

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

**PSY 241 Section D001 [33969],
Spring 2026**

Tuesday + Thursday 10:10AM-12:05PM



Instructor: Mikaela Elliott

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Classroom: 4S - 222

Office Hours: Tuesday 12:15-1:15 PM
in 4S - 222

Link to schedule Office Hours:

<https://calendar.app.google/3NNusG6qXU8bDFbn7>

Class Zoom Link:

We will use this if class needs to be moved online

<https://gc-cuny-edu.zoom.us/j/88635357891?pwd=0bRbtXoJ9QqsInBimTmoElzNtev0A5.1>

Meeting ID: 886 3535 7891

Passcode: 375023



COURSE DESCRIPTION

Child Development (PSY 241) explores how children grow, think, communicate, and navigate the social world from before birth through adolescence. Together, we will examine classic and contemporary theories, learn how developmental scientists design studies with infants and children, and discuss what real research tells us about learning, perception, language, social understanding, and the many environments that shape development. Throughout the course, we'll connect scientific findings to everyday experiences, public policy, and the diverse cultural contexts in which children grow. The course emphasizes understanding not only what develops, but why development unfolds the way it does—and why this knowledge matters for families, communities, and society.

COURSE ORGANIZATION

Part 1: Introduction to Development Science

Introducing Child Development, Developmental Psychology, and the major domains, issues, and theories the field centers on.

Part 2: Prenatal Development, Infancy, and Early Childhood

Focuses on foundational biological, perceptual, motor, and early social-cognitive development from before birth through the first year of life. Then, examines rapid growth in language, thinking, social understanding, and self-regulation during the toddler and preschool years.

Part 3: Middle Childhood & Adolescence

Covers continued cognitive, social, and emotional development as children enter school, form relationships, and transition into adolescence.

CLASS INSTRUCTIONS, MODALITY, AND TOOLS

Brightspace

Class materials—syllabus, assignments, lecture slides, grades—will be accessed through Brightspace. You are responsible for making sure the email address on Brightspace and in CUNYFirst is current to be able to access Brightspace and all its content.

Lecture Slides

The Lecture slides tab contains pdf documents of lectures. I will post lectures slides before class meeting so that you follow along and take copious notes during class. Lecture slides + your notes will help you prepare for assignments and for exams. Lecture slides are arranged as an outline of the class and require notetaking.

Class Meetings

Class meetings allow me to explain concepts, guide you through the activities, discuss material and assignments, and answer any questions you have, in a group setting. Each class period will begin with a Question of the Day, which is a writing prompt used as an attendance grade. We will also use class time for projects.

Software Applications

You will need basic productivity tools to complete assignments, including programs for writing, creating slides, and organizing data. You may download Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) for free through your CIX account: <https://www.csi.cuny.edu/online-resources/office-information-technology-services/student-cix-email-instructions>

If you prefer, you can use the online Office suite: <https://office.live.com/start/excel.aspx/> You may also use Google Docs, Google Slides, and Google Sheets, which are free and fully compatible with course assignments.

Zoom Accounts

CUNY has provided students with a licensed Zoom account. You can access this account by going to: <https://cuny.zoom.us> and choose Sign in. You should be taken to the familiar CUNY login prompt where you enter your Firstname.LastnameNN@login.cuny.edu login credentials.

POLICY FOR MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

The course is designed so you can review materials remotely if you are sick. You do not need to email me about short-term absences. Please reach out only if you expect to miss three or more classes or anticipate a longer absence and need help staying on track. Please reach out or attend office hours if you are confused with any content covered over a short term absence.

CSI POLICIES

Academic Policies and Procedures

Link to the College of Staten Island's general academic policies, standards, and requirements to maintain matriculated status and to qualify for a degree.

<https://csi-undergraduate.catalog.cuny.edu/>

Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings. A student who is absent in excess of 15% of the class hours in one semester may be assigned a grade of WU (withdrew unofficially), subject to the discretion of the instructor.

<https://csi-undergraduate.catalog.cuny.edu/policies/grading-symbols-and-gpa-equivalents>

Policies for Dishonorable Conduct and Cheating

Familiarize yourself with CUNY policies regarding dishonorable conduct and follow them.

<https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/academic-integrity-policy/>

CSI RESOURCES

Brightspace Technical Support

<https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/cis/technology-services/brightspace/>

To make an appointment with the Student Technology Helpdesk, call 718-982-3695 or email:

helpdesk@csi.cuny.edu

WHEN SUBMITTING YOUR BRIGHTSPACE SUPPORT REQUEST, INCLUDE:

1. Your full name
2. Your email address
3. The course(s) with which you are having a problem (department and course number)

An explanation of the problem

Familiarize yourself with CUNY policies regarding dishonorable conduct and follow them.

