

Affect and Lifespan Developmental Psychology (PY 652)
Syllabus subject to change
Spring 2025 | 3 Credit Hours
Class Time: Thursday, 2-4:30; **Location:** Gordon Palmer Rm. #204

Prerequisites: No prerequisites other than graduate student status.

Professor: Dr. Rebecca S. Allen
Office: 364C Gordon Palmer
Phone: 310-2244
Departmental Phone: 348-5083
Email: rsallen@ua.edu
Office Hours: Thursdays 12:30-2:00pm

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Timothy K. Ly
Email: tkly@crimson.ua.edu

Texts:

Required:

Newman, Barbara M. & Newman, Philip R. (2023). *Theories of Human Development (3rd Edition)*. New York, NY: Routledge/Taylor and Francis.

Course Description:

This course will provide an overview of theories and empirical research on a range of different topics in life-span developmental psychology, including affective development. In the first part of the course, we will discuss various theories of developmental psychology, engaging in debate about **What is development across the lifespan?** *Theories of Human Development (3rd Edition)* along with additional readings made available via UA Box will be the text for this first section of the course.

In the second part of the course, we will explore empirical findings related to affective, cognitive, and social bases of behavior across the lifespan. Development will be considered within the context of culture, power, and time period (historical time and place). An intersectional lens will be applied to the fullest extent of this professor's abilities in the selection of readings, assignments, lectures, and class activities/discussions. A selection of journal articles will be required readings for this section of the course and will be available via UA Box. For those of you who would like a refresher of lifespan development or who would like a general text for reference, you may also want to purchase or rent Laura Berk's *Exploring Lifespan Development (4th Edition)*.

Class Processes:

- **Class Materials:** Students may take notes on paper or electronic devices. Please turn off your cell phones when you come into the classroom and use your laptops etc. only for purposes immediately relevant to the class discussion (i.e., making notes, looking up information to assist in class discussion).
- **Email Etiquette:** To ensure that I receive AND RESPOND to your email in a timely fashion (i.e., within 24-48 hours), please include the course title (PY 652) in the subject line of your email.
- **Course Climate:** Students are expected to engage in discussion with classmates in an authentic, respectful manner about topics about which we may have differing points of

view (*What is development across the lifespan?*). See Course Climate for more details.

- **Use the buddy System:** Exchange numbers with at least one other person who will be your point-person to follow-up with if you miss class or have extra questions outside the scope of what the professor may be able to answer.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- 1) Describe “development” as typical changes with aging from birth to death and differentiate typical change from atypical change. Typical changes include basic developmental patterns; typical developmental milestones; and neurological, affective, and social bases of behavior throughout infancy, childhood, adolescence, emerging/early adulthood, middle adulthood, older adulthood, and near the end of life.
- 2) Apply major developmental theories and be able to identify in what ways these theories inform your own lives/work. Students will be able to apply these theories to everyday examples of human behavior and human interaction.
- 3) Evaluate the impact of power, culture, history, environment, and other social determinants of health shaping human development throughout the lifespan.
- 4) Evaluate and apply various research strategies or methodologies to investigate human development across the lifespan from birth to death.
- 5) Critically evaluate the results and conclusions drawn from developmental research and apply analysis of research to everyday situations.
- 6) Think and write critically about developmental theory and empirical research in lifespan development to enhance conceptualization and integration of developmental theory into basic and applied research and/or clinical practice.

Assignments/Learning Outcome Assessment:

This year we will explore (2nd time) the concept of **Ungrading** in a hybrid form of assessment of learning outcomes for many aspects of this course. Ungrading involves de-emphasizing grades assigned by the instructor and re-emphasizing individual, intrinsically motivated learning. For more on Ungrading, see writings by Jesse Stommel (<https://www.jessestommel.com/ungrading-an-introduction/>).

Course Requirements/Assessment Methods (5):

1. *Class Participation (10% ungrading):* Full participation involves active engagement in class discussions and activities. At the end of the semester, each student will reflect on their participation and assign a point grade (0 to 10) to themselves and their identified partner classmate. The average of these 2 scores will be taken as the class participation grade. That said, I do recognize that individuals differ in their preferences regarding speaking in both small and large groups. Talk with me individually if you are concerned about this assessment method, and we as a group may decide that a participation judgment by me may be averaged into this grade.

