

Spring 2010  
**ST COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT**  
Wednesday 2:00-3:50

**SYLLABUS**

**Course Instructor:**

Dr. Marjorie Rhodes

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Office Location: 301 Meyer

Office Hours: Fridays 11:00-12:00

**Course description and objectives:**

This course will examine how children's thinking develops from infancy through childhood. We will discuss how children develop knowledge and reasoning skills across various domains (e.g., how children learn and think about objects, people, the natural world, and society) and we will examine the major theories and explanations of cognitive growth. This course will include consideration of both classic and contemporary research on cognitive development.

**Course Requirements:**

<b>Two in-class exams (30% each):</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>Weakly Discussion Questions (1% each):</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Two Article Presentation/Discussion leading (5% each):</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Two Reaction Papers (10% each):</b>	<b>20%</b>
	<b>100%</b>

**Exams:**

**The in-class exams** are not cumulative and will consist primarily of short answer questions. Questions on the exams will cover all material for the course, including the lectures, textbook, and the other required readings. Exams will take place in class at the regular class time and place.

**Discussion questions:**

Each week (after week 1), students should submit 2 discussion questions via the Blackboard site. Questions should be submitted by 10:00 the night before class. Students will receive 1 point for each week that they turn in questions (for a total of 10 points- there are 11 weeks of class, so students receive 1 “freebie”). Note that this is worth 10% of the grade, so each week that a student misses (after the “freebie”), will knock a percentage point off of the entire grade.

**Article Presentation/Discussion leading:**

Each week, students will be responsible for presenting an article to the class (describing the research question, methods, results, and implications) and leading a discussion about the article (drawing on the discussion questions posted by students). Specific requirements and grading policies will be

distributed in class. Each student will do this twice throughout the term (5% of the grade will be determined by each presentation).

### **Reaction Papers**

Students will do two 2-page reaction papers throughout the semester, on the topic of the week that they do their presentations/discussion leading. These are due the class period after the week in which the student presents. Specific requirements and a grading rubric will be distributed in class.

### **Required Readings:**

The required text for this course is Robert Siegler and Martha Alibali, *Children's Thinking* (4th Ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2005. In addition to the text, 2-3 scholarly articles or chapters will be required each week. These articles are also listed at the end of the syllabus. Be sure to allow yourself enough time to read these carefully. These readings are posted on Blackboard.

### **Grading:**

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

### **Policies:**

**Discussion Questions:** Must be submitted by 10:00 the night before class in order to count for the week.

**Missed exams:** If you miss an exam, you will receive a score of 0, unless there is a documented reason for the absence. Valid excuses (such as sickness, family emergencies) must be accompanied by appropriate documentation (e.g., a doctor's note). Late reaction papers will lose 10% per day.

### ***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. 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.

In addition to the textbook chapters listed below 2-3 scholarly articles will be assigned each week.

<i>Week</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Lecture</i>	<i>Readings (to be completed by the dates listed)</i>
1	1/26	Introduction	Ch. 1
2	2/2	Object Permanence and Physical Reasoning	Ch. 2; Baillargeon (1985) Group 1: Kim & Spelke (1992) Group 2: Hood et al. (2005)
3	2/9	Numerical Cognition	Ch. 8 pp. 283-297; Starkey et al. (1990) Group 1: Feigenson et al. (2002) Group 2: Frank (2008)
4	2/16	Object and Artifact Categories	Ch. 8 pp. 268-283 Group 1: Gelman & Bloom Group 2: Diesendruck & Markson
5	2/23	Biological thought	Ch. 8 pp. 297-302; Carey (1988) Group 1: Medin et al. (2010) Group 2: Waxman et al. 2007
6	3/2	Reasoning and problem solving	Ch. 10 ; DeLoache (1995) Group 1 : DeLoache et al. (2010) Group 2 : Troseth (2003)
7	3/9	Exam 1	
8	3/23	Early Social Cognition	Ch. 9 Group 1: Brandone & Wellman (2009) Group 2: Hamlin, Bloom, & Wynn (2010)
9	3/30	Theory of mind	Wellman (2002) Group 1: Buttelman et al. (2009) Group 2: Senju et al. (2010)
10	4/6	Social Categorization	Hirschfeld (1995) Group 1: Kinzler et al. (2009) Group 2: Shutts et al. (2010)
11	4/13	Moral Cognition	Smetana (2006) Group 1: Leslie et al. (2006) Group 2: TBD
12	4/20	Culture and development	Ch. 4 pp. 107-140 Group 1: Birnbaum et al. (2010) Group 2: Correa-Chavez & Rogoff (2009)
13	4/27	Language and thought	Ch. 6 Group 1: Cimpian & Markman (2009)
14	5/4	Exam 2	

## Readings

Baillargeon, R., Spelke, E., & Wasserman, S. (1985). Object permanence in five-month-old infants. *Cognition*, *20*, 191-208.

