

**UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

**SW 513 Lifespan and Neurophysiologic Development in a  
Cultural, Ecological, and Transactional Framework  
(4 credit hours)  
Fall, 2008**

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Wednesday 5:45 – 9:45**

**Office Hours: By appointment**

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

It is the student's responsibility to have read the College of Social Work Ethical Academic and Professional Conduct Code that is in the College of Social Work MSSW Handbook ([www.utk.csw.edu](http://www.utk.csw.edu)).

**THE HONOR STATEMENT**

An essential feature of The University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity. (*Hilltopics*, 2008).

**DISABILITY**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact The University of Tennessee Office of Disability Services at 2227 Dunford Hall (865-974-6087). This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This is a required Foundation course. Course content includes: theories, frameworks, and research that address culturally sensitive understanding of human development and behavior; effects of risk/protective factors, culture, and other environmental effects, such as poverty, on developmental milestones; neurophysiologic development across the lifespan, starting with early childhood, the profound influence of the environment on these processes, and implications for early prevention, treatment, policies, and services; identification, assessment, and treatment of developmental delays and neurodevelopmental disorders. Processes critical to understanding human behavior and community risk and resilience for vulnerable populations are emphasized.

This course examines frameworks, theories, and research that address a culturally sensitive understanding of human development and behavior. Lifespan and neurophysiologic development in an ecological and transactional framework provides a foundation for understanding the processes of human development and how these processes are influenced by culture and the environment. The course examines the effects of risk and protective factors at various ecological levels, such as attachment, poverty, and culture on developmental milestones. It includes neurophysiologic development across the lifespan, starting with early childhood; the profound influence of the environment on these processes; and implications for early prevention, treatment, policies, and services. Typical development will be covered as well as atypical developmental patterns that are consistent with neurodevelopmental disorders. Processes critical to human behavior and risk and resilience for vulnerable populations are emphasized to understand individual or family behavior.

Content in this course will be illustrated and centered around a case study approach in which students read case studies that are paired with theoretical and research material. Class discussion about the theoretical and research material will be linked to case studies, and students will use theory and research to construct hypotheses about individual or family adaptation to the environment. In addition, students will practice forming research questions and going to the literature to assess what is known about their questions.

## **COURSE RATIONALE**

To practice accountably and effectively, social workers must be able to understand their clients and their presenting issues within their clients' environmental, cultural, and developmental contexts. In supportive environments, individuals flourish as they progress through developmental stages and stage-salient tasks. Other environments, because of risk factors associated with them, are less supportive of wellbeing. Even so, brain plasticity provides humans with an amazing capacity to adapt to these less supportive and sometimes frankly maladaptive environments, although sometimes at great cost to themselves. Especially for young children, the costs to the developing brain of less adaptive environments are profound because their brains actually become organized around repeated experiences within these less adaptive environments. Neurophysiological changes and behaviors resulting from these earlier less adaptive environments are often conceptualized by clinicians as psychopathology or presenting problems of clients. Understanding human development as a series of processes mediated by the brain within an environment-dependent context profoundly reframes not only our understanding of our clients and their presenting problems, but also how to intervene appropriately with clients and their environments. This different understanding of human development also suggests the critical importance of effective prevention programs and social policies that promote wellbeing, as well as interventions directed at changing the larger environments of individuals. Thus, knowledge gained in this course will allow social workers not only to better understand, contextualize, and assess clients and their presenting problems, but also to develop more appropriate interventions, prevention programs, or policies for working with or for the benefit of clients and for the necessary environments to support human wellbeing.

## **COURSE COMPETENCIES:**

By the completion of this course, students are expected to be able to demonstrate (through course activities, assignments, and/or exams):

1. Articulate, critically analyze, and apply an ecological, transactional (risk and resilience) and developmental perspective of adaptive and maladaptive human development and behavior across the lifespan to the understanding and assessment of client systems and to reciprocal relations among individuals and families. (HBSE-F.1, Pops at-risk & SJ-F.1; Diversity-F.3, F.4; CT/EBP-F.1). *(content: attachment theory and neurophysiology as the major foundations with brief comparisons and contrasts to others; risk and resilience; cultural similarities and differences in development and behavior.)*
2. Assess the validity of historically significant theories of human behavior and development for current social issues and problems that clients experience. (HBSE-F.2; Diversity-F.3, F.4; CT/EBP-F.1, F.2, F.3). *(content: brief comparisons and contrasts of major historical theories as appropriate, including psychoanalytic theory, Piaget, Kohlberg, Erikson, Vygotsky, and others).*
3. Evaluate and apply evidence-based theories of human development and behavior that are sensitive to gender, class, age, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, family structure, disability status, and worldview. HBSE-F.3; Pops at-risk & SJ-F.4; Values/ethics-F.1; Diversity-F.3, F.4; CT/EBP-F.1, F.3, F.4) *(content: evidence for application of attachment theory and neurophysiology with specific attention to gender, class, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, family structure, disability status, and worldview).*
4. Explain the roles of neurophysiology, adaptive and maladaptive environments, and experiences, including the effects of trauma and chronic stress, on brain development and the role of genetics and epigenesis in development during the sensitive period of the first three years of life and across the life span. (HBSE-F.4; CT/EBP-F.3, F.4, F.5). *(content: basic introduction to Mendelian genetics and the Human Genome Project; epigenesis and gene expression; effects of stress and trauma on hormones, brain development, and gene expression; effects of early deprivation and parenting on brain development and gene expression; Hobfoll's conservation of resources theory; major developmental disabilities across the life span).*
5. Conduct a scientific review of empirical evidence and theory to address questions about human development and behavior across the lifespan. (Values/ethics-F.3; HBSE-F.7; CT/EBP-F.3, F.4, F.5). *(content: construction and use of theories; how theories are tested; examples and meaning of testing of attachment, neurophysiological theories, and other theories across the lifespan; comparisons and contrast to non-evidence-based theories).*

## REQUIRED BOOKS

Davies, D. (2004). *Child development: A practitioner's guide* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Guilford.