During the theory portion of the class, questions will be posed to small groups (the folks by whom you sit AND consisting of at least 1 “child-focused” and 1 “adult-focused” learner) of roughly equal size, and rotating group leaders will be assigned to bring the small group discussion to the attention of the full class.

2. Weekly Discussion Questions (10% ungrading; 1% each week for a total of 10%, with 13 possible class periods for potential submission): **By Wednesday at 5 pm before each class**, students, individually or in groups of two, are invited to **post ONE integrative reading reflections/discussion questions to the UA Box folder for that class period**. These can be comments, questions, or critiques of the readings that should stimulate discussion with the class. Select reflections will be discussed during class. Some things to think about as you reflect on these readings:

- What surprised you?
- What did you not understand?
- Were the authors ethical in how they conducted this research?
- Was the developmental methodology valid? Were cohort issues considered?
- Did you agree with the claims/conclusions the authors made?

This will help us organize discussion of the topic and has worked well in prior years' classes. You may choose to work with one partner on this, so up to 2 of you and 2 only may submit the same discussion questions. **It will be easiest if you only post once with BOTH of your names on the question(s)**. There are 13 possible weeks for questions, and you only need to submit 10.

At the end of the semester, each student will assign point grade (0 to 10) to themselves or their 2-person team for the quality of their discussion questions across the semester.

3. Midterm Exam (20% RSA/GTA graded): This assignment is NOT one of the aspects of ungrading for this course. I really will be grading this. 😊 The midterm is scheduled at the end of the first section of the course covering theories of developmental psychology. The midterm will be a take home exam composed of short answer questions (no fewer than 4 and no more than 8 of these) and one long answer question. This will be an "open book/open note" exam. The midterm exam is scheduled for **Thursday, February 20th, 2025. You should spend no more than four hours on this exam. It is due by midnight in my email as per the email etiquette class process described above.**

4. 3 Integrative Papers (30% ungrading at 10% each): You will be asked to write short (2-4 pages, double spaced) papers that analyze and give your impressions of the week's readings and class discussion. The purpose of these papers is to provide an opportunity for students to think critically about theoretical and recent empirical developmental research. The paper should incorporate: a) a critique of something that you have read along with b) suggestions for a novel approach (an alteration to a theory, an idea for a new study, or an applied practice idea based on theory and empirical research). Thus, these papers will address some problem or research gap discussed in the readings. The paper should demonstrate that you have done the readings AND thought about them. Only one paper should be submitted for any given week of class. More specific details are provided in the document on the Integrative Papers in Box, along with a potential Grading Rubric. You must turn in at least one paper focused on childhood development and one paper focused on adult development.

Papers will be read by another classmate, who will provide feedback on the content. Both the student and classmate will assign a grade for effort and thoroughness in

accordance with the suggested grading rubric (supportive only). The average of these point totals will be taken.

5. *Learning Letter (30% ungrading)*: In the Learning Letter, students will reflect on the course learning objectives and articulate what they have learned in relation to each objective. Students will assign a grade, providing justification for why this grade is deserved, to themselves for how their thinking about affective and lifespan development **developed** over the span of the course. The central question to be answered, clearly, is: ***What is development across the lifespan?*** A lifespan perspective must be taken – simply talking either about childhood development or adult development will not be sufficient for a grade other than zero.

GRADING POLICY:

Your final grade will be based on the following breakdown:

1. Class Participation: 10%
2. Discussion Questions: 10%
3. Midterm: 20%
4. 3 Integrative Papers: 30% (10% each)
5. Learning Letter: 30%

