

Child Development in British Context

Course Details

Course Designator & Number: LNDN 3536

Number of Credits: 3

Language of Instruction: English

Course Description

The course presents a socio-cultural approach to contemporary issues of children's development. The aim is to demonstrate the importance of understanding people in relation to their social world. Students will gain an insight into life in the UK – including education and child care practices and policies – and explore how it shapes children's development. Issues such as children's early attachments, the development of the self, the emergence of consciousness and UK child care legislation will be examined

Introductory comments: The course begins with an investigation of the aims and principles of developmental psychology as a scientific discipline, and describes the methods used to obtain knowledge about children. This is followed by an exploration of the major topics of development that have been investigated by psychologists. Psychological knowledge will be related to practical issues, showing what insights psychology can and cannot offer in real-life situations involving children

Course Objectives

- To understand the major European theoretical models of child development.
- To develop analytical and research skills in interpreting children's development.
- To understand more about life in the UK – including the education system, child care practices and policies – and explore how it shapes children's development.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course students should be able to: identify, define, and solve problems; locate and critically evaluate information; master a body of knowledge and a mode of inquiry; communicate effectively; gain a deeper understanding of the host culture where they are studying.

Students should demonstrate: responsibility & accountability, independence & interdependence, goal orientation, self confidence, resilience, appreciation of differences.

Methodology

The course will involve: lectures; audio-video presentations; group discussions/group work; case studies; seminars; case laws and field trips.

Required Reading / Materials

Ariès, P. (1973) *Centuries of childhood*. Harmondsworth: Penguin

Bee, H. and Boyd, D. (2006) *The Developing Child* (11th Edition) Pearson Education (US)

Cunningham, H. (2006) *The Invention of Childhood*: London BBC Books

Cunningham, H. (1995) *Children and childhood in Western society since 1500*. Harlow: Longman.

Donaldson, M. (2004) *Children's Minds*: Harper Collins, 2004
Guldberg, H. (2009) *Reclaiming Childhood: Freedom and play in an age of fear*: Routledge

Hobson, P. (2004) *The Cradle of Thought: exploring the origins of thinking*: Pan Schaffer. R. H. (2004) *Introducing Child Psychology*: Blackwell Publishing,

Smith, P.K., Cowie, H., Blades, M. (2003) *Understanding Children's Development* (4th Edition) Oxford Blackwell Publishing

Thomas, N. (2002) *Children, Family and the State*. Southampton: The Policy Press
Wood, D. (1997) *How Children Think and Learn*: Blackwell Publishers

Vygotsky, L. S., Luria, A. R. (1993) *Ape, Primitive Man and Child*: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Websites

- The Children Act Summary 1989 <http://www.fnf.org.uk/childact.htm>
- History of Child Law in England and Wales 1884 -1989
<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/ReadingLists/ChildLaw.asp>:

- Children Act 1989 (C.41) <http://www.wales-legislation.org.uk/scripts/act.php?id=697&lang=E>
- The Children Act 2004 <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/childrenactreport/>
- Every Child Matters: Change for Children <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/>

Grading

Grading Rubric

Letter Grade	Score or Percentage	Description
A	93–100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A-	90–92	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B+	87–89	
B	83–86	
B-	80–82	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C+	77–79	
C	73–76	
C-	70–72	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to fully meet the course requirements.
D+	67–69	
D	60–66	
F	0–59	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

Assignments	Percentage of Grade
Participation in class	25%
Cultural activities	25%
Quizzes	25%
Final oral exam	25%
Overall grade	100%

Assessment Details

Oral presentation: prepare a 5-10 minute presentation about a small-scale research proposal in week 5. The purpose of the assignment is for you to develop an understanding of what is involved in carrying out a scientific study - including consideration of ethical issues.

To put together the research proposal you are expected to work with some of the theoretical ideas about child development encountered in the course – applying them to a hypothetical practical situation of your choosing.

Your report should outline:

- the theoretical justification for the proposed research.
- the research topic, research questions and hypothesis.
- the proposed design.
- the method of data collection and analysis.
- the consideration of the implications of the possible findings.

In addition you must submit a **500 word written summary** of your proposal.

Paper assignment: Chose one of the following questions, answering in no more than 1250 words. The paper must be handed in by Week 10

- Discuss the significance of social relationships and cultural context in children's development.
- What is the significance of early relationships for later development? What are the implications for child care practices?
- Is 'childhood' a universal or historical concept?
- What role does biology play in language development?
- How can UK child care policies be seen as an invasion on the privacy of family life?
- What are some of the factors in the development of self esteem for minority children?