## RECOMMENDED BOOKS

For those with no previous course on human development, a text on human development across the lifespan may be of great help for providing background information.

*Writing with Style: APA Style for Social Work.* Lenore T. Szuchman & Barbara Thomlison. Wadsworth Publishing; 2nd edition.

## **READINGS**

All readings other than those from the required text are on the BlackBoard site for this class and can be downloaded or read from there. Class time is used to integrate the reading material through lectures, discussions and experiential learning. Students are expected to come prepared to discuss, analyze and critique all assigned readings.

## **BLACKBOARD AND WEB SITE**

New for this year, the content for this course is provided via a web page for each week's content. This web page is accessed via BlackBoard, which will contain the syllabus and grade book. The weekly web pages will contain all required readings, videos, and other material. It will also contain much more information that is intended to help you immerse yourself in the content for that week. Human behavior is dynamic and complex. The web site has been designed to help you develop your own context of human behavior as dynamic and complex.

This is the first semester it has been implemented so it is not fully populated with links. It provides access to all required materials, including readings, videos, handouts and other materials. You will also use the web site to link up with group members. It also includes optional synopses of recent studies, longer papers that provide complementary information or those on the lived experience of individuals, optional videos and audio clips, cartoons, and a photo gallery. It might also contain pictures of symbols and icons for persons of each developmental stage as well as the accoutrements of that stage—those items that seem to accompany that particular stage, such as diapers for infants. Most links provide very abbreviated information across various media that is meant as a snapshot of the similarities and differences for that stage.

While there are no expectations that you pursue all information on the web site for each week, it is expected that you will sample the information and bring it into class and group discussions.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

I attempt to remain readily available to students during the semester. If for any reason you are struggling, have questions about an assignment, need to let me know what is going on with you, or just want to talk, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am easily contacted by email and usually will reply as soon as possible. During the semester I monitor my email closely unless out of town. We can set up a phone conversation, meeting, or converse by email. Also feel free to talk with me during break or after class to set up a time to talk.

## **PLAGIARISM**

It is assumed that all of your work is original and that you are aware of appropriate citation rules. If you are not **completely** familiar with citation rules, please review them at the UT Library web

site: <http://www.lib.utk.edu/instruction/learnhow/>. This web site has other tutorials as well on how to use the library effectively, search strategies, etc., that may be of help. Please be aware that copying material verbatim from the web is considered plagiarism unless it is appropriately cited as verbatim material. BlackBoard now provides the means for submitted papers to be automatically scanned to determine if they include plagiarized material. Please assume that your paper will be automatically scanned when it is submitted.

## GRADING CRITERIA

Participation	5 points
Weekly test on readings	10 points
Developmental analysis of infant	20 points
Ecological/cultural analysis of adolescent or young adult	20 points
Ecological, transactional, & developmental analysis of elder	45 points

## Final Grade

The University of Tennessee does not award minus grades at the graduate level. Therefore, the following grading scale will be used for the final grade:

93 – 100	A
88 – 92	B+
83 – 87	B
78 – 82	C+
73 – 77	C
68 – 72	D+
63 – 67	D
<63	F

## Class Participation

Full participation creates an effective learning environment. Students will be expected to contribute to the in-class learning experience by actively listening and contributing to class discussions. Each student is a learning resource for other students and faculty. The common foundation for discussion rests with the readings. You will have the opportunity to participate in small groups as well as in larger class discussions. **Class participation counts for 10% of your grade** and is evaluated on the following criteria: attendance and level of preparation demonstrated in oral questions and comments in small and large group discussions.

Attendance is critical to your capacity to integrate this material. For that reason, your participation grade will be reduced by one letter grade for each absence, unless you are ill or for other extenuating circumstances. **If you miss more than three times**, you will be asked to withdraw from the class except in extenuating circumstances.

## Weekly Tests on Content

Every week you will be required to complete a timed test of your understanding of the required content for that week. These tests serve as motivators for reading the required content and for assessing content not specifically covered in the paper assignments. As a knowledge-based course, the primary means of imparting this knowledge is through the readings. For this reason

and because readings build upon previous ones, it is therefore critical that students do not get behind. As such, the tests will not be difficult but will simply assess your general understanding of the material. For example, tests for weeks 2 and 3 will ask general questions relating to normative and nonnormative brain development, the Human Genome Project, epigenesis, and other such concepts of brain development that are presenting in the writings for that week. Please do not devote extra time to studying for these tests. Rather, your attentive reading of the materials will suffice. Tests are timed to provide a boundary for the time you need to devote to them. Tests will ask open-ended, more general, questions about content from the papers. The last few questions on the test are multiple choice and ask you to provide feedback regarding the usefulness of required materials and methods used in class. You can receive a total of 10 points from these tests, which means that you will need to complete 10 of the 12 available tests. (Tests are not provided for the first and last week.) Access to these tests is provided via the web page for each week. You will be able to complete them up until class time for that week.

### **Summary of Paper Assignments**

The primary assignments for this course are a series of three papers—two focused and one comprehensive—that progressively build skills in observing, listening to, and understanding individuals. The ultimate purpose of these papers is to help you gain knowledge and skills that will help you better assess your clients and develop appropriate interventions. Because of the complexity of the framework for understanding human behavior presented in this class, the first two papers will focus on pieces of the framework and the final paper will bring the full framework together in a final interview with an elder. All papers will be submitted via the Dropbox on the course Blackboard site.

