



CHILD DEVELOPMENT

PSY 301 IN-PERSON COURSE SYLLABUS; WINTER 2025

This syllabus is subject to change. Changes (if any) will be announced via Blackboard.

COURSE INFORMATION

Office: 2128 Au Sable Hall (2nd floor)

Email: mcdonan2@gvsu.edu

Contact: *Email is the best way to connect with me.*

Course Meeting Times: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 1-1:50PM (Section #04)

Monday/Wednesday/Friday 2:00-2:50PM (Section #06)

Classroom Location: Lake Michigan Hall Room #114

GVSU Teaching and Office Hours Schedule - Winter 2025

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9:45 AM		K-12	Office Hours (9:45-10:45AM)	K - 12	Office Hours By Appt.	Family Time	Sabbath
10:45 AM	Class	School	Class	School	Class		Rest, Meditate
12:00 AM	Class	Psych	Class	Psych	Class		Play & Family
1:00 PM	Class	Consulting	Class	Consulting	Class		
2:00 PM	Class	Day	Class	Day	Class		
3:00 PM	Office Hours (3:10-5:10PM)	(Off-Campus)		(Off-Campus)			
4:00 PM							

To Book an Appointment in Dr. McDonald's calendar, Click the Office Hours link provided in Blackboard.

A Note about Boundaries and Whole-Self Care

As a mental health professional, I deeply value life practices that allow for a healthy rhythm of work/professional projects, home and family life, and personal projects/pursuits. To promote good balance and to encourage you to do the same, I do my best to complete my GVSU work between the hours of 8AM-5PM Monday through Friday. I do not guarantee that I will send email responses over the weekend or over scheduled breaks/holidays, as that is designated family, play and rest time, and personal rest/rejuvenation/reflection time. Student emails will generally receive a response within 24 hours; if a response is not received within that time frame, please send a respectful follow-up email. I also strive to complete my grading during the week so please keep this in mind in terms of your expectations for the posting of grades in the BB gradebook.

Catalog Description

Explores the development of the child from conception to adolescence in the home, school, and society. Interactions among physical, cognitive, personality, and social developments are considered. Practical implications for child development of theories and research on these topics will be emphasized. Field observation required. Offered every academic year. Prerequisite: [PSY 101](#).

Course Materials (Required)

Santrock, J., Lansford, J. & Deater-Deckard, K. (2024). Children. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Course Format

In-Person/On-Ground

This course is an onground synchronous course that meets together for three in-person class sessions weekly throughout the semester (Monday/Wednesday/Friday). The time of class meetings varies by session; for Winter 2025, Section #02 meetings are 11-11:50AM, and Section #05 meetings are 12-12:50PM.

Course BlackBoard (BB) Ultra Webpage

In addition to the three in-person class sessions each week, this course utilizes the Blackboard Ultra learning management system to extend learning into the online space. This class will be administered via GVSU's Blackboard Ultra system; our course **Blackboard (BB) Ultra page will contain pertinent course information** including the course syllabus, grades, videos, announcements, assignment documents, dropboxes and exams. Students are responsible for all information provided via Blackboard. **Use of Blackboard Ultra is integral to this course and you must log on several times each week (I suggest checking in daily)** in order to access important course information/documents, complete course requirements, and receive important announcements and updates about course content.

If you experience technical problems with Blackboard Ultra, contact the help desk by email or phone - helpdesk@gvsu.edu or 616-331-3513. The help website is <http://www.gvsu.edu/it/learn/>

Required Equipment (owned or accessible):

- Reliable high-speed internet access
- Computer with a sound card and speakers and operating system that meets current Blackboard browser requirements (Windows 7 or above, OS 10.10 or above)
- Computer microphone built in or external (most laptops have a microphone)
- Computer camera - built in or external (most laptops have a camera)

Dr. McDonald's Deep Hope Statement

My deep hope for students in this course is that they will deepen their understanding of and appreciation for the complexity and importance of childhood development and experiences in creating a healthy life foundation. Adults have much to learn from children and their approach to life—the wonder, joy, laughter, playfulness, creativity and awe that characterize so much about children's natural approach to the world—and studying childhood can help us to reconnect and nurture these life-giving mindsets and practices. By learning how to support and nurture healthy development in children and adolescents in our circles of influence, we simultaneously learn how to nurture health and wellness in ourselves. It is my hope through this course that you gain psychological knowledge while also expanding and deepening your understanding of your own developmental story.

Professor's Statement on Teaching and Learning

Transformative teaching and learning is active, collaborative and mutual; as a professor and an experienced expert in my field, I still constantly learn new insights and perspectives from my students in every single interaction. I am intentional about being a lifelong learner who experiences deep wonder, awe and curiosity about people, ideas, nature and the world around us. My goal as a professor is to model the joy and transformative nature of lifelong learning; learning and a curiosity mindset have transformed my life and shape me daily as a person, and I hope to inspire you to become lifelong learners yourselves. From my perspective, learning is

- **Central to what it means to be human.**
- **Constructive**.....Each learner sees the world uniquely and builds new learning into their prior knowledge, as schemas develop.
- **Connecting**.....Learning is inherently connective, bringing together concepts, ideas, people, cultures.
- **Creative**.....Each person perceives, connects ideas, and makes meaning in uniquely individual ways. Innovation, invention and creative problem-solving abound through brainstorming, reframing, and divergent thinking.
- **Relational**.....The best type of learning happens in relationships of trust/mutuality with an edge of challenge and inspiration.
- **Non-Linear**.....learning does not always progress from Point A to Point B.
- **Messy and Unpredictable**.....the brain is capable of making order and meaning out of even the most random information, experiences and perceptions.

