



Life-Span Developmental Psychology

PSY 364

Grand Valley State University

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Instructor: **Gwenden L. Dueker, Ph.D. (pronouns: She/Her)**
Contact Information: dueker@gvsu.edu
Office: Allendale Campus, AuSable Hall (ASH 2208)
Office Hours: Drop in hour (no appointment necessary) TH 1-2; and other times by appointment

Welcome to PSY 364! Together we will be exploring scientific discoveries about Human Development and learning and thinking about how those discoveries can be applied to improve outcomes for all humans! I love teaching this class and look forward to spending the semester learning together. The point of a syllabus is to give an overview of how that learning will be structured. I have organized the syllabus into the following sections to try to do that in a user-friendly way.

- A. Course content & Learning objectives
- B. How to succeed in PSY 364
- C. Learning Communities and R.E.S.P.E.C.T.
- D. (tentative) Course schedule
- E. Grading procedures
- F. Some useful things to know
- G. AI Policy Statement
- H. Useful Resources at GVSU

A. Course Content and Learning Objectives

Course Description

This survey course will focus on development across the human lifespan. We will adopt a topical approach to the subject. Students will be asked to think critically about developmental research findings as well as the implications and applications of such findings. We will do this through discussions of methodology and common theoretical/philosophical perspectives on development.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

General 364 course goals:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts and theoretical paradigms that direct the field of Life-Span Developmental Psychology.
2. Describe and think critically about changes within the developing person through the life-span.
3. Compare both traditional and current explanations for trends in the human's physical, cognitive, and social/emotional growth *with particular emphasis on thinking critically about the interaction of nature and nurture in individual development.*
4. Understand the scientific method and apply it to the understanding of human behavior and development through the life-span.

5. Apply knowledge of lifespan development to one's experiences in life; work/careers, home/family, self and others.

Prof. Dueker-Specific course goals:

6. *Demonstrate an understanding of the impacts of positive & negative experiences on human development.*
7. *Demonstrate an understanding of how public policy affects human development.*
8. *Be critical consumers of information about Human Development that is presented by nonscientific sources (e.g. Media, Politicians).*
9. *Practice applying scientific knowledge to real-world issues in ways that promote wellbeing for all people.*

B. How to succeed in PSY 364

Mindset required for course participation and success in PSY 364:

1. Willingness to learn new and challenging material
 - a. If you already knew everything about human development, you wouldn't be taking this class.
 - b. Learning requires changing our minds. Be curious. Expect to learn new and sometimes surprising things. We all have assumptions about why people behave the ways that they do. Expect to have many of your assumptions challenged by scientific data about human development.
2. Willingness to practice to attain mastery of material
 - a. Learning requires time and practice.
 - b. If you are signed up for this class then you must want to learn about the scientific study of Human Development.
 - c. I am an expert on that topic. I will guide your learning. However, I can't do the learning for you just like you (unfortunately) can't do my sit-ups for me.
 - d. So, what is the key for success?...**Do the work!**
 - e. All assignments and activities are designed to help you acquire and practice the pertinent knowledge and skills. See below for descriptions of the tools and behaviors that will help you to complete the course work.

Materials required for course participation and success in PSY 364:



Life-Span Human Development

Carol K. Sigelman; Elizabeth A. Rider

1. Access to the **textbook**:
 - a. The text is available via the GVSU Saves Program (see lots of info on the course website). You are not required to use that electronic copy and can opt out of the GVSU saves program, but you will absolutely need access to the textbook in some form.
 - b. Sigelman, C. K. & Rider, E. A. (2021). Life-Span Human Development (10th edition). Cengage. ISBN# 9781337100731.
 - c. You do NOT need to buy access to any extra Cengage materials like MindTap.

2. **Access to technology**, including:
 - a. a desktop or laptop computer (This course cannot be completed with only a phone or tablet.)
 - b. reliable internet access multiple times a week
 - c. Software:
 - i. BlackBoard Ultra
 - ii. Microsoft office (excel, word, powerpoint)
 - iii. Google suite (e.g., google docs)

Behaviors/skills required for course participation and success in PSY 364:

Really, there is only one: **Engage!** What do I mean by that?

1. **Engage** with the other humans in the class:
 - a. Come to class! We are a group of humans learning about human development. We can learn a lot from each other.
 - b. Please contribute to lectures, discussions, and activities to in respectful (see respect section) and helpful ways.
 - c. Did I mention that coming to class is important?!?!?
2. **Engage** with the course materials
 - a. Access the course BB site each week.
 - b. Take the time to read the textbook and supplemental readings.
 - i. I chose them for a reason. I promise not to give you busy work.
 - c. Take the time to watch the supplemental videos
 - i. I will also post or link to videos available on the web or through the library (e.g. TED talks) when those videos can help enhance your learning.
 - d. Expect to spend between 6-8 hours a week OUTSIDE of classtime working on this class.
 - i. Some weeks the time required might be shorter or longer, depending on your interest and speed, but I have tried to pace it all consistently.
 - ii. Time alone isn't enough though. Learning requires S.W.E.E.T.:
 - Sleep (8 hours really matters!)
 - Water
 - Exercise
 - Eating
 - Time

Note: Taking care of your physical needs allows for healthy engagement in the complex material we will be studying. Please be mindful of your physical needs. Prioritize sleep (that's why it is first on the list) because it has strong effects on memory and cognitive function. If at any time in the semester you are struggling to meet basic physical needs (e.g. access to nutritious food, shelter, a safe place to sleep) please contact me ASAP and I will help connect you to available supports so that you can be healthy and safe and able to engage with this course.

