

Fall 2025
PSY 364 Life-Span Development

Meeting Times

Section 04: MWF 9:00-9:50

174 Lake Ontario Hall (LOH)

Section 05: MWF 11:00-11:50

174 Lake Superior Hall (LSH)

Instructor Information

Dr. Sydney Garlitch

Office: 2111 AuSable Hall

Email: garlits@gvsu.edu

Office hours: 12:00-2:00 MW, 12:00-1:00 F

Course Description

A survey of theories and research on human development from conception through death. Physical, perceptual, cognitive, personality, social, and emotional changes are reviewed, and their interrelationships are discussed. Does not satisfy the requirements for teacher certification. Prerequisite: PSY 101

Course Objectives

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

- Demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts and theoretical paradigms that direct the field of Life-Span Developmental Psychology.
- Describe, and think critically about, changes within the developing person through the lifespan.
- Compare both traditional and current explanations for trends in the human's physical, cognitive, and social/emotional growth.
- Understand the scientific method and apply it to the understanding of human behavior and development through the lifespan.
- Apply knowledge of lifespan development to one's experiences in life; work/careers, home/family, self and others.

Required Textbook

You are not required to purchase a textbook for the course, **but there IS a required textbook.** This is an open-source, freely available textbook. You can download the pdf from this link: <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/540> or find it on Blackboard.

Course Format

This course is in person 3 days a week (lecture recordings will not be provided). You should contact me if you are absent so that you do not fall behind in class. To be successful, you will

need to complete all required readings prior to coming to class. The course will be a combination of lecture and discussion based. You will complete class activities, quizzes, exams, and write journal summaries. I will do my best to post lecture slides in advance on Blackboard to assist in your notetaking, but it may not be possible every week.

Grading Scale

93.0-100% A	90.0-92.9% A-	87.0-89.9% B+
83.0-86.9% B	80.0-82.9% B-	77.0-79.9% C+
73.0-76.9% C	70.0-72.9% C-	67.0-69.9% D+
63.0-66.9% D	60.0-62.9% D-	< 60.0% F

Course Outcome Measures

Your grade will be comprised of exams, quizzes, class activities, and a final project.

	Points	Number	Subtotal
Class Activities	10	6 (7, drop 1)	60
Quizzes	15	9 (10, drop 1)	135
Semester Exams	45	2	90
Final Exam	90	1	90
Journal Summaries	25	3	75
Total Points for Class			450

Class Activities: We will complete various in-class activities. Most assignments will be started and completed during class, but some may require some work from you outside of class. You will not know about an assignment prior to class, and you must be in class to earn the credit (unless you have an excused absence). You may have to submit your assignment on Blackboard while other times you will submit your assignment in class. Failure to submit by a given deadline will result in a 0. I will drop your lowest class activity score, so you can miss one in class assignment without penalty.

Quizzes: There will be periodic quizzes throughout the semester to help you practice retrieving and applying lecture and textbook material and prepare you for exams. Quizzes will be timed and administered through Blackboard and can include multiple choice, true/false, and matching questions. **Quizzes are due by 11:59 pm on the due dates (posted on the schedule below and on Blackboard).** You must complete the quiz by the deadline unless you have arranged in advance with Dr. Garlitch for an extension. Failure to complete the quiz by the deadline will result in a 0. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped.

Exams: You will have 2 exams during the semester and one exam during finals week that will be taken in class. The exams will include multiple choice questions based on material from the textbook, lectures, and in-class activities. The final exam will be half cumulative (questions taken from the first two exams) and half from the most recent material learned after Exam 2 (see schedule below). The final exam will be taken during exams week and will be roughly twice as long as the semester exams and thus worth twice the points. Make-up exams are up to the

discretion of Dr. Garlitch and will require a valid reason and proof for the absence (e.g., family or medical emergency). If you know in advance that you will need to miss an exam due to a university-sponsored event or a religious event, please arrange that with the Dr. Garlitch **before the exam.**

Journal Summaries: Reading and understanding scientific journal articles is an important skill in the field of psychology. To help you practice this skill, I will require you to write a summary of an assigned journal article with a topic that relates to what we are discussing in class. More details about the assignment will be discussed in class and a rubric can be found on Blackboard. Each summary is worth 25 points. See due dates for the summaries on the schedule below. Failure to submit by the given deadline will result in a 0 on the assignment. In addition, if I find evidence of artificial intelligence programs being used to submit your assignment, you will also be given a 0.

