

COURSE SYLLABUS

Theories of Human Development HDFS 720 Fall 2008

Monday 1:00-3:45 p.m. SFB 104

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Hours:

COURSE DESCRIPTION

THEORIES OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (3 credits). Critical review and comparison of influential theoretical views of the development of people.

TEXTBOOKS and READINGS

- ✓ S. Crain (2004). *An Introduction to theories of human development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- ✓ Other readings, as assigned.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Students will gain in-depth familiarity with selected theories of human development.
2. Students will recognize and be able to articulate commonalities as well as underlying differences among the theories.
3. Students will work toward developing a personal view of human development.
4. Students will demonstrate their ability to integrate theories of human development into the research process.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Students will be expected to read carefully weekly assignments before class. Note that a significant portion of the class grade will be based on class discussion. Brief weekly quizzes will test students' understanding of the readings.
2. Students will be expected to contribute to class discussion based on assigned readings.
3. Students will be responsible for leading a discussion session about one theory, expected to have read about that theory in greater depth, and prepared to lead the discussion and field questions.
4. Students will submit a written paper in which two theoretical approaches are applied to a topic of the students' choice. After consideration of how each theory interacts with the topic, students will compare and contrast how the two theories provide different views of the topic. This allows students to make a critical evaluation of similarities, differences, strengths, and limitations of the two theories in an integrative manner.

GRADING CRITERIA

Several components will contribute to the final grade, as follows:

1. Weekly discussion, based on thorough reading of assignments, 5 points per week
2. Presentation of one theory; discussion leader, 100 points
3. Integrative paper, applying and comparing two theories, 100 points
4. Brief weekly quizzes on readings, 10 points each
5. Cumulative final exam, 100 points

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

A = 94 - 100%	C = 74 - 78%
A- = 91 - 94%	C- = 71 - 74%
B+ = 88 - 91%	D+ = 68 - 71%
B = 84 - 88%	D = 64 - 68%
B- = 81 - 84%	D- = 61 - 64%
C+ = 78 - 81%	F = 60% and below

DISCUSSION LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Each student will be responsible for leading a portion of the class. Each student will select one of the theories to be presented in class at the beginning of the semester. Students should consider carefully their choice of theory, perhaps selecting one with which they don't have too much familiarity at this time.
2. Leading the seminar will involve the following:
 - Read additional works by the theorist, about the theorist, and about the theory to gain greater depth in understanding the theory. You should gain expertise in this theory!
 - From the readings, select a narrower aspect of the theory for class discussion. In other words, class discussion should not simply be a repetition of the text reading but should build on that reading by expanding on one aspect of the theory. This assumes that the entire theory cannot be expanded in depth during a class period but only one aspect of the theory. This aspect should be meaningful and interesting in its own right, but also add to class members' understanding of the theory.

Examples: Freud's view of women; a non-Western view of Freud or other theorists; why so much of ethological theory is based on animal studies; why Vygotsky is gaining popularity among educators half a century after his writings and death; application of any theory in a specific setting such as education or counseling; etc.

- Set objectives for what the class will gain from your seminar.
- Develop a plan of activities for meeting these objectives; this can include
 - some (not too much) information sharing through lecture;
 - assignment of additional readings, to be shared the previous week with the class;
 - preparation of questions for large group and/or small group discussion to illuminate or clarify a point;
 - a short film, but only if it adds significantly to the narrowed down topic about the theory; other class activities, for instance, development of and debate over a position of two sides of an issue.
- Discuss the plan for leading the class with the instructor at least 2 weeks before the seminar is scheduled.
- Lead the class with the prepared activities during the assigned week.
- Hand in the following: bibliography of works consulted; list of objectives; and a detailed outline of class activities for meeting objectives.

