Rutgers University, Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology
Fall 2018
Tuesdays, 9:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.
Location: Center of Mathematics, Science, and Computer Education (CMSCE) 221A
118 Frelinghuysen Road.
Piscataway, NJ 08854

David Shernoff, Ph.D.
Office: CMSCE
Email: david.shernoff@rutgers.edu
Sakai: https://sakai.rutgers.edu
Phone: (630) 418-0162
Office Hours: Mondays 10-11 a.m. and by appointment

Course Objectives
This course is designed to provide students with an integrated overview of the social and developmental foundations of human behavior. It is difficult to understand any human behavior -- either typical or atypical -- without employing a developmental perspective. Likewise, human behavior is largely influenced by social factors and processes. These influences on human behavior wane and wax over a period of time, with time defined variously (i.e., historically, chronologically, biologically, and/or other experience-related time scales). Furthermore, these influences are not uniform across subgroups and across different contexts. To pull together these various issues, a lifespan systems perspective will be utilized to examine contemporary as well as classic issues in social and developmental psychology.

More specifically, students will be exposed to motivational factors that underlie social and health-related behaviors, interpersonal social relationships, intergroup processes such as stereotyping and prejudice, and social norms and factors. In addition, students will learn about the developmental stages and processes implicated in cognitive, emotional, and social experience across the life span. These learning objectives will be discussed in the context of how psychological studies (experimental and non-experimental) have been conducted to answer these questions, and how new advances in research design, methodology, and technology have helped expand our understanding.

Throughout the course, students will gain important insights into the complexities of human behavior, and develop critical thinking skills when reviewing and discussing the literature. Both competent and compromised adaptations across the lifespan will be discussed in connection with the topics discussed in the class. Finally, one of the objectives of this class is to nurture students’ professional presentation and writing skills. It is expected that students become proficient in writing reports following the publication guidelines of the American Psychological Association (6th Ed.). To promote understanding and class discussions, a number of short multimedia materials (see Weekly Course Outline) will be shown in class.

Required Readings
Chapter and article reading assignments (see Weekly Course Outline, pp. 4-8) are to be
completed for the class in which they were assigned. Some of the assigned articles are brief and many others are not. In order to actively participate in class discussion, students are expected to have read all assigned readings and come to class prepared to discuss them.

Required Supplemental Text

Course Requirements

Class attendance and participation (35% toward final grade; 175 points): Students are expected to come prepared for class and participate actively in class discussion. Students should come prepared to weave ideas from the assigned readings into the discussion. Please be prepared to share some thoughts from the readings at least once per class. Quality participation is further characterized by:

- Consistent attendance and promptness
- Responding to other students’ comments in a sensitive and constructive manner.
- Contributing regularly without dominating.
- Respecting classmates’ rights to hear and be heard.
- Respectfully attending (i.e., without doing something else online)

In addition to verbal contributions in class, your participation is also reflected in overall consistency and follow through, including consistency and participation on any non-graded assignments or Sakai activities (e.g., online class on 11/27). Overall, participation is not based strictly on who talks the most. It is based on commitment and investment in the course as demonstrated by consistency, informed contributions, working well with others, and thoughtfulness. Thoughtfulness can be demonstrated both orally as well as through one’s written work. Quality is just as important as quantity of participation.

Presentations and Facilitation of Instruction (20% towards final grade total; 100 points total):

This part of the course is designed to allow students to take a leadership role in teaching each other aspects of the course that students regard as important and/or interesting. It is intended to allow all students to take an active role in the development of learning goals and applications of the material. It is based on the “unconference” or “open space” model of education. A seminal article on the “unconference” model will be provided.

Present one empirical (not review) article from the reading list (sign ups will occur early in the course), and lead instruction on the day that the reading assignment is due. Leading instruction includes a) a brief summary of the article, b) leading a discussion, and c) a relevant learning activity.