Extra Credit: You can earn up to 8 points of extra credit by submitting a reflection paper (can only submit one paper, not multiple). In the paper, you will reflect on how developmental concepts studied in class relate to your own personal experiences during that time in development. While it will incorporate your own information and personal anecdotes, it should be connected to the themes, issues, theories, and concepts covered in the textbook and class. More details about the reflection paper can be found on Blackboard.

Missing/Late Work: You are responsible for any class information that you may have missed. I would recommend checking with a classmate to see if you can get their notes in addition to finding the information from the lecture slides posted. If you miss class on exam days, you will not be allowed to make those up unless there is a valid reason (along with proof) for your absence. **Late assignments will not be accepted unless it has been discussed prior to the deadline for the assignment. All late assignments will be given a 0.**

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is subject to change with notice given in advance. If changes are necessary, an announcement and updated syllabus will be posted on Blackboard.

Email Policy

Email is the best way for you to communicate with me. Please put PSY 364 and your section in the subject line of the email. You can expect a response within 24 hours of your email during regular business hours (M-F, 9am-5pm). If you send an email outside of those hours, there may be a delay in my response.

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!

Course and Campus Environment

As an instructor, I will strive to create an equitable and inclusive learning environment in our class. It is my and the university's goal that you feel able to share information about your experiences as a student. Below are some of the resources available for support:

- **Title IX, Sexual Misconduct Policy, and Gender- and Sexual-Based Harassment Policy:** Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. Title IX's sex discrimination prohibition also protects students from discrimination based on gender identity or failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity. If you or someone you know has been harassed, assaulted, or denied services on the basis of sex or gender, you can find the appropriate resources at www.gvsu.edu/titleix or contact the University's Interim Director and Title IX Coordinator, Kevin Carmody at (616) 331-9530 or carmodke@gvsu.edu.
- **Disabilities Support Resources:** If you are in need of accommodations due to a learning, physical, or other disability you must present a memo to me from Student Accessibility Resources (SAR), indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested reasonable accommodations. If you have not already done so, please contact the Student Accessibility Resources office (215 The Blue Connection) by calling 331-2490 or email to access@gvsu.edu. You may also access resources at <https://www.gvsu.edu/accessibility>. Please note that I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received a copy of the SAR issued memo. All discussions will remain confidential. Furthermore, if you have a physical disability and think you will need assistance evacuating this classroom and/or building in an emergency situation, please make me aware so I can develop a plan to assist you.
- **Gender Expression and Identity:** At Grand Valley State University we recognize that an individual may wish to be identified by a professional, personal, preferred, display or use name without making an official legal name change. Students, faculty, and staff may use the [myName process](#) to update Banner and some related systems with such a name. The myName process will allow students, faculty, and staff to have the chosen name appear anywhere a legal name is not required.
- **Campus Climate Concerns:** Anytime you or anyone in the GVSU community feels belittled, disrespected, threatened, or unsafe because of who you are, the entire university community is diminished. That's why it's important to report all campus climate concerns--even those intended as jokes. While Grand Valley safeguards individuals' constitutional rights and protected speech, the university is also committed to inclusion and equity. Grand Valley exercises the right to engage in educational dialogue and seeks constructive responses to address campus climate concerns. To report a campus climate concern, go to <https://cm.maxient.com/reporting.php?GrandValley>. In addition, for faculty/staff-related complaints, you can file an informal complaint with the Division of

Inclusion and Equity at inclusion@gvsu.edu or (616) 331-3296. For student-related complaints, you can also contact the Dean of Students office at (616) 331-3585.