- **Curiosity-Driven**.....Sheer motivation to make sense of the world comprises a well of exhilarating joy, discovery, wonder and awe.
- **Growth-Minded**.....Some of the most powerful and transformative learning experiences of our human lives come out of mistakes, misunderstandings and failures.
- **Inclusive**.....All humans—whether neurotypical or neuroatypical—can learn. Adjustments to teaching and learning approaches and strategies can open access to learning for all.
- **Hard and Frustrating at Times**.....Authentic learning challenges and seeks advancement in understanding and insight; being a novice can feel slow, difficult and sometimes impossible. But arduous learning will eventually make the awaited “aha moment” and the long-term retention that much more celebratory. Tenacity and grit are important in the learning process.
- **Both Conscious/Intentional and Unconscious/Unintentional**.....I am amazed when I read research on how the brain processes meaningful learning during sleep. It forages for information and understanding, even when we are not consciously aware of it doing so.
- **Self-Perpetuating and Inspiring**....the more you learn, the more you want to learn. And the more you want to learn, the more you are motivated to keep seeking, pursuing and exploring new places, people and experiences.
- **Not limited to formal classroom settings**.....Learning is not constricted within four walls and formal classrooms; learning is dynamic and ongoing regardless of context and thrives in experiential environments and real-world settings.
- **Fun and Rewarding**....Inherent joy, delight and hope for the best possible future characterize learning. Authentic learning is enjoyable, engaging, playful and exhilarating.
- **Lifelong**.....The foundation of a learning lifestyle often starts with formal schooling; but it continues well beyond the structured high school and college experience into the wide-open possibilities of organic learning and exploring across the lifespan.

My goal as your professor is to refrain from limiting your learning to memorization or concept mastery or a formal academic classroom. Rather, I work to create interesting, challenging and compelling learning experiences that will inspire you, motivate you, and excite you about your current and future work. As your instructor, I strive to live out passionate lifelong learning in my own life so that I can model for you the deep joy, inspired awe, and rich satisfaction of learning and growing as a way of life. As I write this, I am researching to learn more about the Hawaiian island of Molokai and its role as an historical leper colony; the Biblical book of Psalms; embodied human experience; how to make sourdough bread; the immigration crisis at the South-American/Central America border; the effect of urbanization on wild animals; and jellyfish. I simply love to learn, explore and be inspired by new topics, insights and experiences. Someone once said that “We don’t teach students to learn simply to get a degree, a job or a career; we teach them to learn so that they are inspired to keep on learning and growing throughout their lives.” I wholeheartedly agree. If you ever want to chat about ways to create and embrace a learning-focused lifestyle, let’s make an office hour, lunch or coffee date!

Professor's Statement on Diversity

An integral core belief that I hold is that every human being was created uniquely and in intentionally diverse ways to reflect creativity, personality, vitality and the very essence of love and belonging. Each individual was born into unique contextual circumstances that further shape us into diverse beings with unique perspectives on the world. I believe that individuals, families, communities and institutions are made better, richer and more effective when diverse people come together toward a common mission or goal. When people approach learning and discourse with civility, an honest desire to learn, and respectful humility toward others, there is true potential for transformative learning.

In any university classroom, the participants embody incredible diversity of personhood, neurology/cognition, life experience, identity, relational contexts, values/beliefs/spirituality and many more factors. Embracing diversity and celebrating its gift takes incredible humility, respect for self and others, and measured self-control. Deep learning flourishes in an environment where diverse ideas and perspectives are shared, considered, and debated. In my courses, I hold myself to the following standards and ask for every student to promote healthy diversity and belongingness by committing themselves to:

- Respecting self and others in all behaviors and interactions;
- Listening actively for understanding;
- Talking about differences in a respectful manner without shying away from them;
- Engaging in the difficult conversation without shutting down valuable dialogue;
- Keeping diversity/neurodiversity in mind when interacting with classmates;
- View every participant as having valuable, important insights, knowledge and contributions;
- Offering grace and the benefit of the doubt to professor and peers; discussing topics from diverse points is challenging and mistakes will be made;
- Practice cultural sensitivity;
- Intentionally reach out and connect with people who are different than you and have had different life experiences than yours;
- Seeking “sacred intersections” by finding ways that your story intersects with others’ stories;
- Seeking constant self-insight into perspectives, assumptions, biases and stereotypes that may limit or harm others, and challenge yourself to learn, grow and do better;
- Calling out and affirming unique strengths, perspectives and insights in others;
- Sharing diversity-related concerns openly and honestly with the professor if problems arise;

Course Objectives

A PSY 301 student will have the opportunity to work toward the following course objectives:

Objective: Students in this course will	Related GVSU Student Learning Outcome (SLO)	Assessment
Explain the role and importance of the <u>scientific method</u> and <u>empirical research</u> , focusing on design and results of seminal research in child development/psychology.	SLO #2 - Critical Thinking	Section Exams Final Exam Child Observation/ Research Project
Gain skills in observing children using three <u>main observational approaches</u> used by professionals in the field.	SLO#2 - Critical Thinking SLO #7 - Problem Solving	Weekly Assignments Child Observation/ Research Project
Define and explain the interconnectedness of major <u>developmental domains</u> , including biological/physical, cognitive, social, emotional, psychological and spiritual.	SLO #2 - Critical Thinking	Section Exams Final Exam Weekly Assignments Child Observation/ Research Project
Outline the defining assumptions and tenets of major <u>psychological theories</u> of child development (including but not limited to behaviorism, social learning, cognitive theory, psychosocial theory, psychoanalytic theory, ecological theory, sociocultural theory, and developmental contextualism).	SLO #2 - Critical Thinking	Section Exams Final Exam Weekly Assignments Child Observation/ Research Project
Demonstrate an understanding of <u>key developmental concepts and vocabulary</u> that govern the field of child development/psychology..	SLO #2 - Critical Thinking	Section Exams Final Exam Weekly Assignments Child Observation/ Research Project