Leading discussion includes posing well thought-out questions towards the reaching of your learning goals. Thought-provoking questions may grapple with some of the key issues, current debates, and themes of the field in the context of the relevant readings, any other
sources you may wish to incorporate, and applications towards issues of interest. Example discussion questions might include questions seeking to unpack and understand the constructs, ideas, and assumptions presented by a specific theory or perspective. In addition, some treatment of study methodology and/or analyses, if applicable, is desirable.

A brief learning activity should be designed in order for students to learn the learning goals that you have in mind. One simple example can be a role play done in pairs or small groups based on a scenario, brief case, or vignette. Resources for learning activities appropriate for higher education will be provided (15% towards final grade: 75 points).

**Two quizzes** (Pass or Fail): Students are expected to demonstrate their knowledge of the important concepts discussed in class. For each quiz, students will be provided with two separate lists of definitions of key concepts and names of these concepts. The task is to match them correctly. Students must answer 80% questions correctly to be considered to pass each quiz. Passing grades will be given only if a student passes both quizzes.

**Final paper** (35% towards final grade total; 175 points total): The paper is aimed at developing expertise in the principles from the class and applying them in a professionally meaningful way.

- The final paper is a social/developmental case study. This involves applying theories and principles from the course to enhance your understanding and analysis of an individual of choice, as well as your recommendations for positive development. In most cases, a live interview with your case provides a primary data source. Detailed instructions will be provided separately (available on Sakai).
- Be sure to demonstrate your competency/mastery of principles from the course that are most important to your educational advancement and professional development.
- Please include citations and references for ten or more empirical papers published in peer-reviewed journals since 2000. These can include assigned course readings.
- Recommended length: 10 – 15 pages, excluding references. Double-space the paper, use one-inch margin all around, and adopt a 12 font size. Follow the guidelines of the APA publication manual (6th Ed.).
- A hard copy of paper needs to be submitted on the last day of class (12/11/2017). If you would like your reviewed paper emailed back to you, please also email it to me.
- Extra credit of 15 points may be awarded for truly exemplary papers.

**Mid-course final paper outline** (10% towards final grade total; 50 points total). For this assignment, please provide a 1-page single-spaced or 2-page double-spaced sketch or outline of the essential components of your final paper. Who will be your case study? What is the nature of your relationship to your case study? Why did you select your case study? Please provide some basic background information of your case study (i.e., age, gender, community, school attending or job). Importantly, identify the two or three theories or frameworks (preferably three, but a very full development of two can also be effective) from the course that you will apply in your final paper. You do not need (nor will you have space) to make a very full development of that application for this assignment – that can remain the work of your final
paper. It is enough to identify the theories and show that you see the connections that can be made that will aid in a fuller understanding or analysis of your case. Feel free to mention any particular challenges or uncertainties that you see. This is an opportunity for you to get some feedback in advance of writing your final paper. This is due by 11/13/18, and can be submitted earlier, if desired.

**Course Grade**
- A: 450 – 500 points
- B: 400 – 449 points
- C: 350 - 399 points or below
- F: <150 points; no or little basis for passing due to failure to complete most assignments and/or attend most classes

**Weekly Course Outline**

**Week 1 (9/4) – Introduction and Overview**
- PBS (2007). NOVA Epigenetics (12 min) [MP]
- Group norms, online behavior, and academic integrity
- *Ten simple rules for organizing an unconference*
- Resource: *Collaborative learning techniques*

**Week 2 (9/11) – Introduction and Overview to Social and Developmental Theory**

**Week 3 (9/18) – Dynamic Principles of Development. Guest Lecturer: John Worobey**
- DISCOVERY HEALTH (2004). The Baby Human: To Walk, 2004 (45 min) [DVD]
Week 4 (9/25) - Attachment, Parenting, and Parent-Child Communication


Week 5 (10/2) – Social Factors in Adjustment: Social Norms and Comparison


Week 6 (10/9) - Transitions and Adjustment in Adolescence

Week 7 (10/16) - Motivation

  *Suggested*; Shernoff, D.J., *Optimal learning environments to promote student engagement* New York: *Springer*. pp. 151-158 (from Ch. 7: “Connecting to ‘the who’: The primacy of supportive relationships), pp. 248-258 on Murray High School and pp. 260-261 on ‘Mango High School’ (Ch. 11), and pp. 338-341 (Ch. 15).

