

**HDFS 201: LIFESPAN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**  
**Fall 2008 T-TH 9:30 – 10:45**  
**Orvis School of Nursing Room 102**

Professor: Mara Merlino, Ph.D.  
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Hours: M,W 10-11; T,TH 3-4  
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Hours:

Required Text: Berger, K.S. (2008). *The Developing Person Through the Life Span (7Ed.)*. New York: Worth Publishers. Other readings as assigned.

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### **Course Description:**

This course considers human development throughout the lifespan, starting from the prenatal period through late adulthood, focusing in particular on the methods and theories used to understand development at each life stage. Particular focus will be placed on examining Biosocial, Cognitive, and Psychosocial development at different stages in the lifespan.

### **Course Objectives:**

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Demonstrate in-depth understanding of human development across the lifespan, including physical, social, emotional, linguistic, and cognitive characteristics.
2. Articulate common developmental paths and also understand reasons why development evolves in a variety of ways.
3. Demonstrate understanding of the profound impact that family, culture, and ethnicity (particularly in the context of the larger society) play in the lives of people as they develop throughout the lifespan.
4. Demonstrate understanding of variations in typical and atypical development, and the impact challenging conditions has on individuals and families.

### **Course Format:**

All science, no matter what the discipline, is a collaborative endeavor. The exchange of ideas is the basis for innovation in both theory and method. With this in mind, I feel that my role is to facilitate discussion of the course material and to expand upon and clarify concepts which may be unclear, rather than to solely lecture over the readings. I will be conducting class in a format which combines both lecture and discussion. The purpose of this format is to create an open forum for the free exchange of ideas. This means that I will be presenting you with questions that we will discuss as a group, as well as helping you work through the course material.

*Qualified students with physical or documented learning disabilities have the right to free accommodations to ensure equal access to educational opportunities at the University of Nevada, Reno. For assistance, contact the Disability Resource Center, Thompson Building Suite 101, (775) 784-6000, TTY (775) 327-5131.*

***Be sure to advise me as soon as possible if you have special needs. It is my job to help you master this material, and I will work with you to the greatest extent possible, but you have to bring me the documentation if you need special arrangements for testing or something like that. Do NOT wait until the end of the semester to say anything and then expect me to inflate your grade. This is not to imply that you would, but just to say that people have actually tried this with me before—it doesn't work.***

### **Classroom Conduct:**

This is college. Although I do not call role, your attendance is expected. I also expect you to TURN YOUR CELL PHONES OFF and leave them off in my classroom. THIS INCLUDES TEXT MESSAGING. If you are expecting an

important call then let me know, but it is rude to have a cell phone on when it will disrupt other people. I know that you forget sometimes, and so do I, so I'll try to remember to turn mine off if you do the same.

All members of the class have the right to their own opinions and should feel free to express them. You will probably find at some point that you disagree with the opinion of the person expressing his or her point of view. You are encouraged both to listen with an open mind and to critically evaluate the material we cover. You may offer opposing arguments courteously and respectfully. ***It is not acceptable, however, to be intolerant of other opinions or points of view. Comments that demonstrate prejudice toward other class members due to race, creed, religion, sexual orientation, and so forth will not be tolerated. You will be excused from the classroom if you engage in this behavior, and I will drop you from the course if I feel that it is warranted.***

You are expected to observe the general rules of courtesy:

1. Be on time for class. Please try to let me know if you need to come late or leave early.
2. Be prepared for class. Do not come to class without your text. Do not expect others to provide you with pencils, pens, papers, etc.
3. Do not carry on private conversations while others are speaking (personal, phone, or text messaging). This is both discourteous and disruptive, *and will not be tolerated. If you cannot refrain from this behavior, you will be excused from the classroom.*
4. Do not interrupt the person who is speaking.
5. Do not monopolize the discussion. Your point of view may be interesting and dynamic, but it is not the only one. Remember that you learn by listening.
6. Do not bring food into the classroom. It's distracting to try to teach class when people are eating (and you might even want to take notes!).
7. I love children. I encourage you to bring them along to class with you when you need to. Your behavior sets a good example for them, and we can learn from them as much as they can learn from us. However, the purpose of our class is for you and your fellow students to learn, and it is your responsibility to see to it that your children are not disruptive.