A = 90%-100% **B** = 80%-89% **C** = 70%-79% **D** = 60%-69%
 F = 59% and below

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS S_2025

SECTION I: DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY		
Date	Anticipated Topics	Exams/ Assignments Due On This Day
1) Jan. 9	Introduction and Evolutionary Theory	CH. 1 and 2 (pp.1-72; Emphasize 27-66)
2) Jan. 16	Cognitive Developmental and Cognitive Social-Historical Theories	CH. 4 (pp. 123-180) and CH 10 (pp. 413-456)
3) Jan. 23	- Life-course Theory, Socioemotional Selectivity Theory, and the SAVI Model. - Carstensen, L. L. (2021). Socioemotional selectivity theory: The role of perceived endings in human motivation. <i>The Gerontologist</i>, 61(8), 1188-1196. - Charles, S.T. (2010). Strength and vulnerability integration: A model of emotional well-being across adulthood. <i>Psychological Bulletin</i>, 136(3), 1068– 1091.	CH. 7 (pp. 281-320) and see left
4) Jan. 30	Social Role and Psychosocial Theories	CH. 6 (pp. 235-279) and CH 9 (pp. 369-410)
5) Feb. 6	Bioecological Theory	CH. 11 (pp. 459-490) and see Box
6) Feb. 13	Learning and Social Justice Theories	CH. 5 (pp. 187-233) and CH. 8 (pp. 323-363)
7) Feb. 20	MIDTERM	MIDTERM
SECTION II: THE LIFESPAN – SPECIAL TOPICS		
8) Feb. 27	Infancy	
9) March 6	Middle Childhood	
UA SPRING BREAK		
10) Mar. 20	Adolescence	Guest Lecture: Dr. Sharla Biefeld
11) Mar. 27	Emerging and Young Adulthood (18 to 39 or 45)	
12) April 3	Middle Adulthood (40s to age 64)	
13) April 10	Older Adulthood (age 65 and older)	
14) April 17	Caregiving (middle and later adulthood)	
15) April 24	Decisions in Death and Dying (near EOL & palliative)	
April 28 to May 2	FINALS WEEK -- LEARNING LETTER DUE THURSDAY MAY 1 BY MIDNIGHT	LEARNING LETTER DUE THURSDAY MAY 1 BY MIDNIGHT

Section II: The Lifespan – Special Topics
THESE READINGS ARE FINAL
Schedule of Classes and Readings

Date
February
WEEK 8
27

Topics and Readings

Infant-Caregiver Interactions: Cognitive and Emotional Development

- Lecture will cover Dynamic Systems Theory – for reference see CH. 12 from Newman and Newman
- Adolph, K. E., & Hoch, J. E. (2019). Motor development: Embodied, embedded, enculturated, and enabling. *Annual review of psychology*, 70, 141-164.
- Rutter, M., Beckett, C., Castle, J., Colvert, E., Kreppner, J., Mehta, M., Stevens, S., & Sonuga-Barke, E. (2007). Effects of profound early institutional deprivation: An overview of findings from a UK longitudinal study of Romanian adoptees. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 4(3), 332-350. doi: 10.1080/17405620701401846.

March
WEEK 9
6

Affective Bases of Behavior: Middle Childhood Cognitive and Emotional Development (suppl reading if desired)

- Antony, E. M. A., Beckmann, N., & Higgins, S. (2024). Reconceptualising emotion dysregulation in the context of middle childhood: A scoping review of reviews. *JCPP Advances*, e12296, 1-11.
- Rollè, L., Gullotta, G., Trombetta, T., Curti, L., Gerino, E., Brustia, P., & Caldarera, A. M. (2019). Father involvement and cognitive development in early and middle childhood: A systematic review. *Frontiers in psychology*, 10, 2405-2423.

SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS MARCH 13

WEEK 10
20

Affective Bases of Behavior: Adolescence and Family and Peer Relationships; Bullying (guest lecture – Dr. Sharla Biefeld)

- Branje, S. (2022). Adolescent identity development in context. *Current opinion in psychology*, 45, 101286, 1-6.
- Benner, A. D., Wang, Y., Shen, Y., Boyle, A. E., Polk, R., & Cheng, Y. P. (2018). Racial/ethnic discrimination and well-being during adolescence: A meta-analytic review. *American psychologist*, 73(7), 855.
- Umaña-Taylor, Adriana J., and Deborah Rivas-Drake. 2021. Ethnic-Racial Identity and Adolescents' Positive Development in the Context of Ethnic-Racial Marginalization : Unpacking Risk and Resilience. *Human Development* 65 (5/6): 293–310.
- Orben, A., Tomova, L., & Blakemore, S. J. (2020). The effects of social deprivation on adolescent development and mental health. *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*, 4(8), 634-640.

