What This Course Is About

This course is designed to explore the physical, mental, psychosocial, and moral growth of children from infancy through early adolescence. Students will investigate major theories of development, with emphasis on the work of Jean Piaget, Erik Erikson, Lawrence Kohlberg, and Lev Vygotsky. Children themselves are the primary texts for the course, and interacting with the "primary texts" will be an essential component of the semester’s work. A "research" project will guide students in their reflection on the issue of "nature v. nurture".

Students will be collectively and individually responsible for a research project. Individual and collaborative preparation of topical writings, reports, and quizzes will also be required throughout the course (see schedule below).


Specifics: Students will be expected to
1. Come to class regularly and on time.
2. Participate generously in class and online because they are serious in their commitment to "know" children.
3. Read and reflect seriously on assignments.
4. Complete course elements with the intention of constructing their own understanding of key issues regarding child growth and development.
5. Work "Vygotsky style".

Students are strongly urged to attend A.I.R. (Authors, Readers, and Illustrators). Author Matthew Gollub will discuss his books on Oct. 7, and author Mary Langford will discuss her books on Oct. 9. Both events are from 9:30-11:00 a.m. in the Gorman Faculty Lounge

Evaluation:
The course grade will be based on the following:
1. 10% = ASK (Assessing Student Knowledge)*
   - online assessments
   - in-class assessments
2. 6% = Anthology of Children's Literature
3. 10% = (Midterm) exam
4. 54% = Research Portfolio
5. 20% = Final exam
Grades:

Grades will be assigned according to the following maximum point scheme with 90%, 80%, 70% being the cutoffs for A, B, C, respectively. The final course grade will be determined using the following formula.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-81</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>72-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-71</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>62-67</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>60-61</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Assessing Student Knowledge [ASK]:

The list below is a representative sample of in-class assignments/tasks that together allow me to ASK. In actuality, ASK tends to reflect the "instructional conversation" within the classroom during any given semester. "ASK data cannot be "made up."

- "Do Parents Really Matter"
- Observation Journal Entries #1 and #2
- Locke v. Rousseau
- Piaget Quiz
- Piaget Chart
- UD Data/Anecdotal Record
- HFN Data/Anecdotal Record
- Vygotsky Concept Map
- Piaget v. Vygotsky
- Heinz Dilemma
- Kohlberg Chart
- "October Sky" Data/Anecdotal Record
- Erikson Chart
- Responses to Student Presentations

**Anthology of Children's Literature**
A collection of "good" children's literature, including at least 10 books/films/journals.

**Midterm Exam**
One-hour (Midterm) exam

**Research Portfolio**
Proposal
Background Reading/Review of Literature/Annotated Bibliography
Observation Journal (2+6 entries)
Data Collection Instrument(s)
Data and Analysis (Interpretation) of Data
Connecting Theory to Practice (with citations)
Class Presentation

**Final Exam**
Two- Hour Final exam

Total = 100
The major theme of Vygotsky’s theoretical framework is that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition. Vygotsky (1978) states: "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals." (p. 57).

In this course, students are expected to engage in social interaction within the classroom as a fundamental tool in the development of understanding.

Research in education reveals the promise of intertwined active and collaborative learning approaches. “Collaborative learning … emphasizes the virtues of active involvement. It requires students to take the initiative in the classroom, to become active creators rather than passive recipients of knowledge, and to rely on each other as much or more than on the teacher’s authority.” (Hansen & Stephens, 2000).

In this course, students are expected to show evidence that they learn from each other as well as from the teacher.

Education studies show that “the difficult abilities of decision-making and problem-solving are best taught through learning groups.” (Michaelson, Fink & Knight, 1997). “Drawing analogies from everyday learning, researchers argue that knowledge is contextualized; that is, learners construct knowledge by solving complex problems in situations in which they use cognitive tools, multiple sources of information, and other individuals as resources. (Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989; Resnick, 1987). Moreover, because learning occurs in a social context, learners interact with and internalize models of knowing and thinking represented and practiced in a community (Toulmin, 1972).”

In this course, students are expected to show evidence that they have “constructed” knowledge and solved problems by proposing, carrying out, and reporting research that examines a significant question in child growth and development.

Assessment, as explained by Salvia and Yseldyke (1998), is "a process of collecting data for the purpose of making decisions about individuals and groups, and this decision-making role is why it touches people's lives."

Students are expected to take seriously the value of the “social context” of the classroom. Thus, they will be present to contribute to and benefit from the interaction in the classroom and, when appropriate, submit data, which will provide evidence of progress.

What will I collect, and when will I collect it? I cannot answer these questions as precisely as you might prefer. I can only say that just as I feel a responsibility to come to class prepared to engage in “learning”, so too should you feel that same responsibility. The ASK data that I collect will be more important because you were in class to participate fully in its construction than because you got something “right” or “wrong”. The function of the ASK data is to collect evidence of your thinking, evidence of the “formation” of concepts in Child Growth and Development during the semester.

ASK data is authored by you, the student, in the classroom….with the assistance of your peers in most cases….for the purpose of examining concepts as they emerge from “instructional conversation”* (Tharp and Gallimore, 1988).

ASK emerges naturally from the flow of the course. Each time ASK data is offered, it will usually have 10 points of value. It cannot be made up.

* According to Tharp and Gallimore (1988), the "instructional conversation is the medium, the occasion, the instrument for rousing the mind to life….The concept itself contains a paradox: 'instruction' and 'conversation' appear contrary, the one implying authority and planning, the other equality and responsiveness. The task of
teaching is to resolve this paradox. To most truly teach, one must converse; to truly converse is to teach” (p. 109 Rousing Minds to Life).


The Education Department complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written accommodation request to me, or the ADA Coordinator, before the 4th class day.

N.B. Because the use of technology and computer networks has become commonplace for competitive professional work in education/psychology, this course will utilize the World Wide Web ("WWW" or "the Web") for research, guidance and presentation of selected materials. Students should regard Web exploration as part of the research that supports the course. In addition to reading from the Web, more traditional reading will also be used to frame course work and discussion. No prior knowledge of the WWW is presumed, but experienced students should support their less experienced peers in learning the Internet basics.