***OUR CLASSROOM IS A PLACE FOR LEARNING. IF YOUR BEHAVIOR DISRUPTS THE LEARNING OF OTHERS, IT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. THREATS OF ANY FORM OF VIOLENCE, INCLUDING VERBAL AGGRESSION, TOWARD ME OR YOUR FELLOW STUDENTS WILL BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY, AND MAY RESULT IN YOUR BEING EXPELLED AND BARRED FROM ALL UNR CAMPUS LOCATIONS. BE AWARE THAT I WILL PROTECT THE RIGHTS AND THE SAFETY OF YOUR FELLOW STUDENTS TO THE FULLEST EXTENT, AND WILL NOT HESITATE TO CALL ON THE CAMPUS POLICE FOR ASSISTANCE IF I FEEL THAT IT IS WARRANTED.***

## **Athletes and/or School Sanctioned Club Members:**

If you belong to a team or are a member of a school sanctioned club that requires travel, it is your responsibility to see me the first week of class regarding your travel schedule.

## **Course Requirements and Grading:**

The material in this course varies with respect to its complexity. This means that some topics may take more time to cover than anticipated. We will try to make it through all the material outlined on your tentative course schedule, but it may be necessary to adjust the total number of points you are able to earn during the semester to accommodate our progress. I reserve the right to assign additional readings if I feel they are warranted, but I will not assign additional homework, so any adjustments in total possible points will be downward. I *may* also throw out exam questions that turn out to be too obscure or confusing.

In my experience, exam times, particularly midterms and finals, are very hard on grandmothers. I can show you the report. It seems that many of them end up either deceased or in the hospital, causing students to be unavailable on exam days. I would advise you to spare your relatives the inconvenience of being dead or mortally injured during these times--sometimes relatives call me from their cell phones while they're having lunch at a local restaurant, which creates embarrassment for all of us when they learn that they're supposed to be occupying space in the mortuary. Seriously, things really do come up--children get sick, accidents happen, computers break down, etc., and I deal with these issues on a case-by-case basis, but it would be a shame for you to end up with a no points on an assignment just because you didn't feel like being in class. Take note of the following policies, because I'm serious about them:

***I DO NOT ACCEPT LATE ASSIGNMENTS, I DO NOT GIVE MAKE-UP EXAMS, AND I DO NOT GIVE SPECIAL EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENTS SO THAT STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT MASTERED THE COURSE MATERIAL CAN EARN PASSING GRADES.*** You will get out of this course what you put into it. Be responsible.

**I WILL NOT ASSUME THAT YOU HAVE DROPPED THIS COURSE IF YOU SUDDENLY DECIDE THAT YOU NO LONGER WANT TO ATTEND CLASS. BE AWARE THAT IF YOUR NAME SHOWS UP ON MY GRADE REPORT FORM AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER, I WILL ASSIGN YOU THE GRADE YOU HAVE EARNED, AND I WILL NOT CHANGE THIS GRADE UNLESS YOU CAN PROVIDE ME WITH PROOF THAT YOU IN FACT DROPPED THE COURSE BEFORE GRADES WERE TURNED IN.**

## Exams:

There will be four exams over the course of the semester. Each exam will be worth 100 points. Grades will be assigned as follows:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percent</u>
A	93-100%	C	73-76%
A-	90-92%	C-	70-72%
B+	87-89%	D+	67-69%
B	83-86%	D	63-66%
B-	80-82%	D-	60-62%
C+	77-79%	F	<59% (No, I do not give F+. This is a contradiction in terms.)