I am vastly more concerned in this class that you have the opportunity to do an assignment well and to learn from it than I am about the schedule. Having said this, the schedule is not to be abused. I am willing to change the due date of a paper with enough notice (i.e., not 1 or 2 days before unless there is an extenuating circumstance) and for valid reasons. These could be having too many papers due during a given week, having a *major* family ritual that has long been scheduled for a particular time, having been ill, and others. Please talk with me as far in advance as possible to consider whether an alternate due date is appropriate.

These papers are designed to assess student capacity to: a) *apply an ecological, transactional (risk and resilience) and developmental perspective of adaptive and maladaptive human development and behavior across the lifespan to the understanding and assessment of client systems and to reciprocal relations among individuals and families;* b) *evaluate and apply appropriate historic and current and evidence-based theories of human development and behavior that are sensitive to gender, class, age, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, family structure, disability status, and worldview; examine the roles of adaptive and maladaptive environments and experiences, including the effects of trauma and chronic stress, on indicators of brain and human development; and apply empirical evidence and theory to address questions about human development and behavior across the lifespan.*

### **Grading Criteria for Individual Papers**

Papers will receive both a letter grade and the equivalent points for the assignment. The objectives for each paper represent the primary content areas upon which the papers will be

assessed. In addition, writing quality (including APA style) and organization of the paper will contribute to your grade. They will have a lesser impact upon earlier papers than later papers.

An **A+** paper will do an exceptional job of presenting the content for the paper while drawing upon needed references; will be insightful throughout; will address all objectives; will be well-organized with a high level of writing quality; and will use APA referencing style for sources. This grade is reserved for only those very few papers throughout the semester that demonstrate the highest standards.

An **A** paper will do a very good job of presenting the content for the paper while drawing upon needed references; will demonstrate insight, will be well-organized with a high level of writing quality; will address all objectives; and will use APA referencing style for sources. This paper is considered to be of excellent quality. To receive a grade of **A**, all areas must be met.

A **B** paper presents the content for the paper, but exhibits less insight and may not adequately draw upon needed references; may suffer from a lesser quality of writing and organization; and adequately addresses all objectives. This paper is considered to be of average quality. Papers may also be awarded a **B** if they meet expectations for a higher grade but fail to include all objectives.

A **C** paper does not adequately address the objectives or may fail to include all objectives, may be poorly written, may exhibit poor insight, and may fail to draw upon needed references.

A **D** or lower paper has significant problems throughout the paper and fails to address all objectives.

Papers that fall between two grades will be scored accordingly. For example, grades awarded between B and A include B+, 90, and A-, depending on how closely they achieved the criteria. Because a mid-point grade is used (e.g., 90, 80, 70), I typically do not round final grades up.

### **Suggested Guidelines for Writing the Assessment Papers**

1. A good assessment/analysis of a person is like a good storyline in a book. It is easy to read, has a sense of movement to it, makes sense when considering the person, and brings insight to the reader and life to the person being assessed.
2. Understanding another person is a process that evolves through “dwelling within” the experience of that person. What would it be like to be that person or parent? How does this insight help you to better understand the person? It will help if you leave enough time to write a rough draft because the process of writing that rough draft will allow for the process of “dwelling in”. You will then have time to add insights gained through this process.
3. What theory or theories do you find helpful in thinking about this person? If several seem helpful or parts of several are helpful, use more than one and discuss the differences. You may find yourself having a dialogue between two or more theories as you try to understand the child and his/her caregivers. You can integrate your personal view by discussing how you agree or disagree with a particular theoretical framework and explaining your reasoning. One caution—you are not able to prove or disprove a theory on the basis of this one observation.

4. The theories should be woven into the text, not just listed, and should be used to support your interpretations. If the theories do not help you to understand the child better, then you are probably not applying them correctly.
5. The paper should grow out of your observations and/or interviews, and examples should be used throughout the paper to illustrate your points. It is not enough to say that the child is a given age and therefore should be attending to specific milestones. Instead, give examples of types of behaviors in the child that support your theses. For example, in the infant paper Incorporate observations about how the infant initiates contact (e.g. gazing, vocalizing, smiling) and how the caregiver responds, as well as how the caregiver initiates contact (e.g. offering a toy, face-to-face emotional exchanges).
6. Credit authors and other sources appropriately (consult your APA guide). At the end of the paper there should be a Reference Page, alphabetically listing only the books or that you actually used in the text of the paper.
7. Remember that you are the expert. If you do not know the information, it is your responsibility to find it.

**Paper 1**  
**Infant Observation Paper**  
**Due DATE: September 24**

**Overview**

One essential component of the framework used for this class is developmental. The main goals of this assignment are for you to sharpen your observational skills for very young children and to apply relevant developmental theories to these observations. Based on your observation and interview with caregivers, you will draw on the readings, class discussion, and other necessary resources to analyze: 1) the quality of the relationship between the infant/toddler and his/her caregiver(s) and 2) the child's physical, cognitive, and socioemotional development.

**Observation Process**

For this paper, you must assess a child aged 0 - 24 months. You may do so individually or in a small group of students. The child may be alone or other children may be there, but it is important that the child have access to one of her or his **primary** caregivers. An alternate caregiver such as a daycare worker may be present but may not be substituted for the primary caregiver unless this caregiver has an ongoing relationship with the child and is the primary daycare caregiver for the child on an ongoing basis. Your observation can take place anywhere and should last approximately 45 minutes. Your observation notes will provide the material for the paper. These notes do not need to be typed, but please attach them to the paper. **Make sure to protect the duo's confidentiality by not revealing their names.** You might also wish to videotape the observation if possible and if given explicit written permission by the child's parents or legal guardians. Please make sure that you state in writing what you will do with the tape after the observation.

