PSYCH 414: Cognitive Development

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Class time: Tuesday, Thursday 8:30 to 10:20am
Class location: CHL 015
Office hours: By appt.

Text: Cognitive Development (4th Ed., 2002) by John H. Flavell, Patricia H. Miller and Scott A. Miller at UW bookstore
Additional readings available on class website (http://faculty.washington.edu/sommej/).

Notes: Slide lectures can be printed off from the class website (click on Notes on the left navigation bar) prior to class. Note that due to copyright laws graphics that are present in lecture slides are removed for web publication.

Course overview:
This course covers key theoretical perspectives and research findings concerning the development of children's thinking from birth through the early school years. We will focus on both the content of children's knowledge across a variety of domains and the abilities that contribute to the acquisition of this knowledge (e.g., mechanisms of change).

Learning goals:
1. Acquire knowledge about basic aspects of cognitive development. What do children know about the world and how do they achieve this knowledge? (assessed through weekly quizzes)

2. Develop oral communication skills through active participation during in-class discussions (assessed by small group discussions and presentations).

3. Locate, select, read, and evaluate relevant research articles and distill the important information about the methodology employed, the main findings, how the findings fit into the larger literature, and why they are important. Use your own writing to summarize research articles and their implications (assessed by group discussions and research proposal)

4. Develop written communication skills. Formulate a written argument that is logical and coherent, that relies on scientific evidence, and that draws appropriate conclusions from that evidence (assessed by research proposal).

5. Learn how researchers design experiments to assess cognition in children, develop the ability to critically assess these studies, and put this knowledge into practice by designing your own experiment (assessed by small group discussions and presentations and research proposal).

6. Extend classroom knowledge and apply it to research and real-world issues. Use information from lectures and text to evaluate issues that pertain to children's cognitive development (assessed by small group discussions and presentations).

Grading scheme

1) Weekly quizzes **40%**
There will be a total of 9 quizzes (at 8:30 on Tuesdays), each of which will be comprised of 6 multiple-choice questions and 2 (of 3) short answer questions (12 points). Your lowest quiz score will be dropped.

2) Small group discussions and assignments **30%**
Every Thursday, the second half of class time will be devoted to small group discussions and assignments. During this time, the class will be divided into groups of 4-6 students and each group will be given a short assignment to discuss and complete. This assignment will culminate in a brief presentation. Grading will be based on a) your presence at small group discussions, b) your individual contribution to the discussion, and c) your group's presentation.

3) Research proposal **30%**

Outline (1 page) **(5%)**
Describe your research question (what is it? why is it important?). List 5 key references that you will review in your proposal.
Due Tuesday May 18th, by 8:30am
Submit outlines via the catalyst dropbox:
https://catalysttools.washington.edu/collectit/dropbox/sommej/5480

Paper (8-12 pages) **(25%)**
Briefly review key findings concerning your research question. Design an experiment to address a remaining issue with respect to your question.
Due Monday June 7 8h, by 9am
Submit papers via the catalyst dropbox:
https://catalysttools.washington.edu/collectit/dropbox/sommej/5483

BONUS POINTS: Bonus points will be awarded to those students who turn in their Research Proposal by 4pm on Friday June 5th. Students who make this deadline will receive .1 GPA added to their final class grade.

Class overview

Week	*Date*	*Lecture*	*Assignments*	*Readings*
1	T Mar 30	Introduction & Perspectives (1)	None	Cognitive Development, chapter 1
	R Apr 1	Perspectives (2)	None	
2	T Apr 6	Basic Cognitive Processes (1)	Quiz 1	Cognitive Development, chapter 2 and pp. 236-240
	R Apr 8	Basic Cognitive Processes (2)	Small groups	See website
3	T Apr 13	Infants' Physical World (1)	Quiz 2	Cognitive Development, chapter 3
	R Apr 15	Infants' Physical World (2)	Small groups	See website
4	T Apr 20	Infants' Social World (1)	Quiz 3	Cognitive Development, pp. 184-187; 189-193 See website
	R Apr 22	Infants' Social World (2)	Small groups	See website
5	T Apr 27	Language Development (1)	Quiz 4	Cognitive Development, chapter 8
	R Apr 29	Language Development (2)	Small groups	See website
6	T May 4	Representation and Concepts (1)	Quiz 5	Cognitive Development, chapter 4
	R May 6	Representation and Concepts (2)	Small groups	See website
7	T May 11	Reasoning, problem solving and memory (1)	Quiz 6	Cognitive Development, chapter 5 and pp. 240-256
	R May 13	Reasoning, ps and memory (2)	Small groups	See website
8	T May 18	Social Cognition (1)	Quiz 7 **RP outline due**	Cognitive Development, chapter 6, (pp. 177-184; 187-189; 193-224).
	R May 20	Social Cognition (2)	Small groups	See website
9	T May 25	Special Topics (1)	Quiz 8	
	R May 27	Special Topics (2)	Small groups	See website
10	T June 1	Research proposal tutorial	Quiz 9	NONE
	R June 3	NO CLASS		
F	**M June 7**	**By 9am**	**RP due**	**See Bonus points section**