C. Learning Communities and R.E.S.P.E.C.T.

We will be working together to create a meaningful learning community this semester. Learning is challenging! People learn best when they feel safe and respected. So, I want to set some respect ground-rules/expectations for how we (prof. and students) will demonstrate respect for the learning community during this course:

1. **Academic Honesty.** Academic honesty and integrity are expected from all students at all times.
 - a. Academic dishonesty is defined as an attempt to obtain or to help another student obtain a grade higher than what is honestly earned – this includes getting information about exams or assignments from students in an earlier or previous section of the course. Do not assume that any assignment for this course is a group assignment unless I specifically tell you that it is. Anything you turn in to me, whether a written assignment or an exam, needs to be your own, individual work. It is your responsibility to properly cite all sources in your written work and to avoid plagiarism.
 - b. An occurrence of academic dishonesty will result, minimally, in failure of the course and a recommendation for University judicial action. It is every student's responsibility to avoid even the appearance of cheating.
 - c. For more information about academic honesty please see the GVSU student code because this course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>.
2. **Respectful Communication.** Communicating with other members of the learning community is good!
 - a. We will maintain a respectful atmosphere during all class activities for all students (and professors) regardless of age, gender, favorite type of music, ethnicity, sexual orientation, learning ability, or driving skills. By that I mean (a) respectfully attending to the contributions that others make in the class and (b) consciously examining your own contributions to ensure that they are respectful to others around you.
 - b. If you experience a lack of respect at any point during this class, please contact me, and I will work with you to address the problem. Students who are consistently disrespectful towards the classroom community will be dropped from the course.
3. **Communicating with Prof D.** Being responsive is respectful. I try to respond to student questions as quickly as possible during business hours (and often other times too, but don't count on me being awake at 2 a.m. to answer a last-minute question ☺).
- a. Questions about the course or assignments:
 - i. The fastest way to get a question about the course or assignment answered will be to post to the COURSE QUESTIONS board in BB.
 - ii. Using the COURSE QUESTIONS board allows other members of the class to learn from your question and possibly to answer your question sooner than I would be able to.
- b. Questions specific to your own, personal circumstances:
 - i. Attend office hours or schedule an appointment with me
 - ii. Send me an email – duekerd@gvsu.edu
 1. I have lots of filters on my email account to try to weed out spam. Student emails are less likely to get lost in those filters if they have your name and course number listed in the topic line of the email.
 - iii. DO NOT USE THE MESSAGING CAPABILITY IN BB. It isn't reliable. I have posted an "Email Prof D" link at the top of the main BB page for this class. Please use that.

Note: I don't purposely ignore anyone so if you haven't heard back from me within 1 business day (48 hours on weekends) then assume I didn't get the message and please try again (perhaps using a different contact method). I want to respond to you – interacting with students is the best part of my job!

D. (Tentative) Course Schedule

The course schedule is below. Please note that there are two partial weeks during the semester.

RQ = Reading Quiz

Week	Breaks	Class meetings	Topics & Chapters
1		Aug 26 & Aug 28	Welcome to the course, Introductions, Intro to Lifespan Human Development (Chapter 1)
2		Sept. 2 & Sept. 4	Cause and human development (Chapter 1)
3		Sept. 9 & Sept. 11	Contexts of trauma and Contexts of wellbeing
4		Sept. 16 & Sept. 18	Nurture & Nature (Chapter 2) RQ?
5		Sept. 23 & Sept. 25	Prenatal Development & Birth (Chapter 3) RQ?
6		Sept. 30 & Oct. 2	Brain & Body Development (Chapter 4) RQ?
7		Oct. 7 & Oct. 9	Sensation, Perception & Action (Chapter 5) Exam 1
8		Oct. 14 & Oct. 16	Cognition, Memory & Learning (Chapters 6 & 7) RQ?
9	Fall break (Oct. 19-21)	Oct. 23 only	Intelligence, IQ & Creativity (Chapter 8)
10		Oct. 28 & Oct 30	Language, Education & Self (Chapters 9 & 10) RQ?
11	Nov 7 Last day to drop	Nov. 4 & Nov. 6	Social cognition (Chapter 12) RQ?
12		Nov. 11 & Nov.13	Emotions & Social Relationships (Chapter 13) Exam 2
13		Nov. 18 & Nov. 20	Family (Chapter 14) RQ?
14	Turkey Break Nov 26-30	Nov. 25 only	Thanksgiving Break Death & Dying (Chapter 16) RQ?
15		Dec. 2 & Dec. 4	Project Showcase and Science & Human Development wrap-up
Exam	Week	December 6-December 13	Cumulative Final Exam

E. Grading Procedures

I expect that everyone will make a genuine effort to participate in the course, engage with the material and complete their work in a timely fashion. That is how learning happens.

