1. Course Description

This course will focus on biological, psychological, and social experiences, challenges, and changes characteristic of the first decade of life viewed from a multicultural perspective. "Normal" development, as well as the prevalence, etiology, and prevention of a variety of developmental risks will be reviewed. Emphasis will be placed on the integration of research and practice, with particular attention to the development of resiliency and social competence among infants and children. This course will also analyze how various environmental influences such as a parental behavior, poverty, and social justice impact infant and child development.

2. Course Content

This course will present developmental and social systems frameworks for assessing human development during the early stages of the life span. Individual development will be considered within the context of human relationships and particular social environments. Emphasis will be placed on fostering the student's understanding of how culture and biology interact to promote or inhibit adaptation and coping at particular life stages within social settings. Human development from conception up to the transition to adolescence will be explored through a variety of topics including: ecology of the family as a context of human development, biological aspects of development, family and caregiving relationships, social risk factors and resiliency, peer relations and the school environment, and the interface of mental and physical health and well-being.

Insights that illuminate the life span developmental process will be drawn from a variety of social science disciplines, including developmental and social psychology. The relationship between theoretical insight and social work practice, and empirical based interventions will be continually addressed. Special attention will be given to the relationships among life stage, critical life conditions, (i.e., poverty, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation), life events, (i.e., separation, illness, and transition to school) and psychological and physical functioning.

Throughout this course, relevant social science research will be examined and emphasis will be placed on the research methodology employed concerning issues of gender, ethnicity, and social class. The
relevance of this course to Interpersonal Practice Methods courses and Field of Service courses, such as those dealing with families and children, will be explicated.

3. Course Objectives

Students who complete this course will be able to:

1. Specify the key developmental issues, tasks, and conflicts during infancy, toddler, early childhood or middle childhood and how these are influenced by social contexts.

2. Identify and describe biological, psychological, and social changes that characterize normative development specific to the various stages infancy/early childhood through adolescence.

3. Analyze and evaluate various theories of development from a multicultural perspective and a social justice perspective.

4. Specify how risks, protective and promotive factors contribute to child and youth safety, health, security and well-being.

5. Describe the transactional relationship between a child or youth’s development, their environment, and any influencing historical or cultural inequities that may be at work.

6. Specify how history, culture, group memberships and social positions within society (ascribed and earned) shape children’s, youths’, and families’ perceptions, attitudes, cognitive processes and actions. Recognize the roles in development and family relationships played by ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation.

7. Critically examine the influences of interpersonal, community, governmental, societal, and cultural forces from the perspective of how these forces promote or disrupt privilege, oppression, diversity and social justice for children, youth and their families.

8. Discuss ethical dilemmas that may arise for social workers engaged in working with children and youth and their families at the various levels of practice and across the various stages of development.

4. Course Design and Attendance Expectations

This course will use a combination of lecture, class discussion, case material, experiential exercises, group discussion and video material as appropriate.

5. Relationship of the Course to the Four Curricular Themes

- Multicultural and Diversity themes will be addressed by careful attention to the impact of culture, gender, social class, religion, family structure, and ability on child behavior and development. Different patterns of development which may result from different biological and/or social environments will be identified and differentiated from those patterns of development which may result from deprivation or impairment.
• **Social Justice and Social Change** will be addressed through discussion of the impact of economic and social oppression on infant and child development. The potential impacts—both positive and negative—of social work intervention on the child, the family, and the child’s relationship to the family and community will be discussed.

• **Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation** will be particularly important in social work with infants and young children because of the potential lifelong impact of facilitating or harmful conditions at this stage of life. This course will emphasize factors that may contribute to resiliency and vulnerability and identify the kinds of environmental conditions, programs, and interventions that promote optimal development.

• **Behavioral and Social Science Research** will be emphasized throughout the course which will draw on empirically based knowledge from a number of other disciplines, particularly developmental psychology. Discussion of developmental theories will emphasize critical evaluation of these theories in light of behavioral, social science, and biological research.

6. **Relationship of this course to Social Work Ethics and Values:**

As child development throughout the life course is so profoundly impacted by environmental and social conditions, this course will emphasize the critique and evaluation of various developmental theories from a multicultural perspective and a social justice perspective. This course will also consider potential ethical dilemmas that may arise for social workers working with children and families. The impact of social conditions and social policy and the need for macro and micro intervention to improve the lives of children will also be addressed.

7. **Accommodation for Disability Statement**

Any Student who has a disability or condition that may interfere with your participation in this course, please feel free to contact me as soon as possible to discuss accommodations for your specific needs. This information will be kept strictly confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities office at G664 Haven Hall, (734) 763-3000.