Kim, K., & Spelke, E. (1992). Infants' sensitivity to effects of gravity on visible object motion. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*, *18*, 385-393.

Hood, B., Cole-Davies, V., & Dias, M. (2003). Looking and searching measures of object knowledge in preschool children. *Developmental Psychology*, *39*, 61-70.

Starkey, P., Spelke, E.S., & Gelman, R. (1990). Numerical abstraction by human infants. *Cognition*, *36*, 97-126.

Feigenson, L., Carey, S., & Hauser, M. (2002). The representations underlying infants' choice of more: object files versus analog magnitudes. *Psychological Science*, *13*, 150-155.

Frank, M., Everett, D., Fedorenko, E., & Gibson, E. (2008). Number as a cognitive technology: Evidence from Piraha language and cognition. *Cognition*, *108*, 819-824.

Gelman, S., & Bloom, P. (2000). Young children are sensitive to how an object was created when deciding what to name it. *Cognition*, *76*, 91-103.

Diesendruck, G., Markson, L., & Bloom, P. (2003). Children's reliance on creator's intent in extending names for artifacts. *Psychological Science*, *14*, 164-168.

Carey, S. (1988). Reorganization of knowledge in the course of acquisition. In S. Strauss (Ed.), *Ontogeny, phylogeny, and historical development* (pp. 1-27). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Medin, D., Waxman, S., Woodring, J., & Washinawatok, K. (2010). Human centeredness is not a universal feature of young children's reasoning: Culture and experience matter when reasoning about biological entities. *Cognitive Development*, *25*, 197-207.

Waxman, S., Medin, D., & Ross, N. (2007). Folkbiological reasoning from a cross-cultural developmental perspective: Early essentialist notions are shaped by cultural beliefs. *Developmental Psychology*, *43*, 294-308.

DeLoache, J. (1995). Early understanding and use of symbols: The model model. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *4*, 109-113.

DeLoache et al. (2010). Do babies learn from baby media? *Psychological Science*, *21*, 1570-1574.

Troseth, G. (2003). Getting a clear picture: Young children's understanding of a televised image. *Developmental Science*, *6*, 247-253.

Brandone, A., & Wellman, H. (2009). You can't always get what you want: Infants understand failed goal-directed actions. *Psychological Science*, *20*, 85-91.

Hamlin, J., Wynn, K., & Bloom, P. (2010). Three-month-olds show a negativity bias in their social evaluations. *Developmental Science*, *13*, 923-929.

Wellman, H. (2002). Understanding the psychological world: Developing a theory of mind. *Blackwell handbook of childhood cognitive development*.

Buttelmann, D., Carpenter, M., & Tomasello, M. (2009). Eighteen-month-old infants show false belief understanding in an active helping paradigm. *Cognition*, *112*, 337-342.

Senju et al. (2010). Absence of spontaneous action anticipation by false belief attribution in children with autism spectrum disorder. *22*, 353-360.

Hirschfeld, L. (1995). Do children have a theory of race? *Cognition*, *54*, 209-252.

Kinzler, K., Shutts, K., DeJesus, J., & Spelke, E. (2009). Accent trumps race in guiding children's social preferences. *Social Cognition*, *77*, 623-634.

Shutts, K., Banaji, M.R., & Spelke, E.S. (2010). Social categories guide young children's preferences for novel objects. *Developmental Science*, *13*, 599-610.

Smetana (2006). Social-cognitive domain theory: Consistencies and variations in children's moral and social judgments. *Handbook of Moral Development*.

Leslie, A., Knobe, J., & Cohen, A. (2006). Acting intentionally and the side-effect effect: Theory of mind and moral judgment. *Psychological Science*, *17*, 421-427.

Birnbaum, D. et al. (2010). The development of social essentialism: The case of Israeli children's inferences about Jews and Arabs. *Child Development*, *81*, 757-777.

Correa-Chavez, M. & Rogoff, B. (2009). Children's attention to interactions directed to others: Guatemalan Mayan and European American Patterns. *Developmental Psychology*, *45*, 630-641.

Cimpian, A., & Markman, E. (2009). Information learned from generic language becomes central to children's biological concepts. Evidence from their open-ended explanations. *Cognition*, *113*, 14-25.