

<i>Course name</i> <b>Lifespan development</b>	
<b>Lecturer:</b> Chief Assistant Prof. Diana Hristova, PhD	
<b>Type of Course:</b> C	<b>Educational Degree:</b> Master's
<b>Year:</b> First	<b>Semester:</b> First
<b>ECST:</b> 6	<b>Workload:</b> 30 hours of lectures and 15 hours of seminars, and 15 hours of practical exercises
<b>Type of Education:</b> Full-time education	
<b>Assessment:</b> A term paper	<b>Language of Education:</b> English

### **Prerequisites**

None

### **Assessment**

An oral presentation and a term paper. Attendance of min. two thirds of the classes is required.

### **Course description**

Students will be presented with influential psychological theories and research on the dynamics of stability and change in human development. The course offers an exploration of biological, cognitive, social, and personality changes during human life span. Emphasis is on gaining better conceptual understanding of healthy development and processes of coping with normative and non-normative developmental challenges.

### **Course Objectives**

Students will demonstrate knowledge of the following key areas:

- main concepts, theories and assumptions regarding human lifespan development
- methodology of developmental research
- human developmental processes and associated biological, cultural, and social influences on behavior at different age stages
- developmental crises and factors that affect coping with them
- optimal development and processes of its regulation over the life span

### **Lectures and seminars**

#### **1. INTRODUCING HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

What is development and why should we study it? Tenets of lifespan developmental psychology. Various aspects of human development. Ages in the human life span. Critical periods in development. Influences on human development. Perspectives on human development. Optimal development and regulation of developmental change. Methods for studying human development. Research designs.

#### **2. CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

Psychoanalytic theories. Strategies for parenting, educating, and interacting with children. Cognitive theories. Behavioral and social cognitive theories. Ethological theory. Attachment styles. Ecological theory.

### 3. ADOLESCENCE

Puberty: growing during adolescence. Cognitive development and school performance. Social and personality development. Identity: Asking “Who am I?”. Self-concept and self-esteem. Relationships: family and friends

### 4. YOUNG ADULTHOOD

Physical development. How does the body develop during early adulthood? What risks do young adults face? Cognitive development. How does post-formal thinking develop in early adulthood? Social and personality development. Forging relationships: intimacy, liking, and loving. Friendship. Attachment styles and romantic relationships. The course of relationships. What makes marriage work? The transition to parenthood. Work: choosing and embarking on a career

### 5. MIDDLE ADULTHOOD

Physical development and sexuality. Cognitive development. How does one attain expertise? Social and personality development. Continuity and change in personality. The midlife crisis: reality or myth? Relationships. Family. The sandwich generation: between children and parents. Friendship. Work and leisure.

### 6. LATE ADULTHOOD

Physical and sensory changes. Ageism: Confronting the stereotypes of late adulthood. Well-being in late adulthood: The relationship between aging and illness. Socio-emotional selectivity. The nature of cognitive change in late adulthood. Does age bring wisdom? Personality development and successful ageing. Ego Integrity versus Despair. Social development. Work and retirement. Relationships. The social networks of late adulthood.

### 7. THE END OF LIFE

Facing death. Psychological changes before death. Bereavement, mourning, and grief.

#### **References**

- Feldman, Robert S. (2012). *Discovering the Life Span* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Santrock, John W. (2011). *Child Development: An Introduction* (13th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

#### **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.