<u>Apply</u> child development theories, concepts and knowledge to both observations of children and to interactions with children.	SLO#2 - Critical Thinking SLO #7 - Problem Solving	Child Observation/ Research Project
Describe key <u>milestones, stages and transitions</u> evident from conception through adolescence, including but not limited to birth, educational milestones, cognitive changes, social-relational changes, and identity development.	SLO #2 - Critical Thinking	Section Exams Final Exam Weekly Assignments Child Observation/ Research Project
Identify the <u>impact of contexts</u> – family/home, school/educational, community, society–on child and adolescent development.	SLO #2 - Critical Thinking	Section Exams Final Exam Weekly Assignments Child Observation/ Research Project
Identify and discuss <u>ethical responsibilities, challenges and dilemmas</u> within the field of developmental psychology, with focus on the school/educational context.	SLO #2 - Critical Thinking SLO #3 - Ethical Reasoning	Weekly Assignments
Deepen <u>self-insight</u> into one's own unique developmental story using psychological perspectives, from pregnancy through adolescence.	SLO #5 - Integration	Weekly Assignments
Student-specific learning objective (Each student will develop and submit one personal objective to guide learning, in addition to the above)	Varies by Student	Final Exam (Essay)

ASSIGNMENTS & ASSESSMENT

Student learning outcomes will be assessed using the following assignments, each of which will be weighted in the final course grade according to the specified weightings:

- **Section Examx (30%)** - Each student will complete four section exams in this course - one exam over prenatal development/birth/first year development; one exam over years 2 through the early childhood/preschool years; one exam over middle childhood/the school years; and one exam over the tween/adolescent years. Exams will consist of objective items (multiple choice, matching) along with essay questions. All PSY301 exams are closed-book and closed-note unless otherwise announced. The lowest one of these four section exams will be dropped when final grades are computed, so only the top 3 scores will contribute to the final grade. If a student misses a scheduled exam, there will be no make-up and the score of “0” will be dropped as that student’s lowest exam. A student may also “opt out” of one of the section exams, again with that score of “0” being dropped as the lowest. However, students are encouraged to save their “opt out” exam for a time where it may be most needed due to illness or unforeseen circumstances. Each of the three section exams is worth a total of 10% of your final course grade. Note: After completion of an exam, students will only be able to review individual exam items during designated class time (usually one week after taking the exam) or during a scheduled appointment with Dr. McDonald.
- **Final Exam (25%)** - At the conclusion of the semester, during GVSU final exam week, all course students will complete a cumulative final exam covering material from the entire semester. The exam will consist of both objective (multiple choice, matching) and comprehensive theory-application essay(s). A final exam review guide will be posted in BB the week preceding the exam. The final exam will be taken in-person in our classroom via Blackboard Ultra (BB) according to the designated GVSU final exam schedule, which is Monday, April 21 @ 12-1:50AM (Section #04) and Wednesday, April 23, 2:00-3:50PM (Section #06). Students will need to bring their charged laptop to class to complete the final exam. All PSY301 exams are closed-book and closed-note unless otherwise announced..
- **Child Observation/Field Research Project with Presentation (25%)** - Each student will complete a semester-long research project wherein they will apply child development concepts to a real-world research question of interest to developmental professionals, parents and/or educators. Students may choose to complete the project alone or with one partner; if working with a partner, both people will receive the same grade except in unusual circumstances where effort and productivity vary notably. These research

projects are descriptive research; you are setting out to describe *what is* but you are NOT trying to explain causal relationships or predictive relationships between variables. Each student will develop a working research question and hypothesis to guide their project; they will then gather data and review literature across the semester in order to address their research question. At a minimum, the project will consist of:

- Identification and review of at least 5 empirical research articles that relate to your project's research question and hypothesis; if working with a partner, you must include at least 10 empirical research articles;
- Child Observations (including at least one each of the three observation techniques taught by Dr. McDonald (narrative observation, event sampling observation, time sampling observation);
- Minimum of 18 hours spent observing and/or interacting directly with children of various ages, with full notes taken and summarized in your weekly project journal. Observational data should directly relate to your research question and hypothesis. No more than 3 hours may be counted per day for this assignment, meaning that you must spend at least 6 different days with children. When working with a partner, both partners must fulfill the 18-hour requirement for a total of 36 hours together. Children observed may not be related to you as the observer. Options to consider for completing observations might include (though are not limited to):
 - Tutoring/academic support
 - After-school program volunteering
 - Classroom volunteering
 - Coaching or assisting
 - Children's ministry/Sunday School programs
 - 4-H/community education program volunteering
 - Child care

Note that each student is responsible for locating, arranging, and planning for their locations where interactions will occur. For each observation location, an Observation Verification form must be completed, signed by an adult contact person, and turned in to Dr. McDonald via BB, including phone number and email contact information (see PSY301 Observation Verification form on BB). Dr. McDonald reserves the right to contact any and all contact persons to verify observations.