<https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/academic-integrity-policy/>

Office of Accessibility

In accordance with federal law the College offers a number of resources for accommodating individuals with disabilities. To learn about the accommodations and services that are available, please contact the Office of Accessibility Services at 718-982-2510, Center for the Arts (1P), Room 101. Email: Access@csi.cuny.edu

Tutoring

CSI offers walk-in, online tutoring, and tutoring by appointment:

<https://www.csi.cuny.edu/students/academic-assistance/tutoring> Visit their website to check the tutoring schedules. You can make an appointment by filling out their appointment form, call 347-422-6243, or email: oas@csi.cuny.edu

LETTER GRADE CUT-OFFS

A :	92.5+	B- :	79.5 - 82.4	D+ :	66.5 - 69.4
A- :	89.5 - 92.4	C+ :	76.5 - 79.4	D :	62.5 - 66.4
B+ :	86.5 - 89.4	C :	72.5 - 76.4	D- :	60.0 - 62.4
B :	82.5 - 86.4	C- :	69.5 - 72.4	F :	under 60

A Final Letter Grade D vs. F

Several courses in the Psychology Major have a “C or better” requirement. Neither a D nor an F will fulfill this requirement and you will have to retake the course in order to progress through the department curriculum. After you have retaken the course, your prior grade of D or F will remain on the transcript, but only a D grade will continue to factor into your GPA. While you might prefer a letter grade of F over a D, I am required to give you the grade you have earned.

WU Grade

If you stop attending class and fail to complete the required assignments, your grade for the class will be WU (withdrew unofficially). WU grades do not factor into your GPA but may affect your financial aid.



GRADING

Grade %	Grade %	Grade %
Homework Assignments per Chapter	For each chapter, students will complete a 500-word cohesive response to a TED talk, journal article, or news story related to the unit. The homework assignment will have prompts for students to respond to as part of the 500 - word response on Brightspace.	25%
Exams	There will be 3 exams, each worth 10% of the final grade. After each exam, students may earn back 50% of missed points by selecting the correct answer and writing a brief (3-4 sentence) explanation that uses at least one APA-style citation to support the correction. Example: A 75% could become an 87.5% with full revisions.	30%
Low-Stakes Writing	"Question of the Day": Short in-class responses submitted on Brightspace discussion boards at the beginning of each class. Completion of the Question of the Day counts as attendance for that class meeting.	6%
In-Class Assignment 1: "Tinder Profile" for a Theorist	Students create a "Tinder profile"-style poster for a major developmental theorist. The poster should present key concepts from the theorist's work, highlight major strengths and limitations, and identify which other theories they are most compatible with. Completed in class.	13%
In-Class Assignment 2: Cross-Cultural "First Years of Life" Comparison	Students compare infancy across two cultural contexts (e.g., motor milestones, sleep, feeding, carrying, parent-infant interaction) in an infographic that explains how culture shapes infancy and why variation is developmentally normal. The infographic will be presented in class.	13%
In-Class Assignment 3: Media Analysis - Adolescence on Screen	Groups of three select a film, show, or book featuring adolescents and evaluate the accuracy of its portrayal using developmental research. Analyses should address key domains such as identity development, peer relations, family dynamics, risk-taking, and emotional development. Each group will present a 5-minute PowerPoint summarizing their evaluation and connecting media depictions to empirical findings	13%
TOTAL		100%

EXTRA CREDIT

Students may earn up to 5% added to their final course grade by completing thoughtful annotations of the course textbook throughout the semester. An Annotation Guide is provided with the textbook, along with an example of annotated pages, to demonstrate expectations.

EXTRA CREDIT CONT.

Extra credit is earned by chapter. Each completed chapter annotation is worth 0.625%, for a total of eight chapters equaling 5%. Annotations are graded for completion, but they must demonstrate clear effort and thoughtful engagement with the material in order to receive credit. Minimal, superficial, or incomplete annotations will not earn extra credit.

Annotations should reflect active reading (e.g., identifying main ideas, key terms, questions, connections, or brief explanations) as outlined in the Annotation Guide

MAKING UP POINTS ON EXAMS

After exams are returned, students may submit exam corrections to earn back missed points. Corrections must include the correct answer and a brief explanation that supports the correction using at least one APA-style citation. Exam revisions must be submitted within one week of receiving the graded exam.

