

## **PSYC 666 – Cognitive and Perceptual Development**

T R 1:30 – 2:45

Innovation Hall 203

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Instructor:	Timothy W. Curby, PhD	Office:	1014a David King Hall
Phone:	703-993-2457	Office Hours:	Tue 9:30 – 10:30, 2:45 – 3:45
Email:	tcurby@gmu.edu	Website:	<a href="http://mason.gmu.edu/~tcurby">http://mason.gmu.edu/~tcurby</a>

### **Course Description:**

Survey of theory and research on development of perception, memory, concepts, problem solving, intelligence, and academic skills in children.

### **Readings:**

Siegler, R. S., & Alibali, M. W. (2005). Children's thinking (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Pearson/Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, New Jersey. ISBN 0-13-111384-4.

Other readings will be posted on Blackboard.

### **Requirements:**

#### **Class Leader (2)**

Students will act as discussion facilitators for each class meeting. Class Leaders will be responsible for asking thought-provoking questions that facilitate discussion. There is no need to do a thought paper on the week when you lead discussion.

#### **Participation (25)**

Without participation (and attendance), this course does not work. Therefore, students are expected to be in every class. Missing more than 3 classes may result in failing the class.

#### **Weekly Thought Paper (10)**

For one of the two class periods per week, you must write a brief thought paper. Thought papers should be 1½ - 2 pages. The thought paper should pick an issue inspired by the readings and react to it. These should not be summaries.

Beyond the assigned readings, you are also expected to incorporate information from one of two additional sources. This may take the form of:

- A discussion of one paper that is **not on the reading list**, but which you went and found as a result of reading (include the reference at the end).
- A RadioLab episode. Relevant episodes for a given topic are provided.

Thought papers should be emailed to me by noon on the day on which we are discussing the topic.

## Handbook

Groups of students will create a multi-chapter book examining a central issue cognitive and perceptual development. This will be a multistep process that will culminate in a text that will illustrate the students' ability to review, synthesize, collaborate, and communicate salient aspects of research literature. As a part of this handbook, students will submit four assignments:

- The first will be a 1-page synopsis of the topic chosen. The synopsis is due on February 22.
- The second will be five-page proposal for the topic. The book proposal is due on March 24.
- The final book will involve five sections. First, there should be a 2-page introduction to the book. This will be followed by three 12- to 15-page chapters. These chapters will summarize the Cognitive, Biological, and Environmental factors that shape the chosen topic. These will be followed by a 2- to 3-page synthesizing summary. This book is due on April 26.
- Each group will also make a one-hour presentation of their handbook topic. The presentation will consist of a well-synthesized synopsis of the paper topic. The various parts of the presentation must contribute to a comprehensive overview of the topic with smooth transitions between presenters in the group.

Students will be given the opportunity to comment on the effort level, engagement, and level of collaboration of other group members, but it is intended that students in a group will all receive the same grade on each handbook assignment.

### Grading Procedures

Class Leader (2)	5%
Participation (25)	10%
Thought Papers (10)	40%

#### Handbook:

Synopsis	5%
Proposal	10%
Final Handbook	25%
Presentation	5%

### The Honor Code

Students in this course are expected to behave at all times in a manner consistent with the GMU Honor System and Code. (<http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>). For all work, the name that appears on the paper must be the author. If you are using someone else's work as a source, cite it. Please see details available at the website above. Violations of the Honor Code will not be tolerated in this course and will be immediately reported according to GMU procedures. The instructor reserves the right to use software to determine the extent to which the work is the student's. The instructor for this course reserves the right to enter a failing grade for any student found guilty of an honor code violation.

### Miscellaneous

The deadlines for adding and dropping classes are as follows:

Drop without Tuition Penalty Dates: to Feb 08, 2011

Drop with Tuition Penalty (and final drop deadline) Dates: Feb 09, 2011 to Feb 25, 2011

Please activate and check (or forward) your GMU email.

Audio recording of classroom lectures is not allowed without explicit permission by the instructor.

If you are a student with disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 709-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Life is stressful and we all need a little support sometimes. Students are encouraged to contact Counseling Services (364 Student Union I) at 993-2385 for assistance with any kind of psychological/life problem or crisis situation. I can help with referrals for students with particular counseling needs so please feel free to talk with me for help with anything.

## Tentative Schedule of Topics:

		Handbook Assignment	RadioLab	Season
1/25	Introduction			
1/27	Biological bases of cognitive development			
2/1	Piaget's theory		Limits	7
2/3	Information processing theory and newer approaches			
2/8	<i>Handbook Explanation &amp; Meetings</i>			
2/10	Sociocultural Theories of Development		Lucy	7
2/15	Problem Solving			
2/17	Language and Thought		Musical Language	2
2/22	Reading Development	1-Page Synopsis	Words	8
2/24	Symbolic Representation			
3/1	Numeracy Development		Numbers	6
3/3	Development of spatial cognition		Where am I?	2
3/8	Development of perception and attention			
3/10	Inter-sensory Integration			
3/15	NO CLASS - Spring Break			
3/17	NO CLASS - Spring Break			
3/22	Memory development		Memory & Forgetting	3
3/24	Executive Function	5-Page Proposal	Choice	5
3/29	Motor Skills and Cognition			
3/31	NO FORMAL CLASS - Handbook Meetings			
4/5	Self-Regulation		Laughter	4
4/7	Emotions and Cognitive Development		Animal Minds	7
4/12	Conceptual Development		Time	1
4/14	Theory of Mind		Who are you?	7
4/19	Issues in the assessment of cognitive development		Diagnosis	5
4/21	Tests: PPVT, WJ-III, WAIS, WISK, WIPSI, WRAT			
4/26	Collaboration and Social Learning	Handbooks Due	Deception	4
4/28	Culture, Schooling, Cognition			
5/3	Student Handbook Presentations Group 1	Presentation		
5/5	Student Handbook Presentations Group 2	Presentation		
5/12	Student Presentations Group 3 (1:30 – 4:15)	Presentation		