Also interview the caregiver(s) for a few minutes to develop a better understanding of the child's development. The person's views may differ from your own so it is important to listen with a non-judgmental "ear". This is critical in obtaining full information, protecting the person you interview, and preserving your relationship with this person. Consider asking open-ended questions such as, "Tell me about your child," "What are the special things you enjoy about your baby and being his or her parent," or "What are the things that are more difficulty?" Having reviewed the readings, you should also be able to develop other questions that might help you gain insight into the child. You might also meet with other students to develop a list of appropriate questions.

**Under NO circumstances may you work together on your papers, even if you observed the same infant as another student!**

**Outline of Paper**

Drawing on the readings, outside references, class discussion, observation, and interview notes write a double-spaced, properly referenced (*APA style with a minimum of three references*) 6- to 8-page (approximately) paper that includes the following content:

1. Describe the context for the observation and the interview (i.e., where the interview took place and who was present). If other students were there, please mention each student by name.

2. Describe and analyze the domains of development by applying appropriate theories and supporting your analysis with appropriate examples from the observation and interview. Here you will develop your assessment as to whether and how the child is developing normatively for her or his stage of development. To do so will require that you reference normative developmental milestones and capacities for that age. You can find these in the text, handouts, and on the web. Include in this discussion:
  - the infant's physical maturation and abilities, including a physical description;
  - the infant's neurophysiological maturation. (Use your observations to make inferences, or hypotheses, about where the child may be. This section may overlap to some extent with others.)
  - the infant's cognitive and socioemotional development;
  - the child/caregiver relationship and quality;
  - any specific issues (culture, disability status, etc.) that seem to affect the child's developmental pace.
3. Have a conclusion section that discusses whether the child is developing appropriately for that age and why, reasons that the child might be delayed in certain areas (if indicated), and any concerns you may have for the child's future development based upon current development, the quality of the relationship with the caregiver, or any other reasons.
4. Write a final paragraph commenting on your own experience of doing this assignment and considering how your cultural lens affected your observation, interview, and analysis and the way or degree to which the interview confirmed and/or challenged your prior assumptions about this age group.

**Remember:** Age is only one marker of a developmental stage. For many reasons, individuals who fall within a stage chronologically may not be fully within that stage developmentally or may be attending to tasks better understood within a different developmental stage. It is your responsibility to appropriately place the child in a developmental stage based upon capacities of the child. You may need to incorporate tasks and theories of a previous or subsequent stage to enrich your understanding and analysis of the child.

**PAPER 2**  
**Ecological and Cultural Analysis of Adolescent or Emerging Adult**  
**DUE DATE: November 5**

**Overview**

The purpose of this paper is to understand how one's development is critically affected by the context within which one lives, including one's multiple cultural identities. For this paper you will interview an unrelated adolescent or young adult of your choice from a different ethnic, racial, or cultural group than you about their "ecological niche," defined for this paper as multiple cultural contexts (race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, disability status, etc.) and the multiple systems that surround them and within which they are embedded. These include their community and larger society as well as the multiple systems within these that affect them. Examples are work, school, organizations, churches, federal or state systems such as child welfare or social security, and many others. Other systems in which they are embedded may be related to their different cultural identities (e.g., race/ethnic-specific groups to which they belong or LGBT Q(lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, or questioning) groups. Each of these various systems may represent risk and/or protective factors, stressors and/or resources. You will apply appropriate theories to the understanding of the individual's context and how that context has affected or may affect them.

NOTE: Remember that adolescents can sometimes be cantankerous about what they wish to share. Consider this in determining who you will interview.

**Process**

Before you interview your person, it will be helpful to write out questions you wish to ask while considering how to gather information on the individual's multiple cultural identities and various contextual systems to which they belong. You might choose to talk with other students in the class to help you identify appropriate questions. Open-ended questions will likely be far more beneficial than those asking for just a very brief response. It may be helpful to get permission to ask them a few more questions later if you find that you failed to ask information that would be helpful in writing the paper.

The notes from your interview will be the basis for your paper. You will **hand in these interview notes. They do NOT need to be typewritten.** You might also wish to audiotape or videotape the interview for your later review. If so, please get permission in writing to do so. Please make sure that you state in writing what you will do with the tape after the class assignment is completed. Make sure that you **de-identify** (obscure the name of the person) **your notes and paper.**

Examples of questions you may wish to ask to assess their *ecological niche* are: "Tell me something about the community in which you live." "What are some of the advantages and disadvantages to living here?" "Tell me about your work." "Do you find that your work has any effect on your private life and if so, how?" "What are the meaningful groups/organizations to which you belong?" "Who are the people you most like to be around?" The purpose of these questions is twofold. First, you need to identify the various contexts in their lives that are influential to them. Second, you need to identify how the various contexts are influential and affect them.

Examples of questions you may wish to ask to more specifically assess their multiple cultural identities are: "Do you identify with a specific ethnicity, such as Italian, Mexican, or Sudanese? How do you see this heritage playing out in your family? What does this heritage mean to you? What are important family stories that help you understand the cultural roots of your ancestors? What does being male/female mean to you? How has it affected who you are? Have you ever experienced discrimination because of any part of your identity? How did these events affect you? Was/is your family a source of support when experiencing discrimination? (if the person has an oppressed identity such as being a person of color, living in poverty, etc.) How has your family taught you to resist stereotypes or to respond to acts of discrimination? (These questions are neither sufficient to assess a specific identity such as ethnicity nor to assess the multiple cultural identities of the individual.)