Sometimes, life is messy though.

- Computers and internet access can sometimes not work.
- People get sick.
- We are sometimes overwhelmed by work and family obligations.

All of this is real. So, I have planned for “**grace**” throughout the course and in the grading. This **grace** is designed to help you weather the bumps and minor surprises that are part of everyone's lives without

getting derailed from your learning in this class. Your health and your family's health should always be your priority. Please reach out as soon as possible if you have circumstances needing significant accommodation beyond what this **grace** policy allows and I will work with you to determine how to move forward.

Note: I will apply the grace conditions at the end of the semester during final grade calculation. BB grade calculations prior to final exam week will include all submitted (or missed) work.

Credit for this course will be based on student performance in these areas:

	<u>% of final grade</u>
Quizzes	15
Individual Assignments	10
In-class activities	10
Exam1	15
Exam 2	15
Final Project	15
Final Exam	20
Total weighted grade	100%

Quizzes

There will be occasional short quizzes across the semester because frequent testing promotes learning.

- Quizzes will have questions from assigned readings and/or videos.
- Quizzes must be completed in class when they are presented and may not be made up if they are missed.
- **Grace:** The lowest quiz score will be dropped from final grade calculations.

Individual Assignments

Individual assignments designed to promote understanding and application of course concepts will be given throughout the semester. These might include reflections on assigned readings or videos, web and library searches etc. Assignments are crafted to help students master specific content at specific points in the course so it is important to complete them on time to get the maximum learning benefit.

- Specific written descriptions of some assignments will be posted on BB and sometimes there might be a quick video explanation as well.
- Assignments must be completed by the specified deadline and may not be accepted after a deadline has passed.
- **Grace:** The lowest individual assignment grade will be dropped from final grade calculations.

In-class Discussion & Activities Engagement

Learning is enhanced through collaboration. We will be using discussions & Activities during the class to give students a chance to share their work and ideas with each other.

- **Grace:** The lowest in-class/activity grade will be dropped from final grade calculations.

Exams and Final exam

Cumulative exams help to improve student long-term retention and understanding of course materials.

Final Project

The final project for the class will be a chance to apply what you have learned in the class and to express your understanding artistically. Specific instructions for final project will be posted on BB later in the semester.

Grace: Written pieces of the project (non-in-class activities) can be submitted late for feedback and will receive partial credit.

Grading Scale

	A	93-100	A-	90-92	
B+	87-89	B	83-86	B-	80-82
C+	77-79	C	73-76	C-	70-72
D+	67-69	D	63-66	F	62 or lower

* I reserve the right to adjust this scale downward if I see the need. I follow scientific rounding rules.

F. Useful things to know

1. Submitting course materials:
 - All course assignments and materials must be submitted during class to Prof D or via BB.
Emailed assignments will not be accepted.
 - Pay attention to the instructions for submitting materials to BB. Attach a file when asked or copy and paste text when asked.
 - You are required to keep an electronic copy of all work that you submit to me.
 - Get in the habit of creating all assignments and posts in a separate, savable document outside of BB first.
 - Then you can either directly submit the document or copy and paste the information into BB while always retaining your own copy of the assignment.
 - When you submit an assignment to BB you should get a receipt. If you don't have a receipt, it didn't work.
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2. If you need special accommodations for accessing any of the materials for this class (e.g. testing) please let me know and I will work with you and Student Accessibility Resources (SAR) to set up the necessary accommodations to support your learning. Before I can discuss accommodations, you must present a memo to me from SAR documenting necessary accommodations. If you have not already done so, please contact the SAR office (215 the Blue Connection) by calling 331-2490 or email to access@gvsu.edu. Please note that I cannot provide accommodations until I have received a copy of the SAR issued memo. All discussions will remain confidential.
3. Any changes or updates to assignments/grading/schedule or other course materials will be posted as announcements in the course BB site.

G. AI Policy Statement

BY: David A. Joyner @davidjoyner@fediscience.org and adopted by Professor Dueker
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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.

H. Useful GVSU Resources.

All GVSU resources are free and available to ALL students (online, IRL, commuter or resident) so don't hesitate to reach out and ask for help! The Assist item in the main BB menu links to descriptions and contact information for GVSU support services...or you can just come see me and I can help connect you to meaningful support services.

This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <https://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>

Thanks for reading all the way to the end!!!! 😊