8. **Writing Assistance**

For further assistance with writing, you may go to the Writing Workshop 1139 Angell Hall 764-0429.

9. **Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity**

All academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, and misrepresentation will be treated seriously. You will find a discussion of plagiarism and other violations academic integrity. Please consult your Student’s Guide to the Master’s in Social Work Degree Program (online).

10. **Intensive Focus on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice (PODS)**

This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that
support stigma, oppression, and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self-knowledge and self-awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

11. Attendance Expectations

Students are expected to attend all class sessions. The instructor must be notified in the event of a possible absence.

- Attendance at each class session is expected. The learning in this class is experiential. More than two absences will result in a reduction in the final grade (½ step from A to A-).
- Assignments are expected to be on time. Assignments that are turned in late will result in an automatic reduction in the grade for the assignment. Submit written assignments electronically in the assignments section in Canvas by midnight of the assigned date to be considered on time.
- Class participation is strongly encouraged and is worth 10% of your final grade. If for personal reasons you find class participation to be difficult, please see me.

Required Texts


Course Assignments

1. Attendance and Participation: 10% of your grade
   - Discussions on Readings done at home
   - In-class group readings and processing of articles
   - Please refrain from texting, social media and other Internet usage that is unrelated to in-class activities.

2. Remembering your childhood – Due January 22
   2 – 4 pages, double-spaced
   This assignment is worth 10% of your grade

Write a 2 – 4 page reflection paper detailing your first significant childhood memory that left a lasting impression on you. Process the memory using theories and principles from infant and child development discussed in this course and from your course readings; the processing of your experience should be at least one page in length.

   a. Please reflect on how critical life conditions (i.e. poverty, ethnicity, gender (identity/expression), sexual orientation) or life events and environmental factors may have influenced the experience from a theoretical perspective.
   b. Does thinking about the experience from a child development lens change your understanding of the memory?
c. Describe how your experience may have been influenced by your history, culture, social position, privilege, ability, family structure etc.

3. **Case Study Analysis and Discussion – Due February 5**

10-minute group facilitation; 1 page write-up of the analysis; ½ page discussion questions

This assignment is worth 15% of your grade.

Students will develop a case study analysis involving services for an infant, toddler or child and facilitate a 10-minute roundtable discussion with a group of about 8 students. The information should be presented in a handout for each student (electronic okay) and discussed in class. The student should demonstrate a working knowledge of child development, psychosocial aspects of health, an understanding of assessment and goal-setting, and outline a treatment plan. Students will describe the child’s developmental stage, and influences from familial relations, critical life circumstances and social environment. These elements should be examined in the processing of a specific issue, named by the student, and in the development of a treatment plan for the child and/or family. The case study should draw upon current theory and research related to pediatric health, behavioral health, and integrated care. The instructor’s copy of the case study should include research, theories etc… which support the student’s assertions and plan. Please upload a copy of the instructor and student handouts into Canvas for grading.

4. **Community/Parent Education Training – Due March 19**

1 page Handout; 1 page Summary explaining your approach and background research.

This assignment is worth 20% of your grade

Students will work in groups of 2 – 3 (with no more than 10 groups) to prepare a 15-minute workshop or training session designed to educate parents and/or community members on a child development topic. The presentation should include language and clarity suitable for a lay audience and will emphasize the most important facts, practical advice and useful resources. Possible topics include:

- Soothing a crying baby
- Thriving with limited resources (i.e. financial, familial, educational, community)
- Infant nutritional needs/feeding methods
- Infant sleep issues and methods
- Helping children to cope and endure through racism community violence, oppression and challenges
- Infant television viewing
- Bilingualism
- Recognizing signs of and identifying services for various developmental delays
- Postpartum depression
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome
- Regulatory disorders
- Blended families solutions
- Transition to parenting: family adaptation
- Sibling response to the birth of an infant
- Maternal work: effects on children
- Other topics will be considered as well
Students will email the instructor to obtain approval for their topic. Students will be asked to provide one another with written feedback about the quality of the presentation (both content and delivery). This can be anonymous if you wish. Prepare a handout that would be appropriate for new parents (e.g., summary of relevant information, good websites, relevant organizations, local resources). The purpose of this assignment is to allow students an opportunity to practice translating scientific information into an engaging and useful format for a lay audience. Please turn in a copy of any visual aids and references at the beginning of your presentation.