- Interviews of at least 3 children of different ages (6 total if working with a project partner); interview should last roughly an hour in duration and can also include activities, art work, or other shared activities related to the project; all direct

interviews of minor children must include signed parental consent before the child is interviewed (see PSY301 Child Interview Consent & Verification form in BB);

- Interviews of at least 3 professionals who work directly with children, focusing on your research topic and question (6 total if working with a partner). This might include educators, counselors, youth community or ministry workers, etc. Interviews may include broad questions but should focus in on your specific research topic. Ideally, interviews will take place in-person, but virtual interviews will be acceptable if in-person meetings are not possible. Each interviewee must complete and sign the PSY301 Interview Participation Verification form (see form in BB), which will then be submitted to Dr. McDonald via BB.

Child observation/data collection will begin the week of February 10, 2025, and last through March 28, 2025, for a total of 6 weeks of observation/data collection. Each student will keep a weekly log of all project activities, documenting time spent with children, including information on the setting in which observations took place. Further information about journal entry documentation will be discussed in class before the project begins.

All students—including both single-student projects and paired teams— will be assigned to a class research team which will provide support, accountability, feedback and encouragement through the research process. Many Friday class times will be devoted to project-related work (see course schedule).

Early in the semester, students (or student pairs) will propose their study to Dr. McDonald for approval; a proposal work session will take place on Friday, February 7, with instructor approval provided that weekend before observations begin. Examples of topics to research might include the following (though you are welcome to research any developmental topic of interest that is appropriate for our class purposes):

- Children's response to mistakes/failure (fixed vs. growth mindset)
- Children's self-concept (how they define themselves)
- Children's learning strategies
- Children's views of friendship
- Children's play activities, patterns and behaviors
- Children's understanding of conservation principles
- Children's reading/literacy behaviors and habits
- Creativity in children
- Adolescent identity development
- Adolescents and the imaginary audience

All Child Observation Research projects will be presented to the professor/classmates at one of eight “Child Development Research Conference Sessions” held near the end of the course. Each student/pair will have 10 minutes to summarize their research project verbally and visually using slides. The slide presentation should be organized as follows (maximum of 12 slides):

- Title slide (study title and researcher’s name)
- Research Problem
- Research Question & Hypothesis
- Summary of key empirical research reviewed
- Methods of Data Collection
- Results - Summary of Data
 - Quantitative - descriptive statistics, tables, charts,
 - Qualitative - Key themes, work samples, direct quotes
- Discussion - Interpretation of data relative to research problem/question and hypothesis; integration with literature review
- Discussion - identification of study weaknesses and suggested changes for future replication
- Implications for practice/teaching/intervention/parenting and family life
- Implications for future research
- References (formatted in APA 7th edition)

A grading rubric will be posted in BB and discussed during class early in the semester. Students will be graded on quality attention to the following factors;

- Literature review
- Project design
- Observations
- Child Interviews
- Professional Interviews
- Progress Reports
- Integration work
- Project participation and contribution
- End-of-semester presentation
 - Visual organization/quality
 - Verbal communication/quality/effectiveness
 - Content/project description and evaluation
 - Clarity & organization of presentation
 - Professionalism

- **Weekly Written Assignments/Lab Papers (10%)** - Across the semester, students will complete a series of short papers related to in-class labs, videos and other developmental activities. Each of the following short papers/assignments is worth 1% (10 points) toward the student's final course grade; students may miss or opt-out of one weekly assignment except for the pre-course and post-course papers without penalty (though students are still responsible for the course content related to every writing assignment). If an assignment is missed or turned in past the due date, it will automatically be counted as the one opt-out paper. If students complete all 11 assignments, their lowest weekly writing score will be dropped automatically in the gradebook before final grades are computed:

- 1 - Week One Introductory Forms
- 2 - Pre-Course Reflection Paper: Vocation, Worldview & Child Development
- 3 - Theory Matrix/Application Paper
- 4 - Practice Observation Summary Paper
- 5 - Piagetian Concepts Paper
- 6 - Context Analysis Paper (Bronfenbrenner/Lerner & Lerner)
- 7 - Play & Art/Creativity Date Summary Paper
- 8 - ACES Questionnaire and Reflection Paper
- 9 - Peer Project Feedback Form
- 10 - Adolescent Brain/TED Talk Response Paper
- 11 - Post-Course Reflection: Vocation, Worldview & Child Development

Weekly written assignments/lab papers cannot be made up beyond due date, except for in extreme situations with prior approval from Dr. McDonald:

Excellent Quality-	9-10/10
Average Quality:	8/10
Below Average Quality:	7/10
Well-Below Ave. Quality:	5-6/10
Highly Deficient or Incomplete:	0-4/10

- **Class Engagement, Participation & Attendance (10%)** - It is my goal that we create a safe community space of learning, listening, considering and respecting where every voice can be heard and valued. Learning is an active process, and a college course is made stronger when every student in the course engages and participates on an ongoing basis. We need the input and perspective of every single person in the course. I encourage the sharing of perspectives and ideas, even those that feel "half-baked." During our class

sessions, I will be looking for evidence of student engagement and participation which includes the following specific behaviors:

- Timely arrival to class
- Limiting absences to unavoidable situations such as illness
- Verbal participation in class
- Verbal participation in small group activities/discussions
- Active notetaking
- Completion of weekly written assignments
- Sending class-related articles and links to Dr. McDonald with your comments
- Respectful attitude and behavior toward the professor
- Respectful attitude and interactions with peers
- Avoiding unnecessary distraction (i.e. in regard to phone/laptop use)
- Present and active engagement in fishbowl discussions

In terms of class attendance, please plan to be in class and to save your allowed absences for when you really need them. Life happens and each student is allowed 3 absences to use for illness, mental health days, etc. Any additional absence beyond 3 will result in a grade reduction in your final course grade. Consistent with GVSU policy, student absences for the following circumstances are excused:

- 1) Active participation in an intercollegiate event;
- 2) Observance of religious holidays
- 3) Military duty
- 4) Jury duty, or appearance in court or other government hearings
- 5) Student illness or medical conditions that preclude class attendance
- 6) Birth or adoption of child
- 7) Academic and/or professional conference
- 8) Bereavement for an individual of significant relationship.

