Human Development

Semester
Spring 2017

Course Code
APSY-UE 9020 and APSY-UE 9021/APSY-UE 9022/APSY-UE 9023

Instructor Details
Dr. Nana Akua Anyidoho
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Office hours: Thursday, 1-2 pm

Class Details
Human Development
Thursday, 10am - 1 pm

Class Description
This course introduces students to human development across the lifespan. The course will discuss the major theories that explain our biophysical, cognitive, emotional and social development through the various life stages—prenatal, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood.

The class format will include lectures, class discussions, video reviews, fieldwork, and presentations.

Desired Outcomes
The learning goals are
- to understand and explain the major theories of human development;
- to explore the extent of continuity and change in a person’s life trajectory;
- to appreciate the interaction of ‘nature’ and ‘nurture’ in shaping human development throughout the life span, with particular attention to socioeconomic setting/status, family background and culture as aspects of ‘nurture’;
- to explore the interaction of home, school and community settings on human development;
- to observe in real life settings (including through classroom observation) some of the developmental processes discussed in class;
- to critically apply what is learnt to educational policies and practices.

Assessment Components

Attendance and Class Participation [10%]: Students are expected to attend all classes (an attendance register will be kept) and to actively participate in class discussion and assignments. One indicator of your participation is submission of

In-Class Presentations [5%]: Each student will give one presentation relating to any aspect of that week’s topic and based on at least one empirical paper. (You may consult the instructor on your selection of a paper). This is an opportunity for students to delve deeper into an aspect of development that interests them, or to investigate questions raised by the class readings. The presentation should provide an overview of the methods and findings of the articles read, and should make a connection to class discussions and readings.

The presentation should answer the following questions:
- Why is the topic of the presentation significant/important to understanding life span development?
- What are the assumptions/hypotheses, methods and findings of the empirical paper?
- How does the paper connect to and expand on class readings/discussions?
- What is the ‘take-home’ message of the presentation?
ASSIGNMENTS [15%]: You will be take-home assignments and fieldwork in the course of the semester to do individually and in groups.

FIELD TRIP REFLECTION PAPER [5%]: You will write a paper (2-3 pages) after one of your fieldtrips, making a connection between your experiences and observations during the trip with the themes of this course.

FIELD OBSERVATION PAPER [15%]: You will produce a paper (6-8 pages) that makes a connection between your fieldwork observations, and the theories of human development discussed in class. The paper should make reference to class readings, as well as to other sources, and should address a specific question. Examples of topics are:

- How do the teacher-child relationships in the school appear to affect children's learning?
- How do peer relations at school appear to influence students' social-emotional skills?
- How does the school reflect the community where it is located? How does the community context seem to influence life at the school?

Consult with your instructor on your topic before you begin writing.

MIDTERM [25%]: A mid-term will be given approximately halfway through the semester, and will cover all assigned readings and all discussions in class up to the date of the midterm.

FINAL EXAM [25%]: The final exam will cover assigned readings and discussions after the mid-term up to the date of the final exam.

NOTE: These are the only basis of assessing your performance in this course. NYU-Ghana policy does not permit extra work for extra credit.

Assessment Expectations

Grade A: Consistent evidence of understanding of the course content that goes beyond class readings and discussions, and displays independent and analytical thinking. Written work (i.e. assignments and exams) is very well-organized, clear and generally free of grammatical errors or spelling mistakes. Consistent and active participation in class discussions. All assignments are passed.

Grade B: Evidence of understanding of the course content (readings and class discussions). Written work is generally well-organized, clear and with few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes. Active participation in class discussions. At least 4 of the 5 assessments are passed, including the final exam.

Grade C: Inconsistent evidence of understanding of the course content (readings and class discussions). Written work is not well-organized, lacks clarity, and has many errors. Some participation in class discussions. At least 4 of the 5 assessments are passed, including the final exam.

Grade D: Partial understanding of the course content. Written work is incoherent, unclear and contains many errors. Little participation in class discussions. At least 3 of the 5 assessments are passed, including the final exam.

Grade F: Only 1 or 2 of the 5 assessments is passed; little evidence of learning. Little participation in class discussions.
Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. **To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is mandatory, and unexcused absences will be penalized with a 2% deduction from the student’s final course grade for every week of classes missed.** Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences will result in harsher penalties, including failure.

Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include days of travel associated with the holiday. Students must notify you and the site’s staff in writing via e-mail one week in advance of being absent for this purpose. Accommodations should be made to allow students who have been absent for religious reasons to make up any missed work.

Requests to be excused from a class on medical grounds should go to the Site’s staff. All non-medical requests must go to the Site Director and should be made in person (not by email) BEFORE the day of class.

Written assignments must be submitted by **on the specified date to the course site on NYU Classes.**

Extensions will be granted only in cases of illness or emergency and, where possible, should be sought at least two days before the deadline.

Work submitted late without an agreed extension (except in cases of emergency) will not be accepted, and the student will receive a 0 for that assignment.

Students must adhere to **NYU’s academic integrity policy** while studying away at a global site. As that policy states: “At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others.”
NYU defines plagiarism as “presenting others’ work without adequate acknowledgement of its source, as though it were one’s own.”