LATE WORK POLICY

The course is organized into three parts. Students may submit any assignments due within a given part at any time up to the end of that part without penalty. This includes homework assignments and in-class assignments associated with that part. After the part deadline has passed, no late work from that part will be accepted, except in cases of documented emergencies. Students are responsible for keeping track of part deadlines listed in the course schedule.

Exams and in-class low-stakes writing activities cannot be made up unless prior arrangements are made or documentation is provided.



WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE

SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Date	Class Activity	Textbook Readings	Assignments and Due Dates
PART 1 - Introduction to Developmental Science			
Jan 27	Syllabus Overview; and reviewing course expectations	-	-
Jan 29	Chapter 1: Introduction to Child Development	pages 11-48	-
Feb 1: Last day to drop for 75% tuition refund			
Feb 3	Chapter 1: Introduction to Child Development	pages 11-48	-
Feb 5	Chapter 1: Introduction to Child Development	pages 11-48	Homework Assignment for Chapter 1 Due Feb 6 th at 11:59PM
Feb 8: Last day to drop for 50% tuition refund			
Feb 10	Chapter 2: Theorists & Theories	pages 49 - 82	-
Feb 12	CUNY CLOSED	-	-
Feb 17	CUNY CLOSED	-	-
Feb 19	Chapter 2: Theorists & Theories	pages 49 - 82	Homework Assignment for Chapter 2 Due Feb 20 th at 11:59PM
Feb 24	Online for Snow Day Chapter 2 Cont.	pages 49 - 82	-
Feb 26	EXAM 1 (In Class)	-	EXAM 1
End of Part 1: All late Work Due Feb 27th at 11:59PM			
PART 2 - Prenatal Development, Infancy, and Early Childhood			



Date	Class Activity	Textbook Readings	Assignments and Due Dates
Mar 3	In-Class Assignment: Tinder Profile for a Theorist	-	In-Class Assignment 1 due in class
Mar 5	Chapter 3: Conception, Heredity, Neurobiology, Prenatal Development	pages 83 - 115	-
Mar 10	Chapter 3: Conception, Heredity, Neurobiology, Prenatal Development	pages 83 - 115	Homework Assignment for Chapter 3 Due Mar 6 th at 11:59PM
Mar 12	Chapter 4: Birth and the Newborn	pages 116 - 134	-
Mar 17	Chapter 4: Birth and the Newborn	pages 116 - 134	Homework Assignment for Chapter 4 Due Mar 13 th at 11:59PM
Mar 19	Chapter 5: Infancy and Toddlerhood	pages 135 - 227	-
Mar 24	Chapter 5: Infancy and Toddlerhood	pages 135 - 227	-
Mar 26	Chapter 6: Early Childhood	pages 228 - 302	-
Mar 31	Chapter 6: Early Childhood	pages 228 - 302	Homework Assignment for Chapter 5 Due Mar 27 th at 11:59PM



Spring Break: April 1-9th

April 12: Last day to request Pass/Fail option

Date	Class Activity	Textbook Readings	Assignments and Due Dates
April 13: last day to drop courses			
Apr 14	In-Class Assignment: Cross-Cultural "First Years of Life" Comparison"	-	In-Class Assignment 2 due in class
Apr 16	Exam 2 (In Person)	-	Exam 2
End of Part 2: All late Work Due April 19th at 11:59PM			
Part 3 - Middle Childhood & Adolescence			
Apr 21	ASYNCHRONOUS: Middle Childhood	pages 303 - 392	-
Apr 23	ASYNCHRONOUS: Middle Childhood	pages 303 - 392	-
Apr 28	Chapter 7: Middle Childhood	pages 303 - 392	Homework Assignment for Chapter 7 Due May 1st at 11:59PM
Apr 30	Chapter 7: Middle Childhood	pages 303 - 392	-
May 5	Chapter 8: Adolescence	pages 393 - 487	
May 7	Chapter 8: Adolescence	pages 393 - 487	Homework Assignment for Chapter 8 Due May 8 th at 11:59PM
May 12	Exam 3 (In Person)	-	Exam 3
May 14	Adolescence Project work day	-	-
May 19	In-Class Assignment 3: Adolescence Media Analysis Presentations	-	In-Class Assignment 3 due

End of Part 3: All late Work for this Section Due May 19th at 11:59PM

May 29: Grades released on CUNYFirst