Regardless of the reason for absence, it is the student's responsibility to catch up on any missed work and, if needed, to initiate connection with Dr. McDonald to discuss missed work. If you have concerns related to attendance, please make an appointment to have a conversation about it with Dr. McDonald.

Instructor Feedback to Students

Students in this course will receive feedback on their work and course progress through the following channels:

- 1) Weekly whole-group feedback provided in class by Dr. McDonald
- 2) Individual grades on exams (provided through Blackboard gradebook; allow one week for exam grades involving essays)
- 3) Criterion-measured grades on weekly written application assignments
- 4) Verbal and written feedback on team fishbowl discussion (verbal comments provided immediately following presentation; written grading within one week of final student presentation date)
- 5) Student appointment discussion with Dr. McDonald (by student request)

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Grading Scale

The following GVSU psychology program-adopted grading scale will be used to assign final course grades:

A	=	100 – 93
A -	=	92 – 90
B +	=	89 – 87
B	=	86 – 83
B -	=	82 – 80
C+	=	79 – 77
C	=	76 – 73
C -	=	72 – 70
D+	=	69 – 65
D	=	64 – 60
F	=	< 60

Note: There is not a “D -” grade in the scale used by the GVSU Psychology Department. You must earn at least 6% to pass this course.

Professor Policies on Written Work

All written assignments submitted to Dr. McDonald should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Heading should include student's name (first and last), course w/section #, and submission date
- Cite all sources fully and correctly using APA 7th edition.
- For any paper citizen external sources, you must include a complete APA-formatted References page;
- Unless noted otherwise, written assignments should be submitted electronically via BlackBoard Ultra.
- Assignment due dates should be respected and followed. **Late work is generally not accepted**, unless a student has an unavoidable serious emergency that has been communicated to Dr. McDonald and an assignment extension approved. Please do everything that you can to turn assignments in on time, according to the stated due date. In general, late assignments are not accepted and will receive a grade of "0".
- When you submit a written assignment with your name on it through your BlackBoard Ultra account, I assume that it is solely your work and that you have cited to give credit to others' work that you have integrated into your paper. Any instance of plagiarism will be reported and handled according to GVSU policy. Please, if you are in a bind and tempted to cheat/plagiarize, come and talk with me honestly. It is never a good idea to cheat and plagiarize, and it is always the best choice to operate in a way that upholds your integrity.
- Further information on GVSU academic honesty policies can be reviewed here: <https://www.gvsu.edu/catalog/navigation/academic-policies-and-regulations.htm#anchor-29>

Professor Policies on Exams

All exams completed for Dr. McDonald should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Course exams will be administered electronically through Blackboard Ultra.
- Exams may utilize Lockdown Browser, which is each student's responsibility to download to their device.
- Exams should be completed according to the syllabus schedule.
- Please do not make travel plans that conflict with course exam dates/times. Final exams are scheduled in accordance with GVSU's master schedule and cannot be adjusted.
- Make-up exams are given only in unavoidable emergency circumstances.
- When you submit an exam with your name on it through your BlackBoard Ultra account, I assume that it is solely your work. Any instance of cheating on exams will result in an exam grade of "0" and possible other penalties; it will further be reported and handled according to GVSU policy. It is never a good idea to cheat on an exam, and it is always the best choice to operate in a way that upholds your integrity. It is better to fail an exam honestly than to pass it by cheating.

- The final exam is cumulative. While an exam review guide will be provided in the week preceding the exam, any and all material from course readings, lectures, activities and discussions is fair game for inclusion on exams.
- Students will only be able to view their individual exam during whole-class review times in the week following an exam or during individually scheduled meetings with Dr. McDonald.

Extra Credit Policy

Extra credit will not be offered in this course. There are many scheduled assignments where you can earn points, so please take full advantage and do your best work throughout the course to avoid a panicked situation near the end of the course. If you have concerns about how you are doing in the course, please make an appt. to talk with Dr. McDonald early to formulate a plan to improve your course performance.

Student Accessibility Policy and Resources

Grand Valley State University strives to provide an inclusive environment across campus that is accessible to all individuals with a diverse range of abilities. As your instructor, it is my objective to facilitate opportunities within all class activities and programs because your success is important to me. If you are encountering difficulties that are interrupting your learning experience please feel free to make those known to me as soon as possible, as early planning is essential. If you feel that you need accommodations in this course, you must present a memo to me from Accessibility Resources, indicating the existence of a disability and the approved accommodations. If the class meets in person, you should schedule a meeting with me during office hours to discuss your accommodations. If your class is online or hybrid, please forward your memo to me in an email and schedule a virtual or phone appointment with me to discuss your accommodations. Accommodations are not retroactive. If you have not already done so, please contact the Accessibility Resources office (215 CON) by calling (616) 331-2490 or by email to dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu. Please note that I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received a copy of the Accessibility Resources issued memo. Furthermore, if you have a disability and think you will need assistance evacuating this classroom and/or building in an emergency, please make me aware so that the university and I can develop a plan to assist you. All discussions will remain confidential.

As your professor, I have a deep commitment to creating a safe learning space where everyone belongs and feels heard and valued. Even when (especially when) we don't agree, we can still practice civility and demonstrate respect and acceptance for our fellow humans.

