Developmental Pathways of Diverse Learners, Birth – Adolescence (3:3:0)  
Summer 2010  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 7:00 – 10:05 pm  
Robinson A 123

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Office hours by appointment

Course Description
Examines child and adolescent development from diverse perspectives. Addresses typical and atypical physical, social, emotional, language, and intellectual development. Explores role of individual differences and culture in understanding and interpreting child and adolescent development. Field Experience Required.

Nature of Course Delivery
The class will have lecture, discussion, group work formats and will require active participation of all students. Guest lecturers from the community may be utilized to support content from readings.

Learner Outcomes
This course is designed to enable students to

• Describe the major theories of development and critically examine the theories as they apply to the lives of culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse children and their families.
• Examine the transactional nature of overall development in the context of the family, community, socioeconomic conditions, and culture.
• Identify typical developmental milestones of diverse children from birth through adolescence and their cultural and socioeconomic variations.
• Observe and describe overall development in the social and emotional domains as well as physical and cognitive as it occurs in natural environments and through play.
• Identify environmental and biological/physical/medical at-risk factors that can contribute to possible developmental risk and atypical development across the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional domains.
• Discuss the etiology of major disabilities as well as giftedness
• Select culturally and linguistically appropriate resources to use with diverse families and their children.
• Identify culturally and linguistically responsive professional practices that facilitate development in the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional domains.
• Explain the affect of child abuse and neglect on development.
Professional Standards

This course addresses the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The course content has been designed to address the following standards and competencies.

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
- Standard 2 Development and Characteristics of Learners

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- Standard 1 Promoting Child Development and Learning

Virginia Professional Endorsement Competencies
- Human growth and development (birth through adolescence)

Virginia Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement Competencies
- Understanding of normal growth and development from birth through age 5

Required Texts


Required Readings found at www.nap.edu


Course Requirements

General Requirements
1. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Because the class will be structured around discussion and small group activities, it is imperative that students keep up with the readings and participate in class.
2. Class attendance is important. If, due to an emergency, students will not be in class, they must call the instructor and leave a message.
3. The university requires that all pagers and cell phones be turned off before class begins. Laptops and other electronic devices are not to be used in class, unless part of instructor assigned class activity.
4. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time (the beginning of the class in which they are due). However, it is recognized that graduate students occasionally have serious problems that prevent work completion. If such a dilemma arises, students should speak to the instructor in a timely fashion.
Attendance

Attendance in class is important to students’ learning; therefore, students are expected to make every effort to attend class sessions. Absences, tardiness, and leaving early may negatively affect course grades. The following policy is from the university course catalog:

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of non-participation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor’s grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

Written Assignments

All written assignments prepared outside of class will be evaluated for content and presentation as graduate-level writing. The American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition (APA) style will be followed for all written work. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If students are not confident of their own ability to catch errors, they should have another person proofread their work. When in doubt, they should check the APA manual. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the GMU library web guide at http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu/.

Students will
1. Present ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner. (Avoid wordiness and redundancy.)
2. Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly.
3. Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document where appropriate. (Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions.)
4. Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar.

Grading Criteria

A = 95 – 100  A- = 90 – 94  B+ = 87 – 89  B = 83 – 86
B- = 80 – 82  C = 70 – 79  F = < 70

A+ is possible if work is of exceptional high quality and includes work above and beyond that required for the course.

Grading Policy

All CEHD undergraduate and graduate students are held to the university grading policies as described in the Academic Policies section of the catalog: http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=104. Those students enrolled in a CEHD licensure program, however, must earn a B- or better in all licensure coursework. A degree-seeking graduate student will be dismissed after accumulating grades of F in two courses or 9 credits of unsatisfactory grades (C or F) in graduate courses. A 3.0 grade point average is required for completion of the graduate degree.
Grading of Assignments

1. Attendance and Participation    15
2. Child Abuse and Neglect Online Training   5
3. Book Discussion              10
4. Developmental Theory Perspective   10
5. Written Child Observations    15
6. Family and Teacher Resource and Information Group Project
7. Statement of Understanding     30

Total Points Possible             100

Submission of Performance-Based Assessment

This course has a Program Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) that MUST be uploaded and submitted to Task Stream for evaluation when the assignment is due. Only PBAs posted to TaskStream will be graded. This means that NO final grades will be posted until all materials are on TaskStream.

