

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

T R 1:30 – 2:45  
Research Hall 201

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Instructor:	Timothy W. Curby, PhD	Office:	Aquia 335
Phone:	703-993-2457	Office Hours:	Tue 3:00 – 4:00
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### **Course Description:**

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

### **Required Readings:**

*Day-by-day listings of required readings are supplied in a separate document.*

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 are supplied by the instructor.

Podcasts: Links to relevant RadioLab (or other podcast) are to be listed to along with the readings.

### **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. You may do a thought paper for the class 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 course.

#### **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 can also incorporate information provided in the relevant 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 19.
- The second will be five-page proposal for the topic. The book proposal is due on March 21.
- 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 will be followed by a 2- to 3-page synthesizing summary. This book is due on April 21.
- 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

The course uses a traditional grading scale (>93% = A, 90 – 93% = A-, 87-89% = B+, etc.).

Each assignment is weighted according to the following:

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:

Last day to add: January 29, 2013

Last day to drop: February 22, 2013

Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

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:

	Topic	Handbook Assignment	RadioLab	Season	Siegler Chap.
1	1/22 Introduction				1
2	1/24 Biological bases of cognitive development	-	-	-	-
3	1/29 Piaget's theory		Limits	7	2
4	1/31 Information Processing				3
5	2/5 <i>Handbook Explanation &amp; Meetings</i>				
6	2/7 Sociocultural Theories of Development		Lucy	7	4
7	2/12 Problem Solving		<i>Psych Files: Dan Willingham</i>		10
8	2/14 Language and Thought		Musical Language	2	6
9	2/19 Reading Development	1-Page Synopsis	Words	8	11
10	2/21 Symbolic Representation		Mr. Bliss		
11	2/26 Numeracy Development		Numbers	6	11
12	2/28 Development of spatial cognition		Where am I?	2	
13	3/5 Executive Function		Choice	5	
14	3/7 Development of perception and attention				5
	3/12 <b>NO CLASS</b> - Spring Break				
	3/14 <b>NO CLASS</b> - Spring Break				
15	3/19 Memory development		Memory & Forgetting	3	7
16	3/21 Inter-sensory Integration	5-Page Proposal			
17	3/26 Self-Regulation		Laughter	4	
	3/28 <b>Handbook Meetings</b>				
18	4/2 Emotions and Cognitive Development		Animal Minds	7	
19	4/4 Motor Skills and Cognition				
20	4/9 Conceptual Development		Time	1	8
21	4/11 Theory of Mind		Who am I?	1	9
22	4/16 Issues in the assessment of cognitive development		Diagnosis	5	
	4/18 <b>NO CLASS: SRCD</b>				
23	4/23 Collaboration and Social Learning	Handbooks Due	Deception	4	
24	4/25 Culture, Schooling, Cognition				
	4/30 Student Handbook Presentations	Presentation			
	5/2 Student Handbook Presentations	Presentation			
	5/14 Student Presentations (1:30 – 4:15)	Presentation			