WEEK 11
27

Affective Bases of Behavior: Emerging Adulthood; Young Adulthood and Marriage & the Family

- Arnett, J. J., Žukauskienė, R., & Sugimura, K. (2014). The new life stage of emerging adulthood at ages 18–29 years: Implications for mental health. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 1(7), 569-576.
- Pezalla, A. E., & Davidson, A. J. (2024). "Trying to remain calm... but I do reach my limit sometimes": An exploration of the meaning of gentle parenting. *PLoS one*, 19(7), e0307492, 1-19.
- Sassler, S., & Lichter, D. T. (2020). Cohabitation and marriage: Complexity and diversity in union-formation patterns. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 82(1), 35-61.

April
WEEK 12
3

Affective Bases of Behavior: Midlife and Aging Cognition and Relationships

- In addition to readings, brief snippets of video for discussion: *Still Doing It: The Intimate Lives of Women Over 65 – Challenging Ageist Notions*.
- Infurna, F. J., Gerstorf, D., & Lachman, M. E. (2020). Midlife in the 2020s: Opportunities and challenges. *American Psychologist*, 75(4), 470-485.
- Turner, A. I., Smyth, N., Hall, S. J., Torres, S. J., Hussein, M., Jayasinghe, S. U., ... & Clow, A. J. (2020). Psychological stress reactivity and future health and disease outcomes: A systematic review of prospective evidence. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, 114, 104599, 1-20.
- von Humboldt, S., Ribeiro-Gonçalves, J. A., Low, G., & Leal, I. (2024). What sexual well-being really means for older adults: a systematic review of the literature. *Educational Gerontology*, 1-36.

WEEK 13
10

Older Adulthood, Chronic Illness

- Carpenter, B. D., Gatz, M., & Smyer, M. A. (2022). Mental health and aging in the 2020s. *American Psychologist*, 77(4), 538-.
- Hülür, G., & Macdonald, B. (2020). Rethinking social relationships in old age: Digitalization and the social lives of older adults. *American Psychologist*, 75(4), 554-566.
- Spreng, R. N., & Turner, G. R. (2019). The shifting architecture of cognition and brain function in older adulthood. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 14(4), 523-542.

WEEK 14
17

Caregiving

- In addition to readings, brief snippets of video for discussion: *On Our Own Terms: A Death of One's Own*.
- Bannon, S. M., Grunberg, V. A., Manghani, H. R., Lester, E. G., Ritchie, C., & Vranceanu, A. M. (2022). Together from the start: A transdiagnostic framework for early dyadic interventions for neurodegenerative diseases. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, 70(6), 1850-1862.

- D'Amen, B., Socci, M., & Santini, S. (2021). Intergenerational caring: A systematic literature review on young and young adult caregivers of older people. *BMC geriatrics*, 21(1), 105.
- Schulz, R., Beach, S. R., Czaja, S. J., Martire, L. M., & Monin, J. K. (2020). Family caregiving for older adults. *Annual review of psychology*, 71(1), 635-659.

WEEK 15

25 **Decisions about Death and Dying**

- In addition to readings, brief snippets of video for discussion: *HBO Series The Alzheimer's Tapes* (**TRIGGER WARNING: a man dies on film**)
- Blake, R. R., & Blake, C. (2023). Why people think they might hasten their death when faced with irremediable health conditions compared to why they actually do so. *OMEGA-Journal of Death and Dying*, 87(4), 1109-1126.
- Henry, M., Alias, A., Bisson-Gervais, V., Liu, J. Y., Dargis, L., Gauthier, L., ... & Mishara, B. (2023). Medical assistance in dying in Canada: A Scoping review on the concept of suffering. *Psycho-Oncology*, 32(9), 1339-1347.
- Yan, H., Bytautas, J., Isenberg, S. R., Kaplan, A., Hashemi, N., Kornberg, M., & Hendrickson, T. (2022). Grief and bereavement of family and friends around medical assistance in dying: Scoping review. *BMJ supportive & palliative care*, 13(4), 414-428.
- SUPPLEMENTAL: Updating APA Resolution on Palliative and End-of-Life Care (Committee on Aging current document)

Policy on Missed Exams and Coursework:

Because you are not required to submit discussion questions for every class meeting, I will not accept late discussion questions. Late midterm exams will be docked 10% for every day late.