Important GVSU Policies

All GVSU Academic policies can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.gvsu.edu/catalog/navigation/academic-policies-and-regulations.htm>

This includes but is not limited to

RESOURCES

GVSU provides a large range of valuable resources to support students in their academic and vocational pursuits. Here are just a few of the key resources that are available to you, so please take advantage of them as the need arises:

- The Knowledge Market (Located in the Library: Assistance with Research, Writing and Presentations) <https://www.gvsu.edu/library/km/>
- The Tutoring and Reading Center <https://www.gvsu.edu/trc/>
- Mental Health Needs (Counseling Center) <https://www.gvsu.edu/counsel/>
- Financial Wellness (Money Smart Lakers) <https://www.gvsu.edu/moneysmart/>
- Financial Aid Issues <https://www.gvsu.edu/financialaid/>
- COVID information <https://www.gvsu.edu/lakerstogether/>
- Career Services (Career related events, resume writing, sample interviews): <https://www.gvsu.edu/careers/>
- Professional Advising (for major and graduation requirements, etc.): <https://www.gvsu.edu/clasadvising/>

Psych Friends Peer-to-Peer Mentors: Psych Friends mentors are upper-level psychology and behavioral neuroscience students who provide guidance and support in many areas, such as: effective studying and time management techniques, understanding the PSY and BNS major requirements, careers in the field, and the process of applying for graduate school. Visit <https://www.gvsu.edu/navigate> to schedule an online or in-person meeting today! Mentoring is available to psychology majors and to any student taking a psychology course.

Policy on Artificial Intelligence (AI)

In the GVSU Psychology program, we treat AI-based assistance, such as ChatGPT and Copilot, the same way we treat collaboration with other people: you are welcome to talk about your ideas and work with other people, both inside and outside the class, as well as with AI-based assistants.

However, all work you submit must be your own. You should never include in your assignment anything that was not written directly by you without proper citation (including quotation marks and in-line citation for direct quotes).

Including anything you did not write in your assignment without proper citation will be treated as an academic misconduct case. If you are unsure where the line is between collaborating with AI and copying from AI, we recommend the following:

1. Never hit “Copy” within your conversation with an AI assistant. You can copy your own work into your conversation, but do not copy anything from the conversation back into your assignment. Instead, use your interaction with the AI assistant as a learning experience, then let your assignment reflect your improved understanding.
2. Do not have your assignment and the AI agent open at the same time. Similar to above, use your conversation with the AI as a learning experience, then close the interaction down, open your assignment, and let your assignment reflect your revised knowledge. This includes avoiding using AI directly integrated into your composition environment: just as you should not let a classmate write content directly into your submission, so also avoid using tools that directly add content to your submission.

Typical Class Session Structure: I value creativity and engagement in my teaching; I also seek to help you build your “psychological tool belt” of strategies that you can use in your internship and work settings now and into the future. I work diligently to employ a spectrum of teaching methods to engage a diverse student group with a wide range of preferred modalities. As I plan each class session, I tend to draw from a menu of activities including but not limited to:

- Mini-skills demonstrations (each class session will begin with a brief skill description of demonstration)
- Direct instruction/lecture “nuggets” (15-20 minutes, typically)
- Think, pair and share (learning in pairs)
- Thought-writes (quick papers)
- Small group activities and discussions
- Case Study Application
- Problem-based learning
- Other creative teaching strategies such as jigsaw methods, debates, games
- Exit reflections in Google forms (we will do this every week as part of your course engagement grade)

PSY301 SCHEDULE - WINTER 2025

DATE	FOCUS	TOPICS	READING (Complete before class)	UNDERSTANDING, APPLYING, CREATING & WRITING	ASSIGNMENT (Note due dates)
WEEK 1 Monday, 1/06/25	Course Introduction Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Development Overview 		Student “Get to Know You” Introduction Form (DUE: Wednesday 1/08 by 11:59PM) “Commitment to Succeed” Agreement with Personal Learning Objective (DUE Friday 1/10/25 @11:59PM)	
Wednesday, 1/08/2025	Child Development and Vocation Developmental Theory		Course Syllabus Santrock et al, Chapter 1		
Friday, 1/10/25	Project Overview Session: The PSY301 Observation/Research Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining Development Key Themes in Development Research in Developmental Psychology 	Observation/Research Project Documents (posted in BB)		
WEEK 2 Monday, 1/13	Key Developmental Theories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaviorism & Conditioning (Skinner & Thorndyke) Social Learning Theory (Bandura) Cognitive Theory (Piaget) Psychosocial Theory 	Review Santrock et al, Chapter 1 (pp. 16-27)	Case Study - Theory Application (in class)	Pre-Course Writing: Statement of Vocation, Worldview and Child Development (Due: Monday @ 11:59PM)

		(Erikson)			
Wednesday, 1/15	Key Developmental Theories (Cont)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecological Theory (Bronfenbrenner) • Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky) • Developmental Contextualism (Lerner & Lerner) 	Review Santrock et al, Chapter 1 (pp. 16-27) Article: Lerner & Kauffman (1985) (Linked in Blackboard)		
Friday, 1/17	Developmental Lab - Developmental Theory and Learner Case Study (in research groups)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eclecticism • Your Personal Developmental Theory • Applying theory to developmental case studies 		Case Study - Theory Application & Developmental Theory Matrix (in class)	
WEEK THREE Monday, 1/20	NO CLASS (MLK DAY)				
Wednesday, 1/22	Genetics, Ovulation and Conception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conception Process • Origins of Life Debate • Reproductive Technologies • Reproductive Ethics • Genetic Disorders • Ovulation 	Santrock et al, Chapter 2 View: Video Clips on Ovulation and Conception (posted in BB)		DUE: Developmental Theory Matrix & Personal Theory Statement (DUE: Wednesday @ 11:59PM)
Friday, 1/24	Developmental Lab - Useful Techniques for Observing Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naturalistic vs. laboratory observation • Narrative Recording • Event Sampling • Time Sampling 	Observation Techniques Documents (posted in BB)		DUE: Project Topic Paragraph & Solo/Partner Project Choice (by 11:59PM)
WEEK FOUR Monday, 1/27	Pregnancy & Prenatal Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prenatal Care • Prenatal Testing • Pregnancy Lifestyle Choices • Pregnancy 	Santrock et al, Chapter 3		DUE: Practice Observation Summary Paper (by 11:59PM)

