

**CHILD AND ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT (PSY 203 Section N)
FALL 2011**

Tuesday and Thursdays, 8:00am-9:15am, Flipse Room 301
University of Miami, Department of Psychology

Instructor: Dr. Rebecca Shearer

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When contacting either Dr. Shearer or Ms. Carter by email please list "PSY203" in the subject of the email. If you do not get a response from me (usually within one business day), assume I did not receive your email. It is your responsibility to verify that I received any assignments turned in via email.

Required Textbook:

Berk, L. E. (2010). *Infants, children, and adolescents – 7th Edition*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon/Pearson.

Required Web-based application:

My Virtual Child www.myvirtualchild.com

The text and MyVirtualChild are required for the course. MyDevelopmentLab is recommended, but not required (access is automatically included when you purchase your book through the UM bookstore).

Course Description: This course provides a chronologically organized overview of child development from the prenatal period through early adulthood. Major theoretical approaches to the study of child development will be discussed and applied to the study of the domains of physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development. The dynamic interplay between the individual and environment will be stressed, with important considerations to ecological influences that play a role in children's development such as families, communities, schools, and culture. Students will also apply critical thinking skills to current issues related to child and adolescent development through class discussion, readings, and raising their own child online (myvirtualchild).

Objectives:

- Students will learn the major theories of child development across four broad developmental periods: infancy/toddlerhood, early childhood, middle childhood, and adolescence.
- Students will be able to compare and contrast theories in terms of their implications for the study and interpretation of children's behavior, thoughts, and emotions.
- Students will be able to integrate and critically evaluate information on controversial topics.
- Students will use discussions and assignments to reflect on the processes leading to typical and atypical development.

Course Requirements:

1. To complete all assigned reading prior to class.
2. To actively participate in class discussions and complete in-class assignments.
3. To take 3 non-cumulative exams.
4. To complete 1 reaction papers/class debate on a selected controversial topic.
5. To “raise” your own child online via myvirtualchild.com, participate in the Virtual Parenting Blog on course blackboard, and write a short reflection paper related to this experience.

Grading:

Exam #1 (Chapters 1-5)	25%
Exam #2 (Chapters 6-10)	25%
Exam #3 (Final) (Chapters 12-17)	25%
Reaction Paper/Class Debate	10%
My Virtual Child Assignment	15%
Total	100%

Final grades will be determined using the following grading scale:

A+	98.0% and above	C+	78.0% to 79.99%
A	92.0% to 97.99%	C	72.0% to 77.99%
A-	90.0% to 91.99%	C-	70.0% to 71.99%
B+	88.0% to 89.99%	D+	68.0% to 69.99%
B	82.0% to 87.99%	D	60.0% to 67.99%
B-	80.0% to 81.99%	F	below 60%

Final grades will not be rounded up or changed for any student, for any reason. Extra credit opportunities are provided throughout the semester to assist you in improving your grade. It is your responsibility to take advantage of these opportunities. Every semester there are several students who miss the next highest grade by a very small margin (e.g., ½ point). The majority of those students did not complete the extra credit – don’t be one of those students!

Attendance: Attendance is strongly recommended. This is a highly interactive class with many in-class activities. I design lectures as extensions of what you read in the text. This means that there will always be new information in the lecture that is not in the readings. Please plan to arrive on time. As a courtesy to the instructor and fellow student colleagues, cell phones, text messaging, laptops off please.

Blackboard: <https://www.courses.miami.edu>

Lecture outlines and additional materials from class will be available on the course website.

Exams: There will be 3 non-cumulative exams. The first two exams will take place during class on the scheduled days. The third exam will take place during University scheduled finals time. Each exam is worth 25% of the final grade. The exams will be a combination of multiple choice and short answer questions and will cover content in the textbook, class lectures, and discussions. You will not be allowed to retake an exam for any reason. If you need to reschedule the date for an exam in an extenuating circumstance (for example if you have more than 2 exams scheduled on the same day), this must be arranged at 2 weeks in advance with the instructor. Please look at your course calendars at the beginning of the semester to plan ahead. EXAMS CAN BE RE-SCHEDULED AHEAD OF TIME, BUT NOT AFTER THE CLASS HAS ALREADY TAKEN THE EXAM ON THE SCHEDULED DATE.

Reaction Paper on Controversial Issue: You will complete 1 short (3-4 double-spaced pages) reaction paper based on controversial topics (each worth 10% of your grade). Your topic will be assigned at the beginning of the semester. You will be asked to incorporate class lecture and the textbook with your own opinions and at least one outside empirical article of your choosing. Acceptable sources include research articles or literature reviews from peer-reviewed academic journals, such as *Child Development*, *Developmental Psychology*, or *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*. Students will be assigned 1 topic and will be expected to lead a class debate on the date their topic is due. A list of topics and due dates will be distributed at the beginning of the semester. Reaction papers will not be accepted late (you will get 0%). Empirical article(s) you use must be published in professional research journal. A good source is PsycINFO, available from the UM library website (www.library.miami.edu). Go to the website link, select Databases and Indexes, select the first letter of the database you are looking for ("M" for Medline or "P" for PsycINFO), and scroll down to the page until you find the database.

MyVirtualChild: Students will raise their own child online via the web-based application, myvirtualchild. You will be asked to participate in a Virtual Parenting Blog on the course blackboard and write a short paper reflecting on the experience of raising your child across the course of the semester (worth a total of 15% of your final grade). More specific information about this assignment will be provided in class.

Extra credit Opportunities: Extra credit opportunities may be given to the entire class throughout the semester and will be announced by the instructor. In addition, attendance will be taken at each class; for students who attend 90% of classes or more, 3 extra credit percentage points will be awarded at the end of the semester. For students who attend 80-89% of classes, 1.5 percentage points will be awarded.

Excusable Absences: If you miss an exam you will not be allowed to take that exam at a later date unless you are absent for an excusable reason. Absences from exams are considered excusable under the following circumstances only: illness of the student, religious observance (where the nature of the observance prevents you from attending class), participation in university activities at the request of University authorities, and compelling circumstance beyond your control. You must apply to the instructor in writing and provide documentation for your absence.

Religious Observances: You are responsible for informing the instructor at the beginning of the semester if you anticipate any absences for religious observances. You will not be penalized for observing religious beliefs and you will be given an opportunity whenever feasible to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances.

Policy on Academic Dishonesty: Students are expected to abide by the terms of the University of Miami Honor Code. Academic dishonesty includes cheating on exams or assignments, plagiarizing written work, submitting fraudulent documents and forging signatures. If you are unfamiliar with the Honor Code, please visit the following website for information http://www.miami.edu/UMH/CDA/UMH_Main/1,1770,2618-1;12148-3,00.html Examinations and assignments are to be completed independently. Students will be required to sign the Honor Code Pledge for all exams and assignments. Any violation of the honor code will result in a course grade of F.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities should inform the instructor of their needs at the beginning of the semester. The instructor will work with the student to determine and implement appropriate academic accommodations.