Attendance Policy:

Attendance is required because you will be expected to incorporate class discussion and lecture materials into your 1) midterm exam, 2) three "un-graded" integrative papers, and 3) "un-graded" learning outcomes letter. Because ten percent of your grade will be based on class participation, multiple absences will affect your class participation grade.

Notification of Changes:

The instructor will make every effort to follow the guidelines of this syllabus as listed; however, the instructor reserves the right to amend this document as the need arises. In such instances, the instructor will notify students in class and/or via email and will endeavor to provide reasonable time for students to adjust to any changes.

Controversial Topics:

All University faculty, instructors and teaching staff have the academic freedom to explore, discuss, and provide instruction on a wide range of topics in an academic setting. This class may present difficult, objectionable, or controversial topics for consideration, but will do so

through an objective, scholarly lens designed to encourage critical thinking. Though students may be asked to share their personal views in the academic setting, no student will ever be required to assent or agree with any concept considered “divisive” under Alabama law, nor penalized for refusing to support or endorse such a concept. All students are strongly encouraged to think independently and analytically about all material presented in class and may express their views in a time, place, and manner, consistent with class organization and structure, and in accordance with the University’s commitment to free and open thought, inquiry, and expressions.

Campus Resources:

- Student Well-Being and Care Office (part of Student Affairs/Dean of Students): <http://bamacares.ua.edu/> or 205-348-2461; This office helps students in acute need. They have a variety of services from meals and shelter to financial assistance.
 - The Writing Center <https://writingcenter.ua.edu/> or 205-348-5049; Offers help with writing.
 - The Office of Disability Services: <http://ods.ua.edu/> or 205-348-4285; If a learning disability is making academics challenging, students can talk with someone at this office.
 - The Counseling Center: <https://counseling.sa.ua.edu/> or 205-348-3863; Helps students achieve academic success and personal growth through quality brief counseling, psychological services, and outreach.
 - Student Health: <https://shc.ua.edu/> or 205- 348-6262 or walk-in.
 - Substance misuse and abuse services: <https://shc.ua.edu/substance-abuse-services/>
 - The Women and Gender Resource Center: <https://wgrc.sa.ua.edu/>; Free counseling and advocacy services to members of The University of Alabama community who are victims/survivors of interpersonal violence. WGRC also offers programming designed to promote social justice and address gender issues.
 - The Veteran and Military Affairs Office: <https://vets.sa.ua.edu/> or 205-348-0983; Support for students who are active military, veterans, dependents, or survivors.
 - Safe Zone: <http://safezone.ua.edu/> or 205-348-7297; Support for LGBTQA+ individuals.
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Statement on Academic Misconduct:

Students are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the official Academic Misconduct Policy (<https://catalog.ua.edu/undergraduate/about/academic-regulations/student-expectations/academic-misconduct-policy/>) provided in the Online Catalog.

Statement On Disability Accommodations:

Contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) (<https://catalog.ua.edu/undergraduate/about/supportprograms/disability-services/>) as detailed in the Online Catalog.

Severe Weather Protocol:

Please see the latest Severe Weather Guidelines (<https://ready.ua.edu/severe-weather-guidelines/>) in the Online Catalog.

Pregnant Student Accommodations:

Title IX protects against discrimination related to pregnancy or parental status. If you are pregnant and will need accommodations for this class, please review the University's FAQs on the UAct website (<https://www.ua.edu/campuslife/uact/information/pregnancy>).

Religious Observances:

Under the Guidelines for Religious Holiday Observances, students should notify the instructor in writing or via email during the first two weeks of the semester of their intention to be absent from class for religious observance. The instructor will work to provide reasonable opportunity to complete academic responsibilities as long as that does not interfere with the academic integrity of the course. See full guidelines at Religious Holiday Observances Guidelines (<https://provost.ua.edu/oaa-guidelines-for-religious-holidays-observance>).

UAct Statement:

The University of Alabama is committed to an ethical, inclusive community defined by respect and civility. The UAct website (www.ua.edu/uact) (<https://www.ua.edu/uact>) provides extensive information on how to report or obtain assistance with a variety of issues, including issues related to dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, sexual violence or other Title IX violations, illegal discrimination, harassment, hate or bias incidents, child abuse or neglect, hazing, threat assessment, retaliation, and ethical violations or fraud.