## Preparation and Participation:

You will be expected to actively participate in class. This requires some advance preparation on your part. It is clearly in your best interests to read and think about the material before you come to class. Each class period I will be posing a number of questions to the class. These questions will cover the key topic areas covered in the day's readings. **I may come up with an occasional pop quiz for credit.**

**Please be aware that many of the questions on your exams will be over information that we talk about in class. Do your reading before coming to class, and take notes. Do not expect me to tell you what's going to be on the exam so that you can be selective about your readings.**

## Research Requirement:

You will be required to earn at least twelve research credits during the semester by participating in research projects being conducted by members of the UNR faculty community. I will provide you with instructions for becoming a member of the UNR Social Psychology subject pool. Instructions for participating in the research will be provided by individual investigators.

## Academic Dishonesty:

**CHEATING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.** If I see you using ANY electronic device unrelated to accessibility during an exam, I will take your exam from you immediately and you will receive a grade of zero (F) for that exam. Be aware that cheating comes in many different forms. The following list is not exhaustive of the possibilities, but will give you a general idea of what **NOT** to do in any of your classes:

1. Copying from somebody else's exam is cheating.
2. Allowing somebody to copy from your exam is cheating.
3. Having somebody else write your homework assignments or take-home essays is cheating.
4. Copying directly from books, articles, or other outside sources without giving the author credit and claiming that the work is your own is cheating (this is called plagiarism).
5. Trying to pass off papers downloaded from the Internet as your own is cheating.

**I REPEAT--CHEATING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.** The majority of students work hard for their grades, and they deserve respect. If you cheat on your papers or exams, I will notify the college out of respect for those students who do the work honestly. Be aware that the consequence of academic dishonesty is expulsion from school. Don't make me do it.

## TENTATIVE Course Schedule

Date	Day	Activity	Readings
8/26	T	Welcome, Syllabus	Ch 1
8/28	TH	Introduction	Ch 2
9/2	T	Theories of Development	Ch 3
9/4	TH	Heredity and Environment	Ch 4
9/9	T	Prenatal Development and Birth	Ch 5
9/11	TH	First 2 Years: Biosocial Development	Ch 6
9/16	T	First 2 Years: Cognitive Development	Ch 7
9/18	TH	First 2 Years: Psychosocial Development	
<b>9/23</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>EXAM 1 Chapters 1-7</b>	<b>Ch 8</b>
9/25	TH	Play Years: Biosocial Development	Ch 9
9/30	T	Play Years: Cognitive Development	Ch 10
10/2	TH	Play Years: Psychosocial Development	Ch 11
10/7	T	School Years: Biosocial Development	Ch 12
10/9	TH	School Years: Cognitive Development	Ch 13
10/14	T	School Years: Psychosocial Development	
<b>10/16</b>	<b>TH</b>	<b>EXAM 2 Chapters 8-13</b>	<b>Ch 14</b>
10/21	T	Adolescence: Biosocial Development	Ch 15
10/23	TH	Adolescence: Cognitive Development	Ch 16
10/28	T	Adolescence: Psychosocial Development	Ch 17
10/30	TH	Early Adulthood: Biosocial Development	Ch 18
11/6	T	Early Adulthood: Cognitive Development	Ch 19
11/8	TH	Early Adulthood: Psychosocial Development	Ch 20
<b>11/11</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Veteran's Day—No class.</b>	
<b>11/13</b>	<b>TH</b>	<b>EXAM 3 Chapters 14-19</b>	<b>Ch 21</b>
11/18	T	Middle Adulthood: Biosocial Development	Ch 22
11/20	TH	Middle Adulthood: Cognitive Development	Ch 23
11/25	T	Middle Adulthood: Cognitive Development	Ch 24
11/27	TH	<b>Thanksgiving Day—No class, have fun, eat lots!</b>	
<b>12/2</b>	<b>T</b>	Late Adulthood: Biosocial Development	Ch 25
12/4	TH	Late Adulthood: Biosocial Development	
12/9	T	Late Adulthood: Cognitive Development	
<b>12/12</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>FINAL EXAM 7:30-9:30 A.M.</b>	