Assessment criteria/Course expectations: Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned topics. Learning will be assessed through research and presentation skills – both oral and written.

CAPA Program and Instructor Policy

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic course depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work and class behavior. This means to gain full attendance you must attend all classes, you must not be late (unless with a valid reason) and you must be respectful of the professor and of other students by not talking/whispering in class when others are talking or presenting. Persistent lateness or lack of attention in class, i.e., reading materials other than the work assigned, may result in a low or zero grade for participation, and possible referral to the CAO. **No electronic equipment will be used in class**, including laptops, phones, ipods, cell phones, etc, unless you have written permission from the Chief Academic Officer prior to the course. If you are caught using any electronic equipment, you may receive a zero grade for participation.

Plagiarism will be dealt with very seriously, and will be referred to the Chief Academic Officer in London. You may receive an F for the course. If all work is not submitted by the end of the program, you will receive an F for the course.

Class Participation and Attendance

Attendance at all classes is mandated by CAPA; students who miss a class without permission from CAPA's Chief Academic Officer will have their grade for the course lowered. Informed participation is expected in every class, so students must have read the full assignment carefully before coming and be ready to discuss it if called upon. At any meeting there may be a brief, pass-fail two-minute quiz on some utterly obvious fact in the assigned reading. Students will also be asked to complete informal in-class writing assignments on a regular basis, which will require them to demonstrate their familiarity with the assigned materials.

Students who repeatedly demonstrate unsatisfactory performance on these quizzes and exercises will be penalized in the participation grade.

Course Content

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Unit 1

Introduction to the course: Theoretical models of child development

- Reading: Schaffer, chapter 3 (Beginning Life) and chapter 10 (Towards Adulthood).
- Activity: group discussion and feedback

Unit 2

Research methods and ethics in developmental psychology.

- Reading: Schaffer, chapter 1 (Finding out about children)
- Activity: case study, small and large group discussions

Unit 3

Field Trip to Museum of Childhood History, at Bethnal Green

- <http://www.vam.ac.uk/vastatic/nmc/index.html>

Unit 4

A balance sheet of modern childhood

- Reading: Guldberg, chapter 1 (A childish panic about the next generation) & chapter 3 (Childhood in historical perspective).
- Activity: handout and discussion

Unit 5

Oral Presentations

Unit 6

Childhood in historical context: Viewing 'Angela's Ashes'.

- Reading: Schaffer, chapter 2 (The nature of childhood).
- Activity: Video, discussions and feedback.

Unit 7

No Class - midterm break

Unit 8

The Nationalisation of Childhood in the UK

- A critical exploration of current legislation and guidelines e.g. The Children Act 1989; Every Child Matters 2003; The Children Act 2004.
- Reading: Summary of The Children Act 2004 Summary of The Children Act 1989 Summary of Every Child Matters 2003
- Reading materials will be provided via email
- Activity: case studies; group presentations

Unit 9

Early attachments and UK childcare policies and practices.

- Reading: Schaffer, chapter 4 (Forming Relationships), Guldberg, chapter 8 (Let parents be parents: the myth of infant determinism)
- Activity: seminars; group discussion and feedback).

Unit 10

Field Trip to Freud Museum

- <http://www.freud.org.uk/> 20 Maresfield Gardens London NW3 5SX. Nearest tube station: Finchley Road.
- Paper due

Unit 11

Acculturation processes and social relations in ethnic minority children: in the UK

- Reading: David Marley (2008) Diversity builds esteem: The Times Education Supplement. 1 August, 2008.
- Reading materials will be provided via email
- Activity: Discussion of Marley's article in small groups

Unit 12

Language acquisition

- Reading: Schaffer, chapter 9 (Using language)
- Activity: case study; small and large group discussion

Unit 13

Understanding Piaget

- Reading: Schaffer, chapter 6 (The child as scientist: Piaget's theory of cognitive development).
- Activity: workshops and case studies

Unit 14

Final Week - Examination

Policies

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance and punctuality are mandatory in order to earn full marks. The final grade will take into consideration preparation required for class (i.e. readings) and participation in class discussions. If you miss any meetings without an excused absence from the on-site director, your final grade will be dropped accordingly. In the case of absences, it is the student's responsibility to find out what information was given in class including any announcements made.

University of Minnesota Policies & Procedures

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

Student Conduct

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found [on the Learning Abroad Center website](#).