

Lab in Developmental Psychology
Spring 2011, T/TH 9:30-11:20, 159 Meyer

Instructor: Dr. Marjorie Rhodes
Office: 301 Meyer
Email: marjorie.rhodes@nyu.edu
Office hours: Fri. 10-11

TA: Rebecca Bainbridge
Office: 856 Meyer Hall
Email: rab434@nyu.edu
Office hours: Thurs. 2:30-3:30

Writing consultant: Zach Udko; Email: zudko@earthlink.net

Course Description

This course introduces students to a range of research methods used in psychological research, with an emphasis on methods used with children and methods used to examine change over time. By the end of this course, students should be familiar with different methods used to study human development, as well as with the strengths and limitations of various approaches. They should also be able to critically evaluate research presented in scientific and popular articles, and most importantly, should be able to competently design research studies to address specific research questions. Course material will be presented through lectures, readings, and class discussions. Throughout the course, participants will complete three research projects (in groups), which will enable them to gain direct experience with research design, implementation, data analysis, and the oral and written presentation of research findings.

Class Format

In class, material will be introduced via lecture, discussion, and group activities. Significant portions of class will also be spent on activities directed towards completion of research projects. It is critical to attend every class period. Students will be expected to have read assigned readings prior to class, and to be prepared to discuss them, or to participate in activities building on these readings. Lecture notes will be posted online, and students may print them out ahead of time and bring them to class. However, much additional information will be presented during class, and reading the lecture notes (as posted) is **not** an adequate substitute for attending class.

Reading Material

The reading material for this course consists of an **optional** course textbook, *Research Methods in Developmental Psychology 3rd Edition*, by Scott Miller, as well as **required** scholarly articles that are available for download from the class website.

Grading Scale

A = 93-100	A- = 90-92	B+ = 87-89	B = 83-86	B- = 80-82	C+ = 77-79
C = 73-76	C- = 70-72	D+ = 67-69	D = 63-66	D- = 60-62	F < 60

Assignments

Assignment	Percentage of grade	Due date
Article Critique	5%	2/15/11
Exam 1	20%	3/1/11
Paper 1	15%	3/8/11
Paper 2	20%	4/14/11
Exam 2	20%	5/4/11
Paper 3	20%	5/11/11

Exams

Exam 1 will cover all of the course material presented until 2/22/11; Exam 2 will cover all course material presented on 3/3/11 and after. These exams include material presented in class (including in lecture, discussion, and activities), as well as in the scholarly articles. No material presented in the book but not covered in class or in a scholarly article will be included. The exam will consist of short-answer questions.

Papers

One key purpose of this course is to improve your scientific writing. For each paper, detailed directions and a rubric will be distributed in class. For each paper, there will be opportunities for peer editing and for receiving feedback on a draft from the writing consultant. Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities.

Grading Accuracy

It is each student's responsibility to monitor their points online and report any discrepancies to the TA **within one week** of the contested assignment. These disputes must be resolved throughout the term (within one week). DO NOT wait until the end of the term to check your grade.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

No form of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be tolerated. Forms of plagiarism and academic dishonesty include (but are not limited to): copying or paraphrasing from someone else's work (e.g., another student, an online source), presenting another person's ideas as your own (e.g., those found in an article, or from another student), or turning in someone else's work as your own. Here are some particular things to consider: 1) Although the research projects will be conducted in groups, **each paper must be written individually**. This means that the papers of any individual group members should not be particularly similar to each other in terms of wording, or in terms of some of the more creative aspects of the assignments (e.g., identifying limitations and/or future directions). Even though you may work closely together, no two people talk or write in the same way, so if papers are completed individually, each paper will be unique. 2) Care should be taken not to inadvertently plagiarize from scholarly articles. If a student copies directly from an article, the entire section should be in quotation marks (and properly formatted,

with page numbers, etc.). Such quoting is discouraged, as students should describe important components of articles in their own words. Also, ideas from articles must be attributed to the authors, not the student. For example, if you are pointing out a limitation of a study, which is also noted by the authors, then the authors must be cited as responsible for identifying this limitation. Again, students should keep in mind that creative thinking is encouraged, so if you are asked to identify limitations of a study (for example) it is best to think of limitations which are **not** already discussed by the study authors. 3) All cases of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be treated very seriously, and may result in a zero on the assignment, failure of the course, and/or referral to an appropriate dean's office or disciplinary committee.

Late Policies

Students should complete all assignments on time. Make-up exams will be arranged only in extenuating and well-documented circumstances (e.g., a doctor's note will be required if a student misses an exam at the last minute due to health reasons). Grades on the major writing assignments will be lowered by 5 points (half a letter grade) per day for each day that they are late.

Turning in Assignments

All assignments should be turned in during class on the day that they are due. They may not be turned in via email. To save paper, you may print double-sided.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

WEEK		Topic	Reading due (optional when textbook; required when article)	Assignment due
1	T, 1/25	Experimental design 1	Ch. 1 and 2	
	R, 1/27	Experimental design 2 and article critique	Article: "Preschoolers' responses to social comparisons involving relative failure"	
2	T, 2/1	Infancy methods 1	Ch. 11; "Nature and Nurture in Own-Race Face Processing"	
	R, 2/3	Infancy methods 2/decide groups	"Social evaluation by preverbal infants"	
3	T, 2/8	Discuss selected infancy article, and work on critique	Infancy article selected by your group	
	R, 2/10	Literature Reviews/Intro writing (presentation by writing consultant)		
4	T, 2/15	Infancy methods 3/project design; peer editing of Introductions		Article critique due in class
	R, 2/17	Informal presentation of project ideas		Informal (not graded) description of project idea/ Draft (not graded) of Paper 1
5	T, 2/22	Stats- Descriptive statistics and t-tests	Ch. 8 (refer to for all statistics throughout the course)	Drafts of Paper 1 to writing consultant (optional but encouraged)
	R, 2/24	Exam Review		
6	T, 3/1	Exam		
	R, 3/3	Preschool methods1	Ch. 12	
7	T, 3/8	Begin child project, library research		Paper 1 due in class
	R, 3/10	Design method/pilot		

		on adults		
8	T, 3/15-	Spring break		Pilot
	R, 3/17	Spring break		Pilot
9	T, 3/22	Preschool methods 2	“Inferring properties from categories vs. inferring categories from properties”	
	R, 3/24	Present videos of pilot/discuss		Videos of pilot and informal presentation
10	T, 3/29	Stats 2		
	R, 3/31	Peer editing Paper 2		Bring drafts Paper 2 to class
11	T, 4/5	Interventions	“Reducing the racial achievement gap: A social-psychological intervention”	Drafts of Paper 2 to writing consultant
	R, 4/7	Begin adult research project		
12	T, 4/12	Correlational/ Longitudinal/ group projects	“The role of chaos in poverty and children’s social emotional adjustment”	
	R, 4/14	Pilot on class		Paper 2 due Bring survey to class
13	T, 4/19	Data collection		
	R, 4/21	Stats		Bring data file to class
14	T, 4/26	Stats/writing discussion sections/ peer editing of methods (presentation by writing consultant)		
	R, 4/28	Group Presentations		Drafts to writing consultant
15	T, 5/3	Review		
	Th, 5/4	Exam 2		
	Th, 5/11			Paper 3 due