Drawing on the readings, outside references, class discussion, and your interview notes, **write a double-spaced, properly referenced (minimum of three references other than the text), 7- to 10-page paper.** When writing the paper, make sure to support your assessment of the person with examples derived from the individual. Please organize your paper as follows, using appropriate headings:

- 1) Describe the context for the interview (i.e., where the interview took place and who was present) and introduce the person, including information relevant to gaining an initial understanding of who the person is.
- 2) Present the multiple cultural identities of the individual and how these identities are uniquely represented in this individual. Remember that there is more variation in individuals within groups than between groups so beware of cultural stereotypes. This should be the individual's own perspective of her or his different identities. Discuss how the multiple identities reflect strengths and stresses for that person (i.e., how the person draws strengths from each identified culture and how that culture might also represent risk factors). Also discuss how these multiple cultures have complexly interacted within the individual. For example, are values for one culture inconsistent with values of another culture? How do all the various identities of the person seem to merge to contribute to who the person is? Support your analysis with appropriate examples from the interview.
- 3) Describe the community/neighborhood context within which the individual resides. If this person is a college student, it may also be necessary to discuss the context of her or his permanent home if the person identifies more with that than her or his temporary community. Within the community, it is likely that the person is embedded within multiple other systems or networks of people. These may include work, school, church, recreational groups, and many other possibilities. Identify these as well and discuss whether they are risk and protective factors, stressors or resources for the person. Also discuss other risk/protective factors and stressors or resources at this level. As appropriate, apply theories to help in developing a better understanding of this context, its systems, and its effect on the individual. Support your analysis with appropriate examples from the interview.
4. Describe the societal context within which the individual resides and that is pertinent to that person. In other words, what of the larger society's norms, values, and systems has affected who this person is or with whom the person has interacted? These might include political systems, norms and values regarding specific stereotypes, entitlement programs, other types of financial support the person or family may or may have received from the

government, or anything else that impacts the person that can best be explained at the societal level. Also discuss how the person's cultural identities are more or less compatible with societal norms and how this impacts the person. Pay particular attention in this section to how one's multiple cultures have privileged or oppressed the person. As necessary, apply appropriate theories to help in developing a better understanding of this context, its systems, and its effect on the individual. Support your analysis with appropriate examples from the interview.

4) Consider how the person's multiple cultural identities and community and societal influences have coalesced to affect the individual's physical, cognitive and moral, social (family, intimates, and peers), emotional/affective, and spiritual domains. Apply appropriate theories as necessary. For example, as a result of growing up in the United States, most persons were exposed to Christian religions as children and thus grew up with specific belief systems.

5) Write a final paragraph commenting on your own experience of doing this assignment and considering how your cultural lens affected your observation, interview, and analysis.

Please review the grading criteria for all papers to determine how the quality of papers will be assessed.

**FINAL PAPER  
ELDER**

**DUE DATE: November 26**

For your final paper, you will interview and assess an older adult who is developmentally defined as such (i.e., is negotiating the developmental tasks of an elder) and who is not a relative. The purpose of this assignment is to: 1) sharpen your assessment skills, both observational and interviewing; and 2) integrate and apply relevant theories that will help you understand the person you interview. You will use the developmental/neurophysiological, ecological/cultural, and transactional framework discussed throughout the semester.

Interview your individual for at least an hour. **You may NOT go as a group to interview the elder.** Treat this as an open-ended interview, letting the person tell his or her story. As necessary, interject questions to gain a fuller understanding of this person based upon the requirements of the paper. Your interview notes will provide the material for the paper. You may find that after writing a rough draft of your paper, interviewing the elder a second time, even if briefly, may help. Interview notes do not need to be typed, but please attach them to the paper. If you audiotape or videotape the interview, make sure that you have received explicit written permission that includes what you will do with the tape once the assignment is completed.

Write a double-spaced, APA referenced paper approximately 10 – 12 pages in length. Briefly introduce the person, how you know this individual, and the environment/context in which the interview occurred. Then describe and analyze development across these domains (but not necessarily in this order):

- 1) Place the individual within her or his context by discussing important information about the person, her or his multiple cultural identities, current context, important family members and other relationships, strengths and struggles, and other important information necessary to introducing the person. Discuss developmental tasks the individual is negotiating. The purpose of this introductory section is to develop a good general overview of who this person is. Apply appropriate theories as applicable.
  - 4) Describe multiple cultural identities of the person, expounding on the strengths and resiliencies drawn from each culture as well as any oppressions experienced.
  - 5)
  - 6) 4) Discuss individual, family, and systemic factors that have shaped this person's life, the challenges or "issues" he or she currently faces, and how you think the person will navigate the current challenge(s).
  - 7)
- 2) Describe and analyze in a culturally sensitive manner the physical, cognitive, moral, social (family, intimates, and peers), emotional/affective, and spiritual domains of development by applying age-appropriate theories.
- 5) At the end of this more formal analysis, write a paragraph or two commenting on your own experience of doing this assignment and considering how your cultural lens affected your observation and analysis and the way or degree to which the interview confirmed and/or challenged your prior assumptions about aging.

Consider throughout this paper:

- Whether (and if so, how) early development seems to predict later functioning
- What major life themes seem to be present

The following questions may be helpful in preparing for the interview and organizing your thinking afterwards:

- 1) How does this person make meaning of her or his life; how does s/he convey a sense of self? What are the person's multiple identities and how have they affecting her or his life?
- 2) How does this person balance activities and intimacy now, as compared to how he or she balanced them during other times in life?
- 3) How is he or she coping with the tasks of aging?
- 4) How is or has this person been affected by strengths or weaknesses in physical health?
- 5) How does this individual currently relate to formal and informal support systems? How has she or he done so throughout her or his life?
- 6) As this person speaks of the present and past, are strengths identified? Do you hear examples/themes of resilience?
- 7) How is the cultural context of this person uniquely expressed in the person's multiple identities?