		Myths/Truths			
Wednesday, 1/29	Labor, Birth and the Newborn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stages of Prenatal Development • Prenatal Conditions and Anomalies 			
Friday, 1/31	Project Proposals View “Babies” Netflix Documentary (Response Paper due Monday)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labor/Delivery Plans and Places • Labor Experience • Birth Process • Stages of Delivery • The Human NewBorn 	Santrock et al, Chapter 4		
WEEK FIVE Monday, 2/03	Infancy: Baby’s First Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Attachment • Trust vs. Mistrust • Oral Stage • Infant Reflexes • Brain Development in Year One • Fine and Gross Motor Development • Early Language Basics • Intellectual Development - Habituation 	Santrock et al, Chapters 5, 6 & 7		“Babies” Film Response (DUE: 11:59PM tonight)
Wednesday, 2/05	EXAM #1	Covers theory- focused materials from Chapters 1, plus additional theory readings, videos and notes	Exam One covers Developmental Theory & Chapters 1-7 content		
Friday, 2/07 No Class	Project: Proposal Work Session (proposals due				DUE: Project Proposal (by 11:59PM)

Meeting Today	by 11:59PM tonight)				
WEEK SIX Monday, 2/10	Toddlerhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terrible Twos? • Terrifying Threes? • Emerging Sense of Self • Language Development • Locomotion 	Santrock et al, Chapters 8, 9 & 10		<i>Project Proposal Approvals Sent</i> <i>*Child Observations/ Interviews begin this week (after project approval received)*</i>
Wednesday, 2/12	Early Childhood/ Preschool Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language and Literacy • Early School Contexts • Impact of Media on Early Brain Development 	Review Santrock et al, Chapters 8, 9 & 10 Benjamin et. al article (2020) (Linked in Blackboard)		
Friday, 2/14	Developmental Lab #4 - Piagetian Tasks and Early Childhood Cognitive Development Sibs and Kids Planning Time				
WEEK SEVEN Monday, 2/17	Field Trip Day: Complete Play Date and Art Date (1 hour each)				DUE: Piagetian Concepts Paper (DUE Monday @ 11:59PM)
Wednesday, 2/19	Play, Art/Creativity, Learning and Healthy Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play as Developmentally Crucial • Art and Creativity in Development 	Reading TBD		
Friday, 2/21	Sibs and Kids Day - Bring				DUE: Google Mid-Semester Feedback

	your younger siblings, cousins or favorite kids to class for games, activities and treats!				Form (Due Friday 2/21 @ 11:59PM) DUE: Project progress report (due today by 11:59PM)
WEEK EIGHT Monday, 2/24 (Mid-term grades due 2/25)	EXAM #2		Exam Two covers Developmental Theory & Chapters 8, 9 & 10		DUE: Play & Art/Creativity Date Summary Paper (DUE Today 10/04 @ 11:59PM)
Wednesday, 2/26	School-Age Child/ Middle Childhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry vs, Inferiority • Family Context and Parenting Styles • Non-shared developmental environments 	Santrock et al, Chapters 11, 12 & 13		
Friday, 2/28	Project: Open Project Office Hours with Dr. McDonald - Spring Break Treats (Optional)				DUE: Context Analysis Paper (Bronfenbrenner/Lerner & Lerner) DUE: 11:5PM)
SPRING BREAK 3/01-3/09	NO CLASS THIS WEEK	ENJOY!			
WEEK NINE Monday, 3/10	Common Childhood Neurodevelopmental Disorders and Treatments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disorders in School • Pediatric Treatment Approaches 	Review Santrock et al, Chapters 11, 12 & 13		
Wednesday, 3/12	Childhood Trauma Special Guest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childhood Trauma, ACES and 	Reading TBD	Complete ACES Assessment	

	<i>Speaker:</i> <i>Marjory Erdman</i>	HOPE • Trauma and the Developing Brain		(linked in Blackboard) - Bring results to class today	
Friday, 3/14	Project: Group Progress Meetings Meetings				Due: ACES Questionnaire and Reflection Paper (by 11:59PM)
WEEK TEN Monday, 3/17	EXAM #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity vs. Role Confusion • Aspects of Identity • Identity Statuses • Individuation and Affiliation • Positive Youth Development (Lerner) 	Exam Three covers Developmental Theory, Developmental Trauma & Chapters 11, 12 & 13		
Wednesday, 3/19	Tweens & Developmentally Targeted Middle Schools		Santrock et al, Chapters 14, 15 & 16		
Friday, 3/21	Project: Peer Project Feedback Meetings				
WEEK ELEVEN Monday, 3/24	Adolescents & Identity Development		Review Santrock et al, Chapters 14, 15 & 16		DUE: Peer Project Feedback Forms (submitted to BB and sent to feedback partner; Due @ 11:59PM)
Wednesday, 3/26	Adolescent Risk and Resilience		Readings TBD		
Friday, 3/28	Child Development Conference				DUE: Adolescent Brain/TED Talk Response Paper (by 11:59PM tonight)