CEHD Syllabus Statements of Expectations

All students must abide by the following:

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See http://gse.gmu.edu/facultystaffres/profdisp.htm for a listing of these dispositions.
- Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#Anchor12 for the full honor code.
- Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/policy/newpolicy/1301gen.html. Click on responsible Use of Computing Policy at the bottom of the screen.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/ or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

Assignments

Attendance and Participation (15 points)

Because active participation and engagement are imperative for optimal learning, preparation for and participation in in-class activities will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Students attend class, arrive on time, and stay for the entire class period.
- Students complete readings and prepare for class activities prior to class as is evidenced by their ability to discuss and write about the concepts presented and examined in the texts as well as participate fully in related activities.
- Students are actively involved in in-class learning experiences as is evidenced by (1) participating in all activities, (2) engaging in small and large group discussions, (3)
completing written work related to the activities, and (4) supporting the participation and learning of classmates.

- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class discussions, activities, and written reflections.

**Child Abuse and Neglect Online Training (5 points)**

**Students must complete an online mini course on Child Abuse and Neglect.** Students will upload and submit a copy of the certificate of completion onto TaskStream. Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) School of Social Work’s Virginia Institute for School Services Training Activities (VISSTA) Program offers an online course that fulfills the requirement. This course is entitled “Child Abuse and Neglect: Recognizing, Reporting, and Responding for Educators” and is available, at no cost, at [www.vcu.edu/vissta/training/va_teachers](http://www.vcu.edu/vissta/training/va_teachers).

**Book Discussion (10 points)**

Each student will be responsible for leading a discussion about an assigned chapter from either *A Child’s Work: The Importance of Fantasy Play* text or assigned readings on adolescent development. Students are expected to lead the discussion using three well constructed, high level questions that are developed prior to class. Discussion questions must be developed as defined by classroom lecture on questioning the first night of class.

**Developmental Theory Perspective (10 points)**

In order that all class members leave this course with an overview of the most prominent developmental theories in the field of early childhood education and gain a critical perspective on the values and liabilities of different theories and their application, students will prepare a review of an individual theory. Some of these key theoretical perspectives include Maturational, Behaviorist, Psychoanalytic, Cognitive-developmental, Sociocultural, and Ecological systems theories. Within these perspectives, there are prominent theorists. Students will select a theorist and write a three-page, double-spaced paper that will include the following:

1. Background of the theorist
2. His/her main theoretical orientation, including key tenets
3. How this theorist would explain cultural differences that are apparent in development
4. How this theorist would explain variation in development, including disabilities
5. What is known from more recent research about these theories

The main source of information will be course textbooks; however, other sources should be consulted and cited. This assignment will assist students in writing up their statement of understanding. Students will work in small groups on this assignment.

**Written Child Observations (15 points)**

*This assignment is associated with the 15 hours of required field experience.*

All teachers need to develop skills as observers of children. They learn most about children by studying their behavior directly, observing with objectivity, making careful notes and reflecting upon them thoughtfully. Accurate observations make valuable contributions toward planning for one child’s learning or improving curriculum for the entire group. Observations help develop an
understanding of the theories and how they developed to provide information about child development. There are a variety of informal and formal methods of observing, which will be explored in class. Students will experience note taking in class to learn about observing children. As a part of this assignment, they will write up two observations. Students will do the following:

- Bring to class a running record or a diary record of one child, using a free-writing format. Students will write up everything they see and hear in their notebook. They will make sure they observe a child who is engaged in activities in different domains of development (physical, cognitive, etc.). They will spend five minutes each time and observe the child for four times. Play observations should be the central focus for gathering examples to describe children’s cognitive, social/emotional, and physical/motor development.
- Students will bring to class a time sampling or event sampling observation that represents at least four entries in all domains of development.
- In both reports of their observations, students will address what connections they found between their observations and developmental theories discussed earlier.