- **Student Well-Being:** As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can negatively impact your learning, such as anxiety, depression, interpersonal or sexual violence, difficulty eating or sleeping, loss/grief, and/or alcohol/drug problems. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and affect your ability to participate in day-to-day activities. In order to support you during such challenging times, GVSU provides a number of confidential resources to all enrolled students, including the University Counseling Center (<https://www.gvsu.edu/counsel/> or (616) 331-3266) and the Student Ombuds, Takeelia Garrett (garrettt@gvsu.edu).

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

The expectation in class (and at the university) is that all academic work will be done by the student to whom it is assigned without unauthorized aid of any kind. I, as the instructor, will exercise care in the planning and supervision of academic work, so that honest effort will be positively encouraged.

- One issue in academic honesty is **plagiarism**. Offering the work of someone else as one's own without proper reference is plagiarism. The offering of materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgment also is considered plagiarism. Any student who fails to give credit in written or oral work for the ideas or materials that have been taken from another is guilty of plagiarism. Such activity may result in failure of a specific assignment, an entire course, or, if flagrant, dismissal from Grand Valley. For further information see the Student Code.
- Another issue that revolving academic integrity is unwarranted use of generative AI assistance, like ChatGPT and Copilot. Using AI software to submit assignments for class is not permitted. Like taking work from another person, including anything that you did not write without proper citation is plagiarism.

In addition to the information above, this course is subject to all GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>

Course Schedule

Any changes to the following schedule will be announced in class and on Blackboard.

Week	Topic	Reading/Assignments
1	8/25 Class Intro + Studying Development 8/27 Research Methods 8/29 Research Methods	Chapter 1
2	9/1 No Class (Labor Day) 9/3 Theories of Development 9/5 Theories of Development	Journal Summary 1 due 9/5 Quiz 1 due 9/5
3	9/8 Prenatal Development and Birth 9/10 Infancy 9/12 Infancy	Chapter 2 Quiz 2 due 9/10 Chapter 3
4	9/15 Infancy 9/17 Infancy 9/19 Infancy	Quiz 3 due 9/19
5	9/22 Exam 1 9/24 Early Childhood 9/26 Early Childhood	Chapter 4
6	9/29 Early Childhood 10/1 Early Childhood 10/3 No Class—Online Assignment and Journal Summary	Quiz 4 due 9/29 Journal Summary 2 due 10/3
7	10/6 Middle Childhood 10/8 Middle Childhood 10/10 Middle Childhood	Chapter 5
8	10/13 Middle Childhood 10/15 Adolescence 10/17 Adolescence	Quiz 5 due 10/13 Chapter 6
9	10/20 No Class (Fall Break) 10/22 Adolescence 10/24 Adolescence	Quiz 6 due 10/24
10	10/27 Exam 2 10/29 Emerging Adulthood 10/31 Emerging Adulthood	Chapter 7
11	11/3 Emerging Adulthood 11/5 Emerging Adulthood 11/7 Emerging Adulthood	Quiz 7 due 11/7

12	11/10 Middle Adulthood 11/12 Middle Adulthood 11/14 Middle Adulthood	Chapter 8 Quiz 8 due 11/14
13	11/17 Older Adulthood 11/19 Older Adulthood 11/21 Older Adulthood	Chapter 9 Journal summary 3 due 11/21
14	11/24 Older Adulthood 11/26 No Class (Thanksgiving Break) 11/28 No Class (Thanksgiving Break)	Quiz 9 due 11/24
15	12/1 Death & Dying 12/3 Death & Dying 12/5 Death & Dying	Chapter 10 Quiz 10 due 12/5

Final Exam Schedule

Section 04 (MWF 9:00-9:50): Wednesday, December 10, 8:00 am - 9:50 am

Section 05 (MWF 11:00-11:50): Wednesday, December 10, 10:00 am - 11:50 am