

<i>Course Name</i> Child Development	
Lecturer Chief Asst. Prof. Camellia Hancheva	
Type of course Elective	Educational degree Master's
Year Second	Semester 3rd
ECTS 3	Workload 30 hours of seminars
Type of education Full-time education	Language English
Assessment Multiple choice test, a term paper	

Prerequisites

Students should have completed Lifespan Development course

Exam

Course requirements:

- Attendance of min two thirds of the classes.
- One out of three written homework essays.
- A term paper.

Course aims

The Child Development course provides a comprehensive study of multiple lines of human development from infancy to middle childhood. It is grounded on the classical theories and incorporates the latest research to present a systematic view of child development and sensitivity to the cultural and historical context. The comparative look at theories of early development form one of the basic foundations for understanding the mind and the structural configurations of psychological, adaptive and maladaptive functioning. Embracing a thematic approach within the chronology of child development, the course stimulates a convergence of the image of child-from-textbooks and the child in everyday life. It aims to develop a profound understanding and application of theories to research and practice. After its successful completion, students will have acquired skills for formulating a critical stance on issues of children's actions, interactions, performance, and experience.

Seminars

1. THE CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT

Root metaphors in developmental theories: organismic, mechanistic and narrative metaphor. The interplay and contributions of nurture, nature, socio-cultural and historical context. Patterns of ontogenetic developmental trajectory. Continuity/discontinuity and tempo of developmental progression. Forces and processes leading to formation of mental structures and adaptive and maladaptive functioning.

2. THEORIES OF DEVELOPMENT

Comparative overview of neuromaturational & constructivist theories, ethological theories, learning theories, psychoanalytical theories, theories of the child's mind, Socio-cultural theory, Dynamic systems approach.

3. METHODS IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH

Data collecting techniques and methods: observational methods, experimental methods, interviews; Research designs: epidemiological, cross-sectional and longitudinal designs. Analysis and interpretation of data. Ethical considerations in studies with children.

4. BIO-PSYCHO-SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS OF CONCEPTION, PRENATAL DEVELOPMENT AND BIRTH

Interdisciplinary approach to reproduction: genetics, trans-generational issues, environmental and cultural dimensions, health care policies. Milestones of prenatal development. Heredity, environment and behavior factors reconsidered. The newborn period. Human reflexes and their role in development. Physical and motor development.

5. INFANCY THROUGH LENS OF CONSTRUCTIVIST, INFORMATION-PROCESSING, PSYCHOANALYTICAL, ETHOLOGICAL, AND INTER-SUBJECTIVIST APPROACHES

The origins of cognitive, emotional and social development. Development of perception. Object constancy. Sensorimotor stage of cognitive development. Neo-Piagetian approach, memory development and categorization. On Imitation and social cognition. Emotions and the organization of development. Interdependence of affect and cognition. Emotional development and adaptation. Attachment as dyadic regulation. Psychosexual development.

6. EARLY CHILDHOOD. NEUROCONSTRUCTIVIST AND INFORMATION PROCESSING APPROACH TO COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Preoperational thinking and Neo-Piagetian theories. Brain and behavior development. Development of Memory. Animate-inanimate distinction. Causal reasoning. Empathizing-systematizing theory. Executive functions. Attention development. Heredity and environment in ADHD

7. EARLY CHILDHOOD. MIND AND LANGUAGE

Theory of mind, Symbol formation and Language acquisition. J. Piaget v/s L. S. Vygotski theory of language and mind. Creativity and play as diagnostic and therapeutic tools.

8. EARLY CHILDHOOD. PSYCHODYNAMIC AND ATTACHMENT VIEWS

Psychoanalytic theory of stages/phases in development. Epigenetic theory of E. Erikson. Socio-emotional development: Patterns of attachment. Factors, influencing development of secure attachment. Transitional objects and transitional phenomena, attachment to non-social objects. Consequences of early separation and loss: family dynamics, cultural differences and welfare policies. The emergence of the autonomous self and guided self-regulation.

9. MIDDLE CHILDHOOD

The concept of intelligence: theories, application and individual differences. School readiness. Process of learning: learning motivation, test anxiety, attributions and Self-efficacy. Concrete operational thought. Attention and memory development.

10. EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN MIDDLE CHILDHOOD

Mentalization and affect regulation. Understanding emotions in others. Stages in development of moral reasoning. Pro-social behaviour and aggression. Peer relations: acceptance and status; friendship, bullying and peer victimization.

References

- Hopkins, B. *The Cambridge encyclopedia of child development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Berk, L. *Child Development*, Boston: Pearson, 2006
- Goswami, U. (eds.), *The Wiley-Blackwell handbook of childhood cognitive development*. New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 2nd ed. 2011
- Palombo, J., H. Bendicson & B. Koch. *Guide to psychoanalytic developmental theories*. Dordrecht: Springer, 2009

Standards of Academic Integrity

Generally, academic fraud and dishonesty include, but are not limited to the following categories: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, multiple submissions, etc.

- **Cheating:** Using unauthorized notes, aids or information on an examination; altering a graded work prior to its return to a faculty member, allowing another person to do one's own work and submitting it for grading.
- **Fabrication:** Inventing or falsifying information, data or citation; presenting data gathered outside of acceptable professorial guidelines; failing to provide an accurate account of how information, data or citations were gathered; altering documents affecting academic records; forging signatures or authorizing false information on an official academic document, grade, letter, form or any other university document.
- **Plagiarism:** Submitting material that in part or whole is not one's own work; submitting one's own work without properly attributing the correct sources of its content.
- **Multiple Submissions:** Submitting identical papers or course work for credit in more than one course without prior permission of the instructor.

A breach of ethics or act of dishonesty can result in:

- failure of an entire course (blatant plagiarism, cheating on a test or quiz)
- academic suspension or expulsion from the university.