Family and Teacher Resource and Information Group Project (15 points)

The Family and Teacher Resource and Information File, which will be created by work in small groups, has a dual focus: 1) what the teachers need to know about the disabilities/risks factors/special needs (d/r/s) of some children and effective research-based intervention strategies and 2) what teachers can do to make this information more accessible to families so they may more effectively advocate for their child.

- Students will select a topic related to disabilities/risk factors/special needs to research in groups. The research on each d/r/s needs to include the following:
  a. Definition, characteristics, and etiology of the d/r/s
  b. How it affects child and adolescent development across domains and stages
  c. Impact that the d/r/s has on families at different ages/stages
  d. Cultural views and/or socio-cultural factors influencing the d/r/s, including the effect of language, culture, and class
  e. Education and intervention approaches and any controversy associated with these approaches
  f. Research-based ideas/resources for professionals working with the child with this d/r/s
  g. Family-centered criteria used to select relevant resources.

The final component of the Resource File is the section that addresses what the teachers need to know and what they can do to make this information more accessible to families so they may more effectively advocate for their children. Consider creating a one-page handout that offers a glimpse of what the Resource File has to offer and important facts or questions for parents to consider about this d/r/s topic.

Statement of Understanding (30 points)

This is the NCATE 2 Content Knowledge Development Performance-Based Assessment that shows evidence of meeting CEC Standard 2 Development and Characteristics of Learners and NAEYC Standard 1 Promoting Child Development and Learning. This assignment is to be submitted on TaskStream by 4 p.m. on June 18. (See Appendix B TaskStream rubric).
The purpose of this assignment is to synthesize the theories and research related to development of young children ages birth to adolescence and to link it to observations of children over the course of the semester, plus all class readings to demonstrate students’ understanding of **Physical and Motor Development, Cognitive Development, Symbolic Thought Language and Literacy and Social and Emotional Development**. Critically reflect on personal view, assumptions, beliefs, and understandings about how children develop and the role of the socio-cultural context on development and how it impacts children and families of diverse backgrounds.

**Format:** The following three major components are required: (1) review of three major theories, including the key theorists associated with the view and examples of development, learning, and practice; (2) discussion of development in the early childhood years, including the readings and observations/personal examples; and (3) critical reflections focused on views of children of diverse backgrounds, including a discussion of challenges, strengths, practices and questions.

**Major theories:** Based on the initial reports on the theorists that you and your colleagues shared in class, prepare a visual to illustrate your understanding of the three theories and theorists of your choice. You should provide an explanation of the major tenets of the theory and highlight how it applies to children from birth to adolescence, in particular to children of culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse backgrounds. Discuss contradictions, strengths, research, theorists/researchers, and personal observations/experiences that link to the theory. Give examples of interventions, professional practices, materials, interactions observed or used that are examples of the tenets of the theory. Specific examples of how what you observed a child/children doing relates to the specific theory. Also describe some of the common practices associated with each of the theories. **Appendix A provides a sample visual and criteria to address.**

**Early Childhood Development:** This section should rely on all class material, reading, assignments to describe children’s typical characteristics and needs in the areas of: physical and motor development, cognitive development, symbolic thought language and literacy and social and emotional development and the issues related to atypical development and at risk factors. The discussion of each domain should include a synthesis of the key concepts. Statements and explanations should be supported with direct links to the readings, presentations, and research. Examples and observations should be used to demonstrate an understanding of how development manifests itself in early childhood children of diverse backgrounds.

