

PSYC 211 002 Spring 2006 Dr. Robert Pasnak 2049 DBKing 703 993 1354;
703 250 6226 Hrs. M 1:45-2:15, W 11:45-12:15 & appt & drop-in Helen
Bee & Denise Boyd Lifespan Development 3rd Ed. Allyn & Bacon

This course serves the goals of GMU's General Education Mission. This mission is to educate, liberate, and broaden the mind, and to instill lifelong love of learning. In conjunction with each student's major program of study and other electives, minors, or certificates, it seeks to produce graduates with intellectual vision, creative abilities, moral sensibility, and the skills to assure a well-rounded and useable education. There are four specific goals:

1. To ensure that you develop skills in information gathering, written and oral communication, and analytical and quantitative reasoning.
2. To expose you to the development of knowledge by emphasizing major domains of thought and methods of inquiry.
3. To help you attain a breadth of knowledge that supports your specialization and adds to your personal and professional education.
4. To encourage you to make connections between disciplines, between GMU and the external world, and between the USA and other countries.

Planned approach: We will discuss theories of child development that have held up well under scientific examination; i.e. they turn out to hold more than a little of the truth. We will also study the facts that have been discovered in important areas of developmental psychology where no theory is currently viable. I hope that you will better understand things you have encountered or will encounter in your life. I will also try to alert you to skills that will be necessary if you are to put your college education to work for you after you graduate. That may be more important than the first two goals - learning facts and learning theories. I will provide the opportunity for all of three of these things as well as I can provide it, but it is up to you to make the best of it. Even if you are taking the course only because you must, some of the content should be appealing.

It is very helpful if you read the material beforehand, but you should always ask about anything that is unclear, and be bold enough to venture guesses in class. Whether you are right or wrong you'll remember the answer; passive people forget too much.

It is potentially useful to know that 33% of American infants are insecurely attached to their parents, that only 1/6 of us become senile, or that 1/7 preschool/day care centers are high quality, etc.

That is much better than knowing only what you already know - that some infants are not securely attached, some people become senile, or some day care centers are high quality. You will have to be able to translate percentages to fractions and vice versa, at least roughly. If you don't remember how to do this, don't despair. Few people do the arithmetic; most simply memorize the decimal or percentage equivalents of common fractions, at least roughly. If you haven't, it is about time you joined the rest of us and committed the following approximations to memory, like you memorize phone numbers and addresses: $19/20=95\%$ $7/8$, $9/10$, $8/9$ or $11/12 = 90\%$ $5/6$ or $6/7 = 85\%$ or $4/5 = 80\%$ $3/4 = 75\%$ $2/3 = 67\%$ $5/8$, or $3/5 = 60\%$ $1/2 = 50\%$ $3/8$ or $2/5 = 40\%$ $1/3 = 33\%$ $1/4 = 25\%$ $1/5 = 20\%$ $1/6$ or $1/7 = 15\%$ $1/8$, $1/9$, $1/10$, $1/11$, or $1/12 = 10\%$ $1/20 = 5\%$ Almost everyone has memorized the exact equivalences, but you can get by on your exams with the approximations above. There will be a bonus question on each exam that tests whether you have learned these equivalences.

This class meets for 50 minutes per day. If you have to miss a day, enter late, or leave early, don't explain; I know that you'll

have a good reason. **Exception: exams must be turned in for scoring before leaving the classroom.**

Class Web Page: *This class has a mandatory web page.* You can reach it by going to webct41.gmu.edu and looking for PSYC 211 002. You are entered under your GMU user name. Go to STAR (Student Technical Assistance Resource) in RM 229 or 311 Johnson Center to discover how to activate your GMU account and roll it over to your personal (home) account. Your password for the class web page is the 4 digits defining the month and day of your birth, e.g. 0223 if you were born February 23rd. You should find the web page helpful. You can track your grades and catch any errors. You can do extra credit work. You can practice for exams with questions taken from old exams!

STEPS TO LOG ONTO WebCT: There are other ways to do it, but this will work: 1 Go to webct41.gmu.edu 2. Click Log into WebCT. 3 A screen will show up asking you to log in with your GMU user name and password (the 4 digits defining the month and day of your birth). A menu of those courses using WebCT in which you are enrolled will show up. Just click the title Psychology 211 002. Now you can log in when you wish by typing www.webct41.gmu.edu, clicking "Log on to My WebCT" and following directions.

You can also go to <http://www.irc.gmu.edu/WebCT/default.asp> under "George Mason Services related to WebCT" and "Student handouts and references" for a "QuickStart Guide" on accessing it, or go to STAR for individual help.

Course grade: Your course grade depends on how many points you earn. There are 166 possible points; 150 content questions on exams, 6 bonus questions, and 10 points extra credit. You will need 135 points to get an A, 120 to get a B, 105 for a C, and 90 to pass. Notice that calculating your grades as percentages is irrelevant and foolish. Only your point total counts. Because of an internal problem I cannot correct, the class web page adds an extra 52 points to the possible point total. This is erroneous and irrelevant.

Exams: There are three exams that each have 50 regular T-F and multiple-choice questions and 2 bonus questions. One bonus question taps your knowledge of this syllabus and one taps your ability to recognize fractions as percentages or vice versa. You will need unwrinkled scantrons for these exams. The aqua or green ones work; the orange or red ones do not. None of these exams are comprehensive (cumulative), **including the final exam.** The final exam is offered at a different time than the other exams. It will not be given earlier or later for any reason, so if you have a wedding to attend, apartment to vacate, surgery scheduled, tickets for a trip to Asia, etc. that prevents your attendance at 11:00 on May 15, you will get a 23 for the final exam grade. Drop the course now! Do not ask for an exception.

