following the completion of each of the three main topic areas (environmentally based approaches, biologically based approaches, and genetic approaches). The goal of the article summary is to practice applying a theoretical framework (i.e., environmental, biological, or genetic) to specific research questions. Students must select an empirical article that represents an application of the specific theoretical perspective. Towards this aim, students should explain the central tenants of the relevant theoretical framework and how the article represents an example of that perspective. *The empirical study selected must be longitudinal and include at least 2 points in time.*

Article summary format. Article summaries should be approximately 3 pages, double-spaced, 1" margins, 12 pt Times New Roman font. Each summary must include the following:

- a. Summarize the critical components of the theoretical perspective (i.e., environmental, biological, or genetic) for which this article exemplifies. Within this broad theoretical perspective, what is the mechanism of change? (1 page)
  - b. Identify the study hypotheses, briefly describe sample characteristics, procedures and how study constructs are measured, and summarize critical findings. (i.e., review the study, 1 page)
  - c. Discuss how the hypotheses, methods, and results provide a representation of the theoretical perspective being considered. How does the operationalization of the study hypotheses fit within the broader theoretical perspective? (1 page)
- 3) Exams. Students will complete two exams following the completion of the environmental and biological approaches.
  - 4) Final exam. All students will complete an in class, final exam that focuses on applications of a genetic approach.

**Final grades will be based on the following weighting system:**

1. Participation	20
2. Reading summaries (3 x 10)	30
3. Exam 1 & 2 (2 x 15)	30
4. Final exam	20
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TOTAL	100

**Additional information**

**1) Important Dates**

Last day to adjust schedule w/out fee	08/18/2015
Semester Classes Begin .....	08/19/2015
Last day to adjust schedule w/fee, or withdraw with 100% refund	08/25/2015
Last day to apply for December commencement	09/25/2015
Final day to drop a course or resign	10/14/2015
Mid-semester examinations .....	10/05-10/09/2015
Final examinations.....	12/07-12/11/2015
Commencement .....	12/18/2015

**2) Fall Semester Holidays**

Labor Day .....	09/07/2015
Mid-semester break .....	10/15-10/16/2015
Thanksgiving .....	11/26-11/27/2015

## Schedule of classes

Date	Topic	Required reading
<b>Introduction to Developmental Theories</b>		
8/20	Overview	
8/25-27	Philosophical models	Wertlieb, D. (2003). Applied Developmental Science. <i>Handbook of psychology: Developmental psychology</i> , pg. 43-61. Cummings, E. M., Davies, P. T., & Campbell, S. B. (2000). What is developmental psychopathology? pp. 17-35 Lerner, R. M. (2002). Chapter 2, 3 <i>Concepts and theories of human development</i>
9/1-3	Conceptual issues in developmental psychology Continuity – discontinuity Nature – nurture Plasticity	Cummings, E. M., Davies, P. T., & Campbell, S. B. (2000). Chapter 4, Pathways in development, pp. 94-123. Lerner, R. M., (1998). Theories of Human Development: Contemporary perspectives, pp. 1 – 24. Chapter 4 <i>Concepts and theories of human development</i> **suggested chapter 5 <i>Concepts and theories of human development</i> as background material
<b>Macro-Theories of Development: Selected topics</b>		
9/8-10	<b>Environmentally based theoretical approaches</b>	Bronfenbrenner & Morris (1998). The ecology of developmental processes, pg 993-1028. <i>Handbook of child psychology: Theoretical models of human development</i> .
9/15-17	Applications of Environmental theories	Cox, M. J. & Paley, B. (1997). Families as systems. <i>Annual Review of Psychology</i> , 48, 243-267. McLoyd, V. C. (1998). Socioeconomic disadvantage and child development. <i>American Psychologist</i> , 53, 185-204. Conger, R. D. & Donnellan, M. B. (2007). An interactionist perspective on the socioeconomic context of human development. <i>Annual Review of Psychology</i> , 58, 175-199. Granic, I. & Patterson, G. R. (2006). Toward a comprehensive model of antisocial development: A dynamic systems approach.
9/22	Empirical evaluations of environmental theories	<b>Student selected readings – Article Review 1 due</b>
9/24	Empirical evaluations of environmental theories	<b>Student selected readings</b>
9/29	Review	
10/1	<b>Exam 1</b>	
10/6-8	Biologically based theoretical approaches	Del Giudice, M., Ellis, B. J., & Shirtcliff, E. A. (2010). The adaptive calibration model of stress responsivity. <i>Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews</i> , 35, 1562-1592. **suggested Sapolsky, <i>Why zebras don't get ulcers</i> chapters 1, 2