	Work Day				Finish Child Observations/Interviews and Child Professional Interviews this week.
WEEK TWELVE Monday, 3/31	EXAM #4		Exam Four covers Developmental Theory & Chapters 14, 15 & 16		
Wednesday, 4/02	Child Development Project Conference Session #1	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		Observe & Learn from Peer Child Development Project Presentations	
Friday, 4/04	Child Development Project Conference Session #2	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		Observe & Learn from Peer Child Development Project Presentations	
WEEK THIRTEEN Monday, 4/07	Child Development Project Conference Session #3	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		Observe & Learn from Peer Child Development Project Presentations	
Wednesday, 4/09	Child Development Project Conference Session #4	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		Observe & Learn from Peer Child Development Project Presentations	
Friday, 4/11	Child Development Project Conference Session #5	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		Observe & Learn from Peer Child Development Project Presentations	

WEEK FOURTEEN Monday, 4/14	Child Development Project Conference Session #6	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		Observe & Learn from Peer Child Development Project Presentations	
Wednesday, 4/16	Child Development Project Conference Session #7	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		Observe & Learn from Peer Child Development Project Presentations	
Friday, 4/18 Good Friday	Final Exam Review (Online and/or Small Groups)				DUE: Child Conference Key Learning Reflection Paper (DUE: Tonight @ 11:59PM)
Monday, 4/21	FINAL EXAM (Cumulative, covers all course material and Santrock et al., Chapters 1-16)	12:00-1:50PM	*Section 04 students only		DUE: Post-Course Writing: Vocation, Worldview & Child Development (DUE 4/21 @ 11:59PM)
Wednesday, 4/23	FINAL EXAM (Cumulative, covers all course material and Santrock et al., Chapters 1-16)	2:00-3:50PM	*Section 06 students only		

(Note: Instructor reserves the right to adjust schedule if the need arises)

Professor's Tips on How to Succeed in PSY301

Be an Active and Self-Regulated Learner

- **Self-Management is Key:** Online courses require perseverance, self-discipline, self-motivation, and the ability to work independently – more so than face-to-face on-campus classes. Make sure to:
 - Log onto Blackboard daily to check announcements and interact with course material.
 - Stay organized and keep track of due dates.
 - Plan weekly study times and stick to a schedule.
 - Plan on spending roughly **10-12 hours per week** on this course. This includes:
 - 2 - 3 hours watching and (re)watching video material while notetaking (approx)
 - 2 hours completing reading assignments
 - 2 hours in discussion forums/fishbowl prep with team (varies by week)
 - 2 - 3 hrs completing weekly written assignments
 - 1 - 2 hours reviewing and prepping for exams
- **Read!** Complete the week's readings associated with each instruction video, watch the video, then re-read key sections of the readings where you need further clarity.
- **Take Good Notes:** Take notes while reading, while viewing instructional videos, and while studying. Some students find it helpful to translate written notes into diagrams or pictures (sometimes called sketch-notes).
- **Turn in all Weekly Assignments on time.** Late assignments receive a 0. Missing more than the two allowed weekly written assignments may lower your course grade.
- **Prepare for Exams Well in Advance.** Get in the habit of re-reading your notes and quizzing yourself on key concepts each day. Make flashcards, re-write notes, talk about key concepts with a friend/classmate, etc. Use related questions and flashcards, or take practice exams, on platforms such as Quizlet (<https://quizlet.com/>). If you wait until the last minute to begin preparing for an exam, you are setting yourself up for struggle and failure.
- **Communicate with me!** *Email me* or make an appointment to meet with me on Zoom if you need to discuss anything related to this course. *I enjoy meeting and talking with students!*
- **Make lifestyle choices that support learning.** A solid and growing body of research supports that connection between healthy lifestyle and meaningful learning. Small decisions for a healthy lifestyle equate to a brain, body and spirit that is at its prime for learning. Establish healthy routines and practices in the areas such as:
 - Consistent sleep and rest routines (Naps are most effective when 26ish minutes long, or 90 minutes long)
 - Adequate hydration
 - Healthy balanced diet (include favorites in moderation)
 - Daily exercise (even if a brisk 15-minute walk)
 - Healthy breathing (including intentional deep breaths when needed to calm and center)
 - Healthy practices related to tobacco, alcohol, weed/drugs
 - Balance of social/relational connection time and time in solitude

- Make time daily for spiritual/soul practices and rituals that are meaningful and beneficial to you.....mindfulness, prayer, meditation
- Attend to physical and mental health needs, whatever that looks like for you.
- Mindset matters....work on fostering an optimistic, gratitude-focused growth mindset. Mistakes, struggles and failures are optimum grounds for progress.
- **Take active ownership of your own learning**

Exam preparation

- Keep your notes organized.
- Make flashcards of key concepts, theories and research study findings. Keep flashcards with you to use small amounts of time constructively throughout the day for review (waiting for an appt., lull time between classes, walking around campus)
- Distribute your exam preparation across every week of the course, not just in the days leading up to the exam. This is called distributed practice and is much more supportive of student success than cramming.
- Research suggests.....**Brain retrieval practice is key!** Quiz yourself on key concepts or have a classmate or friend quiz you, forcing your brain to repeatedly retrieve information. Train your brain to retrieve.
- Get a good night's sleep consistently; develop a healthy sleep routine and practice good sleep hygiene. This is a lifestyle choice that will serve you well for a lifetime.
- Exercise and breathe clear air....get outside and walk! Walking and breathing in cold crisp air (while dressed appropriately for the weather) is especially helpful. Oxygenated brains are effectively operating brains.