**SYLLABUS SUMMARY**

<b>Session</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>	<b>Date</b>
1	Course overview Establishing a framework		Aug. 20
2	Neurophysiological development		Aug. 27
3	Neurophysiological development, cont.		Sept. 3
4	0 to 3		Sept. 10
	<b>NO CLASS</b>		Sept. 17
5	Preschool	Observation of infant	Sept. 24
6	Childhood		Oct. 1
7	Adolescence		Oct. 8
8	Cultural identity development: Multiple identities		Oct. 15
9	Stress, coping, and adaptation		Oct. 22
10	Emerging and young adulthood		Oct. 29
11	Families and parenting  Guest: Michael Buford	Ecological analysis	Nov. 5
12	Middle adulthood		Nov. 12
13	Late adulthood		Nov. 19
14	Summary and Evaluation	Elder paper	Nov. 26

**Session 1: Course Overview**  
**Establishing an ecological, developmental, transactional framework**

**Required Readings:**

Davies, Chapter 3, Risk and protective factors, pp. 61 – 108.

Davies, Introduction to Part II: A developmental lens on childhood, pp. 133 – 137.

Freud, S. (1999). The social construction of normality. *Families in Society*, 80(4), 333-339.

García Coll, C., et al. (1996). An integrative model for the study of developmental competencies in minority children. *Child Development*. 67(5), 1891-1914.

May, K. M. (2001). Theory: Does it matter? *Family Journal*, 9(1), 37-38.

**Recommended Readings:**

Davies, Chapter 4, Analysis of risk and protective factors, pp. 109 – 129.

**Session 2: Neurophysiological development**

**Required Readings:**

Davies, Chapter 2. Brain development (excerpt), pp. 39 – 45.

Applegate, J. S., & Shapiro, J. R. (2005). Chapter 1. The brain: An introductory tutorial. In *Neurobiology for clinical social work: Theory and practice* (pp. 1 – 14). New York, NY: Norton.

Harper, L.V. (2005). Epigenetic inheritance and the intergenerational transfer of experience. *Psychological Bulletin*, 131, 340-360.

Sandhu, J.S. (2006). Nature vs. nurture: A case report. *Delaware Medical Journal*, 78(11), 413-417. [case study]

Schore, A.N. (2000). Attachment and the regulation of the right brain. *Attachment & Human Development*, 2(1), 23–47.

Siegel, D.L. (2001). Toward an interpersonal neurobiology of the developing mind: Attachment relationships, “mindsight,” and neural integration. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 22(1-2), 67-94.

**Web Links, Required:**

The human genome.

[http://www.ornl.gov/sci/techresources/Human\\_Genome/project/about.shtml](http://www.ornl.gov/sci/techresources/Human_Genome/project/about.shtml)

The brain: A roadmap to the mind. MSNBC.

<http://www.msnbc.com/modules/brain/brainmap.swf>

**Video Link, Required:**

*The behaving brain*. Annenberg Media.

[http://www.learner.org/vod/vod\\_window.html?pid=1525](http://www.learner.org/vod/vod_window.html?pid=1525)

**Recommended Readings:**

Scarr, S. (1996). How people make their own environments: Implications for parents and policy makers. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 2, 204- 228.

Masten, A.S., & Coatsworth, J.D. (1998). The development of competence in favorable and unfavorable environments: Lessons from research on successful children. *American Psychologist*, 53 (2), 205-220.

**Session 3: Neurophysiological development, cont.**

**Required Readings:**

Davies, Chapter 2, Brain development (excerpt), pp. 45 – 60.

Cicchetti, D. & Cannon, T.D. (1999). Neurodevelopmental processes in the ontogenesis and epigenesis of psychopathology. *Development and Psychopathology*, 11, 375-393.

Perry, B.D. The neurodevelopmental impact of violence in childhood. Chapter 18: In D. Schetky and E.P. Benedek (Eds.). *Textbook of Child and Adolescent Forensic Psychiatry* (pp. 221-238). Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press.

Perry, B. D. (2002). Childhood experience and the expression of genetic potential: What childhood neglect tells us about nature and nurture. *Brain and Mind*, 3, 79-100.

**Session 4: 0 to 3**

**Required Readings:**

Davies, Chapter 1 (excerpt), pp. 7 – 28.

Davies, Chapter 5. Infant development, pp. 139 – 171.

Davies, D. (2004). Chapter 7. Toddler development, pp. 194 – 233.

**Web Links, Required:**

Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development. *From neurons to neighborhoods: The science of early childhood development*. National Research Council, Institute of Medicine, Board on Children, Youth, and Families.  
<http://www.zerotothree.org/site/DocServer/shonkoff.ppt?docID=2421>

**Video Links, Required:**

*Indicators of autism.* <http://www.autismspeaks.org/video/glossary.php>

*The social development of infants.* Annenberg Media.  
[http://www.learner.org/vod/vod\\_window.html?pid=1622](http://www.learner.org/vod/vod_window.html?pid=1622)

*Stranger anxiety.* [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6QtUJ1L\\_A8&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6QtUJ1L_A8&feature=related)

*Temperament.* [http://www.learner.org/vod/vod\\_window.html?pid=1622](http://www.learner.org/vod/vod_window.html?pid=1622)

**Video Links, Optional:**

*The responsive brain.* Annenberg Media.  
[http://www.learner.org/vod/vod\\_window.html?pid=1526](http://www.learner.org/vod/vod_window.html?pid=1526)

**Recommended Readings:**

DiPietro, J.A. (2000). Baby and the brain: Advances in child development. *Annual Review Public Health, 21*, 455–471.