**Socio-cultural context:** Within each area of development, there should be a discussion of the multiple influences on young children’s development and learning including: (a) family/community view of child/children’s development, particularly their strengths; (b) how the socio-cultural context (social, political, economic, historical, and personal family story) of the family and community.

**Own Assumptions and Practice:** Critically reflect on own assumptions, beliefs, and practices associated with children and their families. Discuss how they might impact your observations and professional practice and how the student’s theoretical knowledge is/will be used to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments for young children.
## Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 17</td>
<td>Course Overview; Review of syllabus, texts and assignments; Introductions and our personal developmental perspective and assumptions about children; Skills to critically examine theories; Types of child observations; Key/major course concepts</td>
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| May 19     | Clarifications regarding assignments; History of child study and research                                                                                                                                  | Trawick-Smith, Chapters 1 & 2 Paley, Chapter 1  
Korakek, pp 4-11                                                                                          |
| May 21     | Culture and its role in development; In-class work using T-S Chapter 5: The Newborn                                                                                                                      | Trawick-Smith, Chapter 4 Paley, Chapter 2                                                                 |
| May 22     | Developmental domains; Group Presentations on CD Theories                                                                                                                                                | Trawick-Smith, Chapters 6 and Paley, Chapter 3  
Adolescent Stages of Development - handout  
Developmental Theory Perspective DUE                                                                         |
| May 26     | Physical and motor development Sensory integration                                                                                                                                                      | Trawick-Smith, Chapters 10 & 14 Paley, Chapter 4  
Korakek, pp 17-23                                                                                           |
| May 28     | Group Project Work                                                                                                                                                                                        | No Class                                                                                                       |
| May 31     | Including children with special needs                                                                                                                                                                  | Trawick-Smith, pp. 97-101; 141-142; 191-192; 262-267; 278-279; 345-351 Paley, Chapter 5  
Korakek, pp 44-45                                                                                           |
| June 2     | Play as a context for development; Family and Teacher Resource and Information File - Group Project Presentations                                                                                       | Trawick-Smith, pp 254-262 Korakek, pp 28-35 Paley, Chapter 6  
Family and Teacher Resource and Information Group Project DUE                                                   |
| June 4     | Cognitive development                                                                                                                                                                                   | Trawick-Smith, Chapters 7, 11 & 15 Paley, Chapter 7  
Korakek, pp 24-27                                                                                           |
| June 7     | Brain research and development of symbolic thought                                                                                                                                                      | Trawick-Smith, Chapter 12 Neurons to Neighborhoods, Chapter 8 Paley, Chapter 8  
Observation #2 DUE                                                                                           |
| June 9     | Social-emotional development in a cultural context; Teen sexual development, behavior and decision-making                                                                                               | Trawick-Smith, Chapters 9, 13 & 17 Paley, Chapter 9  
Adoles. Growth and Development - handout                                                                  |
| June 11    | Research Night                                                                                                                                                                                           | No Class                                                                                                        |
June 14 | Play and language: Play as a social activity | Paley, Chapter 10, 11
June 16 | Family relationships and influences on development; Parent expectations and cultural variations | Trawick-Smith, Chapter 18
Neurons to Neighborhoods, Chapter 10
June 18 | Reflections on Statement of Understanding, developmental perspectives and cultural variations of/pathways for development; Farewell Potluck | Statement of Understanding DUE
VCU Child Abuse and Neglect Mini-Course Certificate of Completion DUE
Both uploaded to TaskStream by class time

Note: To determine whether the campus is closed due to inclement weather, call 703-993-1000 or go to www.gmu.edu.

Appendix A

Developmental theory:

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<tr>
<th>Name of Theorist/s</th>
<th>Main Arguments</th>
<th>Continuity/Discontinuity</th>
<th>Role of Culture/Context</th>
<th>Weaknesses/Shortcomings</th>
<th>Impact on Educational Theories</th>
<th>Application to Diverse Settings</th>
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