RESEARCH PAPER

Following are some general guidelines for preparation of the paper which is part of the requirements of this course. The focus of the paper will be on an application of two theories of human development to an approved topic. The paper will include three distinct sections:

1. Literature Review:

Select a topic of interest to you to which you will apply the two theories. It could, for instance, be a topic you are considering for your thesis or any other topic of interest to you. It is helpful to select a relatively narrow aspect of the topic, otherwise you will be faced with too much literature to consider. For instance, rather than a topic such as "the effect of television on children" (about which literally thousands of papers and books have been written), narrow it down to "the effect of prosocial television programs on adolescents" (a more manageable piece of the literature).

Complete a **thorough** review of the **research** literature (not popular works) on your topic. By appropriately narrowing down the topic to a manageable scope, you will be able to execute a thorough literature review. The paper you write should review and integrate the information you found in the literature.

2. Theory Applications:

Select two theories through which you will evaluate the literature review. These should be different from the theory presentation you gave in class. They should be from among the ones discussed in class (different ones are

possible, but with prior approval). There is a variety of theoretical formulations, some narrow, others fairly broad, from which you can choose.

When you write the theory portions of the paper, try to examine the literature from the perspective of the theorist who formulated the theory. Thus, to follow the above example about children and television, you might consider how Bandura might view the topic (e.g., children learn from what behaviors they see modeled) and then how Piaget would view it (e.g., children's learning will depend on their cognitive stage of development). You "step into the shoes" of Bandura and Piaget in evaluating the topic from their respective theoretical perspectives.

It is very important that the discussion of theory is relevant to the topic. Thus, it should not be general in nature, but should focus on the features that are salient to your discussion of the topic.

3. Comparison of Theories:

The final, fourth section of the paper compares and contrasts the two theoretical evaluations. Critically evaluate similarities, differences, strengths, and limitations of the two theories in an integrative manner.

4. Format:

The paper should be roughly 20 to 30 pages in length. It is not the length, however, which is important, but the contents.

Please follow APA style, as outlined in the fifth edition of the *APA Publication Manual* (2000), including a complete list of references.

Please write each section that you hand in as a "final" not a "first" draft. You should work on a polished, well-written, well-researched, well-integrated paper. You will get extensive feedback after the first two portions are handed in. It is expected that you will make corrections and alterations based on the feedback for the next time the paper is due.

5. Due Dates:

Your paper will be due in four stages, as follows:

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| 9/15 | Submit the two theories and the topic to which you will apply these by email (note: this is the day before class). You will receive feedback on your topic choice by class the next day. Yes, this is early; however, the first part of the paper will be due a month later, so an early start is important! |
| 10/6 | Submit the first part of the paper, the review of the literature. |
| 11/10 | Submit the paper with the <u>revised</u> first part and the second and third parts of the paper in which you apply the two theories to the literature review. |
| 12/8 | Submit the final paper, making appropriate revisions and providing a comparison between the two theories. |

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
8/25	Introduction; Syllabus; what is theory? Why are theories important?	Read Crain chs. 2-3
9/1	Labor Day-No Class	
9/8	Discuss chs 2-3	Read Crain chs 6-7; Theory choice(s) and your discussion choice to me by 9/15
9/15	Quiz chs 2-3; Discuss chs 6-7; theory choice and discussion choice due	Read Crain chs 8-9 Email paper topic by 9/22
9/22	Quiz chs 6-7 Discuss chs 8-9; paper topic due	Read Crain chs 10-11
9/29	Quiz chs 8-9; Discuss chs 10-11	Read Crain chs 12-13, literature review due 10/6
10/6	Quiz chs 10-11; Discuss chs 12-13; literature review due	Read Crain chs 16-17
10/20	Quiz chs 12-13; Discuss chs 16-17	
10/27	Discussion 1&2	
11/3	Discussion 3&4	Revised literature review and discussion of two theories due 11/10
11/10	Discussion 5&6; literature review and discussion of two theories due	
11/17	Discussion 7&8	
11/24	Discussion 9&10	Final paper with appropriate revisions and comparison of two theories due 12/1
12/1	Discussion 11&12, final paper due	
12/8	Discussion 13&14	Prepare for cumulative exam
12/15	Cumulative Final Exam 12-2 p.m.	Have a Happy Holiday!