Date	Topic	Required reading
10/13	Empirical evaluations of biologically based theories	<p>Ellis, B. J., Shirtcliff, E. A., Boyce, W. T., Deardorff, J., &amp; Essex, M. J. (2011). Quality of early family relationships and the timing and tempo of puberty: Effects depend on biological sensitivity to context. <i>Development and Psychopathology</i>, 23, 85-99.</p> <p>Juster, R., Bizik, G., Picard, M., Arsénault-Lapierre, G., Sindi, S., ... (2011). A transdisciplinary perspective of chronic stress in relation to psychopathology throughout life span development. <i>Development and Psychopathology</i>, 23, 725-776.</p> <p>Davies, P. T., Sturge-Apple, M. L., &amp; Cicchetti, D. (2011). Interparental aggression and children's adrenocortical reactivity: Testing an evolutionary model of allostatic load. <i>Development and Psychopathology</i>, 23, 801-814.</p>
10/15	No class	Mid-semester break
10/20	Empirical evaluations of biologically based theories	Continued.
10/22	Biologically Based Theories	Student selected readings – Article review 2 due
10/27		Student selected readings – continued
10/29	Exam 2	
11/3-5	C. Genetically based theoretical approaches	<p>Background material:</p> <p>Plomin, R., DeFries, J. C., McClearn, G. E., &amp; McGuffin, P. (2008). Chapters 2 – 4 (pp. 5 – 58).</p> <p>Discussion material.</p> <p>Plomin, R., DeFries, J. C., McClearn, G. E., &amp; McGuffin, P. (2008). Chapter 15 (pp. 285 – 304).</p> <p>Caspi, A. et al. (2002). Role of genotype in the cycle of violence in maltreated children.</p> <p>Gottlieb, G. (2007). Probabilistic epigenesis. <i>Developmental Science</i>, 10, 1-11.</p> <p>Leve, L. D., Neiderhiser, J. M., Scaramella, L. V., &amp; Reiss, D. (2008). The Early Growth and Development Study: Using the prospective adoption design to examine genotype-environment interplay. <i>Acta Psychologica Sinica</i>, 40, 1106-1115.</p>
11/10-12	Genotype x environment interaction	<p>Plomin, R., DeFries, J. C., McClearn, G. E., &amp; McGuffin, P. (2008). Chapter 16 (pp. 305 – 333).</p> <p>Reiss, D. &amp; Neiderhiser, J. M. (2000). The interplay of genetic influences and social processes in developmental theory: Specific mechanisms are coming into view. <i>Development and Psychopathology</i>, 12, 357 – 374.</p> <p>Thapar, A., Harold, G., Rice, F., Langley, K., &amp; O'Donovan, M. (2007). The contribution of gene-environment interaction to psychopathology. <i>Development and Psychopathology</i>, 19, 989 – 1004.</p>

Date	Topic	Required reading
11/17-19	Applications of genetically based theoretical approach	<p>Nobile, M. et al. (2007). Socioeconomic status mediates the genetic contribution of the dopamine receptor D4 and serotonin transporter linked promoter region repeat polymorphisms to externalization in preadolescence. <i>Development and Psychopathology</i>, 19, 1147-1160.</p> <p>Sheese, B. E., Voelker, P. M., Rothbart, M. K. &amp; Posner, M. I. (2007). Parenting quality interacts with genetic variation in dopamine receptor D4 to influence temperament in early childhood. <i>Development and Psychopathology</i>, 19, 1039-1046.</p> <p>Lee, S. S., et al., (2010). Association of maternal dopamine transporter genotype with negative parenting: Evidence for gene x environment interaction with child disruptive behavior. <i>Molecular Psychiatry</i>, 15, 548-558.</p> <p>Kochanska, G., Kim, S., Barry, R. A., &amp; Philbert, R. A. (2011). Children's genotypes interact with maternal responsive care in predicting children's competence: Diathesis-stress or differential susceptibility. <i>Development and Psychopathology</i>, 23, 605-616.</p>
11/24	Genetically based theories	Student selected readings – Article review 3 due
11/26	No class	Thanksgiving
12/1	Genetically based theories	Student selected readings ~ continued
12/3	Review	
12/8	Final Exam	