5. **Play Observation Assignment – Due April 2**
   
   **3 – 4 pages, double-spaced**

   This assignment is worth 20% of your grade.

   Each student will observe children at play in a public setting and observe how their play skills and behavior reflect and/or impact their overall development. You will highlight how various skills may facilitate growth in children of that particular developmental phase. Please include how you would advise parents and/or caregivers in cultivating the use of play to foster growth in their child and mitigate challenges to their child’s development. These exercises should be culturally and linguistically appropriate, financially accessible and adaptable for children with disabilities or unique needs.

6. **Analysis of an Infant/Child Centered Community Program – Due April 16**
   
   **3 – 5 pages, double-spaced**

   This assignment is worth 25% of your grade

   Students will choose one evidence-based or research based program that is family centered, community-based or preventive. Analyze the program using course learning such as principles of infant mental health, social work perspectives, research and theory on risk and resilience, and then describe the program in terms of its procedures for engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation. Please address if the agency’s programming is culturally relevant and identify any areas that may perpetuate injustice towards disenfranchised communities. Examine the program’s strengths and propose ideas to improve the program’s services to children. Students will share their findings in class (maximum of 5 minutes per student).
# Tentative Course Schedule (Flexible)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
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<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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| 1  | 1/8  | Introduction and Overview of the Course  
   |      | Introduction to Child Development Theories 
   |      | Video: *The History of Parenting Practices* |
| 2  | 1/15 | MLK Day – NO CLASS | Davies: Introduction: Perspectives on Development  
   |      |                         | Sunderland: Your Child’s Brain |
| 3  | 1/22 | Importance of the Brain  
   |      | Prenatal and Perinatal Development  
   |      | Substance and Alcohol use during pregnancy  
   |      | Epigenetics  
   |      | **Remembering Your Childhood Paper Due** | Davies: Chapter 2 Brain Development (pp. 39-59) |
| 4  | 1/29 | Attachment  
   |      | Perinatal Mood Disorders  
   |      | Early Infancy Development  
   |      | Protective Factors | Davies: Chapter 1 Attachment as a Context of Development, (pp. 3-38)  
   |      |                         | Sunderland: Crying and Separations |
| 5  | 2/5  | Social and Emotional Development  
   |      | Risk and Protective Factors  
   |      | Resilience.  
   |      | **Case Study Analysis Roundtable Discussions** | Davies: Chapter 3 Risk and Protective Factors (pp. 60 - 104)  
   |      |                         | Sunderland: The Chemistry of Love |
| 6  | 2/12 | Infant Development & Physical Health  
   |      | Perinatal Mood Disorders | Davies: Chapter 5 Infant Development (pp.127-162)  
<p>|      |                         | Sunderland: Sleep and Bedtimes |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2/19</td>
<td>Guest Speaker: Julie Payne, LMSW</td>
<td>Davies: Chapter 6 – Practice with Infants (pp. 163 - 184)</td>
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<td>Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw Co.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>2/26</td>
<td>Spring Break! Enjoy!</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>3/5</td>
<td>Toddler Development</td>
<td>Davies: Chapter 7 Toddler Development (pp. 185-224)</td>
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<td>Brain Development and Positive Discipline</td>
<td>Sunderland: Behaving Badly</td>
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<td>Effects of Poverty on child development</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>3/12</td>
<td>Preschool Development</td>
<td>Davies: Chapter 9 Preschool Development (pp. 251-303)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>3/19</td>
<td><strong>Group Presentations:</strong> Community Parent Education Training</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>3/26</td>
<td>Middle Childhood Development</td>
<td>Davies: Chapter 11 Middle Childhood Development (pp. 337-383)</td>
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<td>Abuse, neglect, bullying and other childhood stressors</td>
<td>Sunderland: All about Discipline</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>4/2</td>
<td>Families, Schools’ and Communities’ Role in Child Development</td>
<td>Davies: Chapter 12 (pp 384 – 414).</td>
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<td>Impact of Technology on Children and Families</td>
<td>Sunderland: Looking After You</td>
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<td>Play across Cultures</td>
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<td>Play Observation Assignment Due</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>4/9</td>
<td>DSM; Grief &amp; Loss; PTSD; Developmental Delays</td>
<td>DSM 5 (online) Neurodevelopmental Disorders pp. 31 - 86</td>
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<td>Video: Grief and loss: a child's perspective</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>4/16</td>
<td><strong>Analysis of Infant/Child Serving Program</strong></td>
<td>Davies: Chapter 13– Developmental Practice and Knowledge (pp.415-419).</td>
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<td>Share in class</td>
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