Make-ups: There are **no** make-up exams, unless you can submit medical documentation that you were unable to attend the examination you missed. In the absence of such documentation, you receive a chance score (23 Points) so don't miss any if you can possibly help it.

Anyone missing an exam who has documented a medical reason must take a comprehensive (cumulative) make up exam the day of the final exam.

There is **no** other make-up. Of course I understand that none of us can control everything; accidents and illnesses happen - but I hope not to you, not now.

Exams are based on material from the three texts, one Xerox, and lectures. Relatively few pages are assigned each night from the Bee & Boyd text. I have tried to give you a chance to learn the more important things thoroughly by limiting the assignments. Please do your part. The children's books Dear Mr. Henshaw and Strider are

important when we study divorce. They are easy to read, but have 280 pages - too much to read comfortably in two nights. The For Better or Worse Xerox is also important then.

When studying for exams, give first priority to material covered in both lectures and texts, second priority to material covered only in lecture, and third to that covered only in the text or in films. There will be very straightforward questions from each source, but more from those in the priority listed.

Extra credit Extra credit assignments are designed to extend your knowledge and reward you for extra effort. Most require attendance in class on certain days. You need not do any; the grading scale is the same as it would be if these assignments did not exist. The best students tend to do them for the learning involved, even if they do not need the extra points! The worst students usually don't do them even though they need the points. Take the first path, just in case!

[a] **On 3/3 I'll put on the board a 2-point extra credit assignment based on the Fault Line article, due 3/6.** The assignment *must be obtained and returned in class, not by e-mail* and cannot be turned in late. Part of the extra credit is for coming to class on those days! The Fault Line article is part of the course pack with Valerie's Divorce (also titled For Better or Worse).

[b] **You can earn 3 points (1 point each) by turning in three 100- word summaries of 3 course-related "articles" from the class web page by 3/31.** These must include the name of the article, and cannot include "Bisexual Dad" or the "Dear Abby" article titled "Not OK Kay", which are covered in class. These must *be typed and submitted in class, not by e-mail*, by 3/31 at the latest. None can be submitted after 3/31.

[c] **You can earn 3 more points for turning in three 100-word summaries of 3 linked web pages by 4/21.** Click on the icon that is a link of chain. Then click on the general PSYC 211 Life Span Development web page and keep clicking until you come to a web page you would like to summarize. Put the URL on the summary. Do that for 3 different web pages. These must be *typed and submitted in class, not by e-mail*, by 4/21 at the latest. None of these can be submitted after 4/21.

[d] **You can obtain one point by sending a meaningful comment to the discussion forum on the web page by 4/21 at the latest.** Requests for assistance from other students, answers to such requests, or anything else that isn't nonsense counts.

[e] **You can earn one point for going to the Writing Center in Room Robinson A114 and listening to a brief description of their services.**

Get a written confirmation from them that you did so, even if it is hand-scrawled on a sheet of notebook paper and submit it in class **by 4/21 at the latest.**

ERRORS ARE POSSIBLE WHEN I TRY TO RECORD ALL OF THIS EXTRA CREDIT, ESPECIALLY SINCE THE INSTRUCTOR WEB PAGE IS SO WIDE THAT I CAN'T SEE YOUR NAMES WHEN I RECORD IT. IF THERE IS AN ERROR, YOU MUST NOTIFY ME BY 4/26 SO I CAN GET DOCUMENTATION FROM YOU AND FIX IT. OTHERWISE YOU FORFEIT IT. WAITING UNTIL AFTER GRADES ARE IN WON'T WORK.

Disabilities: If you have a disability and need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. I'm happy to cooperate.

Afterword: I've prioritized the material to help well-intentioned, hard-working students learn the most important facts, ideas, and concepts that they can reasonably master in the time available. Wherever possible I have selected the material that has the most important applications in your future life outside of college. I hope

you want to learn as much as you can in the time you have available, and will do my best to work with you toward this goal.

Date	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
1/23-27	Early Cognitive Development	102-104
1/30-2/3	Later Cognitive Development	156-161
2/6-10	Early Bonding & Attachment	125-131,185

Note: 2/7 is the last day to add a course.

2/13-15	Principles of Discipline	253
2/17-20	Parenting Styles	185-189

2/22 First Examination

Note: 2/24 is the last day to drop without an F

2/24	Day Care	137-141
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Elective Withdrawal Period 2/25-3/24

2/27-3/1	Working Mothers	no reading
3/3-8	Divorce: General Findings	191-195

Note: Fault Line extra credit questions asked 3/3 and due 3/6

3/10	Case Histories	Clearly Books, For Better or Worse Xerox
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3/13-17 Spring Break

3/20	Early Moral Development	250-252
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3/22 Second Examination

Note: Elective Withdrawal Period ends 3/24

3/24-29	Later Moral Development	328-336
3/31-4/5	Adolescent Identity	311-313,323-325

Note: Extra credit article summaries are due 3/31

4/7-10	Dating and Sex	286-289;326-327;354-355
4/12-17	Marriage	372-380
4/19-21	Young Adulthood	380-389

Note: Extra credit "links" summaries, Discussion Forum comments, and documentation of Writing Center visits are due 4/21

4/24-26	Work	389-396
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4/28-5/1	Middle Adulthood	473-476
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Note: The last day to claim unrecorded or misrecorded exam or extra credit points is 4/26. After that, the points are forfeited

5/3-5	Late Adulthood	490-525
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5/15 (Monday)	Catch-up & Review 10:30-11:00	Final Exam 11:10-12:00
	Comprehensive Make-up Exam	12:10-1:05