Before submitting assignments, students are expected to reference all sources that you have consulted in preparing them, and to include a full bibliography for every assignment where you make use of outside sources.

Plagiarism, the use of another writer’s words without due acknowledgement, is a serious academic offence for which you will be penalized. The following acts constitute plagiarism:

- Using a phrase, sentence or passage from another person’s work without quotation marks and attribution of the source.
- Paraphrasing words or ideas from another’s work without attribution.
- Reporting as your own research or knowledge any data or facts gathered or reported by another (including another student).
- Submitting in your own name papers or reports completed by another.

Submitting your own original work (be it oral presentations or written work) toward requirements in more than one class without my prior permission. If there is an overlap of the subject of an assignment with one that the student has produced for another course (either in the current or previous semesters), s/he is obliged to inform me.

If you have any doubts about the definition of plagiarism or if you are uncertain whether your work contains instances of plagiarized material, ask the instructor.

**Classroom Etiquette**

Mobile phones should be set on silent and should not be used in class.

Laptops and tablets are only to be used for taking notes. Students are not to surf the internet during the class.
### Required Text


### Supplemental Texts(s) (copies are in NYU-Ghana Library)


### Session 1 [Feb 2]

**Assignment:**

Make a final decision about your school of choice, and report back to the class the reasons for your choice. *To be presented in Session 2.*

### Session 2 [Feb 9]

**Assignment:**

Biological and environmental foundations  *[Chapter 2]*

Prenatal development, birth, and the newborn baby  *[Chapter 3]*

Neighborhood context: Explore the neighborhood in which your school is situated. Take two pictures that you think are illustrative of neighborhood influence. You will present the pictures in class, explaining why you think these say something important about human development. *To be presented in Session 3.*

### Session 3 [Feb 16]

**Assignment:**

Infancy and toddlerhood  *[Chapters 4 and 5]*

[GROUP] From your first two weeks of classroom observations, what strikes you as similar or different about the Ghanaian children you are observing, compared to the children you have observed in New York city classrooms or elsewhere? Discuss as a group prior to class. *To be presented in Session 4.*

**Assignment:**

Cross-cultural early development: Watch the documentary ‘Babies’ (DVD available in the library) which shows the birth and first year of life of four children from different parts of the world ---

- Ponijao from rural Opuwo, Namibia
- Bayar from rural Bayanchandmani, Mongolia
- Hattie from urban San Francisco, US
- Mari from urban Tokyo, Japan

1. Describe episodes or scenes in the lives of all four babies that demonstrate the SAME concept, stage or development event.

2. Based on the episode or scene you have chosen, describe any DIFFERENCES that might be attributed to environment or nurture (that is, physical environment, family arrangements, parenting style, nutrition, etc).
Note: There should be three sets of observations of similarities and differences – one related to physical development, one for cognitive development, and the third for socio-emotional development. Make explicit links to course readings (the textbook as well as the readings on cross-cultural parenting/child development). Due Monday, Feb 27 by noon.

Session 4 [Mar 2]

Infancy and toddlerhood [Chapter 6]
SPECIAL TOPIC: A cross-cultural perspective on parenting


ASSIGNMENT: (GROUP) Compare the children’s use of technology (phones, internet, etc.) across the school sites (you might need to interview the children, since they may not bring these gadgets to school). How available are these technologies? How do they use them? What might be the impact of these devices on their development? How might differences in access and use across school sites lead to differences in development? To be presented in Session 5.

Session 5 [Mar 3]

Early childhood [Chapter 7 and 8]
SPECIAL TOPICS: TV and aggression and The impact of exposure to media


** The class should split into two group; each group should read one of the articles and prepare to present the main ideas in it in class.

Session 6 [Mar 9]

Atypical Development: ADHD, Conduct Disorder and Autism Spectrum

***Chapter in The Developing Person Through the Lifespan, and excerpts of ‘The Reason I Jump’ and ‘Far from the Tree’.
Session 7 [Mar 16]  Middle childhood and school transitions [Chapters 9 and 10]
SPECIAL TOPIC: What school education represents across cultures

March 23  SPRING BREAK

Session 8 [March 30]  Mid-term exams

Session 9 [Apr 6]  SPECIAL TOPICS: Predictors of academic success: Intelligence; personality; classroom environment and teaching style; and peer and the home-school interaction

Session 10 [Apr 13]  Adolescence: The transition to adulthood. [Chapters 11 and 12]
SPECIAL TOPIC: Social media

Session 11 [Apr 20]  Early adulthood. [Chapters 13 and 14]

Session 12 [Apr 27]  Middle adulthood. [Chapters 15 and 16]

Session 13 [May 4]  Late adulthood and end of life. [Chapters 17, 18 and 19]

Session 14 [May 11]  [Fieldwork Observation essay due] Guided revision

May 18  Final exam

Instructor Profile
Nana Akua Anyidoho is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) at the University of Ghana. She has a BA in Psychology from the University of Ghana, and a PhD in Human Development and Social Policy from Northwestern University’s School of Education and Social Policy.

NOTE: This course outline is a guide. The instructor reserves the right to revise any aspect of the course as is necessary to achieve its learning goals.