Pitzer College

Cognitive Development (with lab)

Psychology 154 Fall 2005

Graded assignments:

- weekly essays (5 of 8 are required; 50%)
- lab exercises (10%)
- lab participation (5%)
- Results/ Discussion of lab reports (20%)
- final paper and presentation (15%)

Class info:

Professor Gottfried

Broad Hall 108
x71648

OH
W 1:30-2:30
and by appointment

Class meetings
W 2:45
F 12:00

For info about this syllabus, contact Gail at gailg@DevSciLabs.com

Goals of the course

This course is designed to introduce students to the process of research in developmental cognition, including hands-on laboratory experiences and student-designed projects. The primary goals are to understand the rigors of developmental psychology as a science as well as to understand the ethics and obligations of working with young human participants.

Students in this class work as a research team. Therefore, class attendance is **required**. You should arrange your schedule to be able to attend each session. If you have an athletic, co-curricular, or personal

commitment that interferes with attendance or completion of the course work, you should consider taking the course another time.

Completion of all work by the deadlines given is required, and academic honesty is expected. Unless otherwise instructed, all papers must be typed, double-spaced, printed, and stapled. *Please do not email papers to me.*

My late paper policy is firm. ***I will not accept late assignments without permission in advance; if you don't hand a paper in when it is due, you will receive a zero.*** See me in case of emergencies.

I realize that as a college student, you are challenged by many competing demands on your time. Although you may need to place other commitments as higher priority than this course, I expect you to accept the consequences of your choice.

All students must have passed introductory psychology and statistics.

Class resources

You will need to purchase the Flavell, Miller, and Miller textbook and a set of earphones to use with the computer.

The labor cost of the class is high. Lab time is devoted to online exercises, data collection, and data analysis. However, most students will spend a significant amount of additional time collecting and coding data, as well as conducting library research and planning presentations.

I am in the middle of writing an online "textbook" for the laboratory part of this class, so you become test participants. The US National Science Foundation kindly paid for your online access and password, in exchange for your feedback on the project. You must have an email account.

We will work with archival data to start, but students will also work directly with children this term.

Cognitive Development

Weekly essays

At the end of each topic-based unit, I will assign an essay question to encourage you to think about the next topic we will address.

Students are required to write a formal expository essay answer to 5 of the 8 questions during the term. Successful answers will require that you read the assigned chapters in advance of our covering the material in class. These essays will probably be about three pages and will require solid experimental evidence in support of your answer.

Should you choose, you may rewrite 2 of your ssays following class discussion as well, but *only* if you have submitted a reasonable essay beforehand (no drafts!). Rewrite grades replace original grades, unless an original grade is not passing (in which case you need to pick another topic to complete 5 essays). Rewrites are due the class following the return of the original.

Remember, because this class has no exams, these essays are the primary way in which you show understanding of the material you learn in this class.

Working with children requires special attention to their needs and abilities. Failure to adhere to ethical requirements will result in your not passing the class, regardless of your other work in the course.

Online exercises for lab

Online exercises are usually done alone, but sometimes you will do them in instructor-assigned groups. If you don't finish during class time, you are responsible for completing the assignment prior to the next class period, unless otherwise instructed. The software is available from any computer; it will automatically download any video or other additional software needed. As with all research, coding exercises often take a lot of time, so plan ahead.

Online exercises are graded for completeness and thoughtfulness. In tasks, a one-sentence "answer" is not enough. You should attempt to integrate your knowledge of children, your own experiences, and your readings into your answers. Explain all your thoughts. In forums, simply posting a thought is not enough. You should attempt to engage in discussion, responding to others' ideas. This will entail your visiting the forums more than once, as your classmates post additional thoughts and ideas.

Sometimes you have access to others' responses. I have access to your responses once they are posted as final. Only you can read anything saved as a draft.

The online exercises are works-in-progress. The goal for the class is to evaluate them, identify any needed changes, and figure out how long each one takes. At the end of the term, you'll be asked to fill out a specific questionnaire.

Research projects

We will complete three research projects in this class — two focused on aspects of social cognition and one on a topic selected by the class.

The first project uses archival data from children. The class will collect data from adults as a comparison. This project is designed to give you the skills you need before working with the children.

The second project will involve our collecting interview data from children and questionnaire data from their parents. This project will be conducted at the Children's School at CMC. Following all the rules of the School is essential — students violating any policies will immediately fail.

For the final projects, groups will select a research topic, ask a question, conduct a literature search, design an appropriate method, collect and analyze the data, and present the results both in an APA-style paper (individual) and in poster format (group).

Research projects take a tremendous amount of time outside of class. Be sure to schedule properly!

Schedule (subject to change)

Introduction to the course	August 31
Read FMM Chapter 1	
Read Sternberg, The princess grows up (handout)	
Infant perception	September 7
Read FMM Chapter 2	
Infant cognition	September 14
Read FMM Chapter 3	
Language	September 21–28
Read FMM Chapter 8	
Social cognition	October 5–12
Read FMM Chapter 6	
Memory	October 19–26
Read FMM Chapter 7	
Representations and concepts	November 2–9
Read FMM Chapter 4	
Reasoning and problem solving	November 16–23
Read FMM Chapter 5	
Integrating cognitive development	November 30
Read FMM Chapter 9	
Read Sternberg, The princess grows up (handout)	
Class presentations	December 7–9

Final paper due at the time of the regularly scheduled exam.

Psych 154
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Pitzer 2005
Lab schedule

Date	*Topics*	*Prior to Lab*	*In lab*
September 2 in the BH lab	Introduction to the lab	nothing	Set up software Begin review of ethics
September 9	Ethics of conducting research with children	Complete virtual lab on ethics Keep track of time you spend on it	Discussion of ethical requirements for research at Pitzer and the Claremont Children's School
September 16	Research methods with infants	Visit the Children's School and pick up research application Reread CogDev Chs 2 & 3	Discussion: Research methods with infants
September 23 in the BH lab	Naturalistic research Operational definitions	In the DTT Virtual Lab, read the Target article and complete the task associated with it	Coding: Talk about talk at the dinner table
September 30	Interrater reliability Reactivity	In the DTT Virtual Lab, complete the IRR worksheet based on your own coding Review the discussion and video clips on reactivity; do not do the task.	Computation: Interrater reliability
October 7 in the BH lab	Conducting structured interviews with children	In the TF Virtual Lab, read the topics in the Research Methods Folder In the Virtual Lab, read the target article and complete the task associated with it	Coding: Understanding the relation between thinking and feeling
October 14	Results and discussion	Collect adult data using Flavell et al. protocol Read the Woolley et al. article and answer discussion questions Complete the Children's School application	Writing workshop: APA results and discussion sections

October 21	Selecting a topic to study	Complete Results and Discussion sections for TF study Collect wishing data from adults, children, and parents	Design: From question to hypothesis
October 28	Coding qualitative data	Collect wishing data from children and parents	Coding: Understanding of wishing
November 4	Designing a method	Find three empirical articles that help to answer your research question	Design: From hypothesis to method
November 11	Pilot testing	Complete Results and Discussion sections for Wishing study IRB and Children's School paperwork	Data collection: Adult data for group project(s)
November 18	Catch up!	Introduction and Method section for group project	TBA, depending on our needs
December 2	Presenting your results	Coding and statistics for your group project	Writing workshop: Poster development
December 9	Class presentations	Finish your poster	Class presentations