Weatherston, D. (2001). Infant mental health: A review of relevant literature. *Psychoanalytic Social Work, 8*(1), 39-69.

*Good review of historical theories.*

National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. *Excessive stress disrupts the architecture of the developing brain. Working paper.* developingchild.net

**Session 5: Preschool**

**Readings:**

Davies, D. (2004). Chapter 9. Preschool development, pp. 259 – 310.

Baron-Cohen, S., & Belmonte, M. K. (2005). Autism: A window onto the development of the social and the analytic brain. *Annual Review of Neuroscience, (28)*, 109-126.

Fish, B., & Chapman, B. (2004). Mental health risks to infants and toddlers in foster care. *Clinical Social Work Journal, 33*(2), 121-140.

**Required Videos:**

*Autism.* <http://www.autismspeaks.org/video/glossary.php>

*The whole child: It's the little things.* Annenberg Media.  
[http://www.learner.org/vod/asx/vanderbilt/Whole\\_Child\\_01.asx](http://www.learner.org/vod/asx/vanderbilt/Whole_Child_01.asx)

## Session 6: Childhood

### Readings:

Davies, Middle childhood development, pp. 335 - 388.

Miller, K. M. (2006). The impact of parental incarceration on children: an emerging need for effective interventions. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 23, 472-486.

### Required Videos:

Echoes of Autism; Asperger Therapy; Nightline Online.

<http://abcnews.go.com/Nightline/story?id=3006889&page=1> (Video clips are in top right corner.)

### Recommended videos:

YouTube clips on Asperger's.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WAfWfsop1e0&mode=related&search=>

## Session 7: Adolescence

### Readings:

Cicchetti, D. & Rogosch, F.A. (2002). A developmental psychopathology perspective on adolescence. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 70, 6-20.

Dahl, R. E. (2004). Adolescent brain development: A period of vulnerabilities and opportunities. Keynote Address. *New York Academy of Sciences*. 1021, 1-22.

Irwin, K. (2004). The violence of adolescent life: Experiencing and managing everyday threats. *Youth & Society*, 35(4), 452-479.

This is a good article on violence that different groups of adolescents experience as a part of everyday life. However, this paper has quotes by white racists that are extremely offensive. Neither the authors of the paper nor I condone the use of this language. These quotes are used in the paper because they are graphic examples of violence that African Americans experience.

Sabbagh, L. (2006). The teen brain, hard at work. No, really. *Scientific American Mind*, August/September, 20-25.

### Required Videos:

The teenage brain. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/teenbrain/view/>

Country boys. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/countryboys/>

**Recommended Readings:**

Adolescent brain development: Vulnerabilities and opportunities. (2004). *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1021, xi – 469.

**Session 8: Cultural identity development  
Multiple identities**

**Readings:**

Adams, H., & Phillips, L. (2006). Experience of two-spirit lesbian and gay Native Americans. An argument for standpoint theory in identity research. *Identity*, 6(3), 273-291.

Ammot, T., & Matthaei, J. (2007). Race, class, gender, and women's works. In M. L. Anderson & P. C. Collins (Eds.), *Race, class, & gender: an anthology* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.) (pp. 283 – 292). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Comstock, D. L. (2005). Relational-cultural theory: A framework for relational development across the lifespan. In D. Comstock (Ed.), *Diversity and development: Critical contexts that shape our lives and relationships* (p. 133 – 160). Belmont, CA: Thompson.

Holleran, L. K. & Waller, M. A. (2003). Sources of resilience among Chicano/a youth: Forging identities in the borderlands. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 20, 335-350.

**Required videos:**

*Serving ethnic and biracial children.*

[http://blackboard.utk.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab\\_id= 2\\_1&url=%2fwebapps%2fblackboard%2fexecute%2flauncher%3ftype%3dCourse%26id%3d\\_169716\\_1%26url%3d](http://blackboard.utk.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_id= 2_1&url=%2fwebapps%2fblackboard%2fexecute%2flauncher%3ftype%3dCourse%26id%3d_169716_1%26url%3d)

*Evolution of my cultural identity.* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bkHXi6JYz8w>

**Session 9: Stress and coping**

**Class Objectives**

**Readings:**

Bigfoot, D. S. (2007). *Trauma in Indian country* (PowerPoint presentation). National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

Carroll, G. (1998). Mundane extreme environmental stress and African American families: A case for recognizing different realities. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 29(2), 271-284.

Hobfoll, S. E. (2002). Social and psychological resources and adaptation. *Review of General Psychology, 6*(4), 307-324.

McEwen, B. S., & Wingfield, J. C. (1998). The concept of allostasis in biology and biomedicine. *Hormones & Behavior, 43*, 2 – 15.

Taylor, S. E. (2006). Tend and befriend: Biobehavioral bases of affiliation under stress. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 15*(6), 273-277.

van der Kolk, B. A. (2002). In terror's grip: Healing the ravages of trauma. *Cerebrum, 4*, 34-50.

**Required Videos:**

Emotions, stress, and health. Annaberg Media Learner.org. Vanderbilt University.  
[http://www.learner.org/vod/vod\\_window.html?pid=1589](http://www.learner.org/vod/vod_window.html?pid=1589)

**Recommended readings:**

Hobfoll, S. (1996). Coping in reaction to extreme stress: The roles of resource loss and resource availability. In M. Zerdner & N. S. Endler (Eds.), *Handbook of coping: Theory, research, applications* (pp. 322-349). New York, NY: John Wiley.

**Session 10:           Emerging & young adult development**

**Readings:**

Arnett, J.J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist, 55* (5), 469-480.