Week 8 (10/23) – Cognitive and Intellectual Development


Week 9 (10/30) – Peer Relationships


Week 10 (11/6) – Life Events, Transitions, and Adaptation


**Week 11 (11/13) – Emotion, Stress, and Coping**


*Case study outline due*

**Week 12 (11/20) – Intro to Health Psychology (Guest Lecturer: Jerod Stapleton)**


**Week 14 (12/4) – Conformity, Obedience, and Compliance**

- Milgram Experiment [MP]

**Week 15 (12/11) – Development in Adulthood and Old Age**


*Final Paper due*

**POLICY STATEMENTS:**

**Academic Integrity Policy:** The Office of Student Conduct supervises issues related to violations of academic integrity (see [http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu)). Please familiarize yourself with the university policy on academic integrity at [http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers/](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers/)

Plagiarism has become increasingly easy and tempting with so much information dispersed electronically over the Internet. Submitting part or whole of the same paper to satisfy requirements of two different courses may constitute self-plagiarism. Plagiarism will be penalized, and may warrant an F on the paper or in the course. Academic misconduct will result
in no less than a one grade deduction in the course. More importantly, more education is needed on this issue, especially as powerful duplication-detection software is becoming increasingly used.

**Office of Disability Services:** Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: [https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines](https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines). If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with me and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at:  
[https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form](https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form)

**Attendance:** Class attendance and participation are critical. Students are expected to be physically and mentally present in class. Absences will be taken into consideration for purposes of evaluation, particularly with respect to class participation. To the extent that there is an unavoidable schedule conflict, please communicate this in advance. When reasons for missing class are legitimate and unavoidable, the student may be fully excused on a case-by-case basis.

**Lateness:** Part of your graduate training at GSAPP is training as a professional. Professionals are not late for their appointments. Moreover, a habit or pattern of lateness on the group level impacts the culture, or social norms, of the class. We might ask ourselves, “do we want to have the kind of class in which people are late a lot, and what would that say about how we respect each other’s time?” Everyone can be late due to rare, unplanned events, such as an unforeseen accident on the highway. And we can all make rare mistakes. However, safe planning involves accounting for routine traffic and bus schedules giving cushion time, etc.

Please return from class breaks within the allotted break time. Failing to do so also compromises professional norms in the class.

**Lateness on Assignments.** Ordinarily, late assignments are marked down one letter grade, or 10% of the points. For extreme lateness (i.e., over three weeks), assignments are marked down by 25% of the point value. Under unavoidable and special circumstances, an extension might be granted.

**Classroom and Online Behavior:** The golden rule is being considerate and respectful of others. Before entering class, *please turn off all cell phones, pagers, or any other electronic device that makes noise.* Moreover, *please refrain from online and other activities on your laptop unrelated to the class in progress.* Because some students may think that this is easy to hide, it can become a big problem (and the truth is that it is not as easily hidden as one might think). Continual online activity is a part of our present culture, but needs to be considered with caution. There are good reasons for all members participating in a common event to agree to
go offline for a hollowed-out period of time, such as the movies, an opera, nice restaurants, etc. This is also matter of group norms and mutual respect. We should ask, “do we want to be the type of cohort that doesn’t pay attention to each other because we are doing other things on our laptops?”

**Diversity Statement:** This course will address issues of diversity and individual differences through readings, lectures, discussions, and assignments. Students are encouraged to raise questions or issues regarding diversity within class discussions, presentations, and assignments.

**Religious Observation:** If you will miss class for a religious observation, you have the right to access work and/or materials you have missed, and to complete missed assignments. Please inform me during the first few weeks of class when you will be absent for observances.
REFERENCES