Bynner, J. (2005). Rethinking the youth phase of the life-course. The case for emerging adulthood? *Journal of Youth Studies, 8*(4), 367-384.

Irwin, C. E., & Rickert, V. I. (2005). Editorial: Coercive sexual experiences during adolescence and young adulthood: A public health problem. *Journal of Adolescent Health (36)*5, 359-361.

Kenny, M. E., Barton, C. E. (2003). Attachment theory and research: Contributions for understanding late adolescent and young adult development. In Demick, J., & Andreoletti, C (Eds.), *Handbook of adult development* (pp. 371-389). New York, NY: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.

Luecken, L. J., & Appelhans, B. M. (2006). Early parental loss and salivary cortisone in young adulthood: The moderating role of family development. *Development and Psychopathology, 18*, 295-308.

## Session 11: Families and parenting

**Guest: Michael Buford**

### Readings:

Cowan, C. P., & Cowan, P. A. (2001). Parenthood: Becoming a parent. In A. S. Skolnick & J. H. Skolnick (Eds.), *Families in transition* (11<sup>th</sup> ed., pp. 235 – 246). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Edwards, M.L.K. (2004). We're decent people: Constructing and managing family identity in rural working-class communities. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 66(2), 515-529.

Flanagan, P. (1998). Teen mothers: Countering the myths of dysfunction and developmental disruption. In Coll, C. G., Surrey, J. L., & Weingarten, K. *Mothering against the odds: Diverse voices of contemporary mothers* (pp. 238 – 254). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Rural and Appalachian Youth and Families Consortium (1996). Parenting practices and interventions among marginalized families in Appalachia: Building on family strengths. *Family Relations*, 45, 387-396.

Slater, S. (1999). Chapter 1. Lesbian families. In *The lesbian family life cycle* (pp. 3 – 14). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

### Recommended:

Cowan, P., & Cowan, C. P. (1998). New families: Modern couples as new pioneers. In M. A. Mason, A. Skolnick, & S. D. Sugarman (Eds.), *All our families: New policies for a new century: A report of the Berkeley Family Forum* (pp. 169-192). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Palkovitz, R., Copes, M. A., & Woolfolk, T. N. (2001). "It's like...you discover a new sense of being": Involved fathering as an evoker of adult development. *Men & Masculinities*, 4(1), 49-69.

## Session 12: Middle adult development

### Readings:

Seltzer, M.M., & Ryff, C.D. (1996). The parental experience in midlife: Past, present, and future. In C.D. Ryff & M.M. Seltzer (Eds.), *The parental experience in midlife* (pp. 641-661). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Hequembourg, A., & Brallier, S. (2005). Gendered stories of parental caregiving among siblings. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 19(1), 53-71.

Stewart, A. J., & Torges, C. M. (2006). Social, historical, and developmental influences on the psychology of the baby boom at midlife. In S. K. Whitbourne, & S. L. Willis

Eds.), *The baby boomers grow up: Contemporary perspectives in midlife* (pp. 23 – 43). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Staudinger, U. M., & Bluck, S. (2001). A view on midlife development from life-span theory. In M. E. Lachman (Ed.), *Handbook of midlife development* (pp. 3 – 39). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

**Recommended:**

Ogle, J. P., & Damhorst, M. L. (2005). Critical reflections on the body and related sociocultural discourses at the midlife transition: An interpretive study of women's experiences. *Adult Development*, 12(1), 1-18.

**Session 13: Late adult development**

**Readings:**

Newman, K S. (2003). Chapter 1. Introduction. In *A different shade of gray: Midlife and beyond in the inner city* (pp. 1 – 6). New York: New Press.

Newman, K. S. (2003). Chapter 1. In the shadow of white flight. In *A different shade of gray: Midlife and beyond in the inner city* (pp. 7 – 28). New York: New Press.

Covan, E. K. (2005). Meaning of aging in women's lives. *Journal of Women & Aging*, 17(3), 3-22.

Greene, R. R. & Cohen, H. L. (2005). Social work with older adults and their families: Changing practice paradigms. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*, 86, 367-373.

Motenko, A., & Greenberg, S. (1995). Reframing dependence in old age: A positive transition for families. *Social Work*, 40 (3), 382-390.

Reichstadt, J., Depp, C. A., Palinkas, L. A., Folsom, D. P., & Jeste, D. V. (2007). Building blocks of successful aging: A focus group study of older adults' perceived contributors to successful aging. *American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 15, 194-201.

Hayslip, Jr., B. & Kaminski, P. L. (2005). Grandparents raising their grandchildren: A review of literature and suggestions for practice. *The Gerontologist*, 45, 262-269.

**Required Videos:**

Alzheimer's disease. Annaberg Media Learner.org  
[http://www.learner.org/vod/vod\\_window.html?pid=1587](http://www.learner.org/vod/vod_window.html?pid=1587)

What is death? Annaberg Media Learner.org  
[http://www.learner.org/vod/vod\\_window.html?pid=1271](http://www.learner.org/vod/vod_window.html?pid=1271)

## Session 14: Summary and Evaluation

### Readings:

Rosenblat, P. C. (2001). A social constructionist perspective on cultural differences in grief. In M. S. Stoebe, R.O. Hansson, W. Stoebe, & H. Schut (Eds.), *Handbook of bereavement research: Consequences, coping, and care* (pp. 285 – 300). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Shaver, P. R., & Tancredy, C. M. (2001). Emotion, attachment, and bereavement: A conceptual commentary. In M.S. Stroebe, R. O. Hansson, W. Stroebe, & H. Schut (Eds.), *Handbook of bereavement research: Consequences, copying, and caring* (pp. 63 – 88). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.