LONDON SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY

Developmental Psychology

TPS-2-205

http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/psycho/teaching/devpsy-main.shtml

Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences

2008/2009

become what you want to be

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1. UNIT DETAILS

Unit Title:	Developmental Psychology
Unit Level:	2
Unit Reference Number:	TPS-2-205
Credit Value:	1
Student Study Hours:	150
Contact Hours:	48
Private Study Hours:	102
Course(s):	BSc (Hons) DEGREE IN PSYCHOLOGY BSc (Hons) PSYCHOLOGY (CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY) BSc (Hons) PSYCHOLOGY (CHILD DEVELOPMENT) BSc (Hons) PSYCHOLOGY (SEXUALITIES) Graduate Diploma in Psychology
Year and Semester	2008-09, semester 1
Unit Coordinator:	Dr Elizabeth J Newton
UC Contact Details (Tel, Email, Room)	X 5889; newtone3@lsbu.a.c.uk Room E335
Teaching Team & Contact Details (If applicable):	Daniel Carney carneyd@lsbu.ac.uk Room E344 X 5852 Tony Stone X 5815; stonea@lsbu.ac.uk Room 329
Subject Area:	Psychology
Summary of Assessment Method:	Written exam and assessed coursework

2. SHORT DESCRIPTION

Developmental Psychology is the empirical study of the changes that occur from conception throughout our lives. Changes occur in behaviour, sensory processes, thinking and beliefs. Documenting these changes and explaining the mechanisms that underlie them are the key jobs for developmental psychologists. In this unit we consider different approaches to development including biological, social and cognitive approaches. We also consider the ways in which psychological knowledge can be applied in educational and social settings and the importance of studying development when children have problems. For each lecture, you will find a synopsis of the area and learning objectives for that specific topic. The following topics are covered:

- Pre-natal development

- Social development

- Language acquisition

- Early cognitive development

- Learning to read, do mathematics and draw

- Theory of mind

- Atypical development, in particular, autism

3. AIMS OF THE UNIT

The main aim of this unit is to develop in students a body of knowledge and critical understanding of developmental psychology. To achieve this aim the unit will critically review the main approaches to the study of child development in a number of key areas. In examining development from infancy through later childhood within a particular area, a description is given of the sequence of development and attention is then turned to theoretical accounts of the processes, which are thought to underlie this development. The strengths and weaknesses of competing theories are examined. Although the focus is for the most part on typical development, there will be some discussion of the relevance and importance of enquiring into atypical development, exemplified by children with disabilities.

4. LEARNING OUTCOMES

4.1 Knowledge and Understanding

On completion of the unit, the student should be able to:

- identify some of the main factors affecting the emotional, social and cognitive development of the individual

- discuss the nature of changes over time

- appreciate the core assumptions underlying different theoretical and methodological approaches relating to development

- identify issues and themes crossing different areas of developmental psychology

- appreciate the importance of studying atypical development and discuss how learning and development are affected in those with communication disorders, such as autism

4.2 Intellectual Skills

In the course of the unit, the student should be able to develop their ability to:

- critically assess relevant research studies and findings

- demonstrate an understanding of a variety of conceptual issues surrounding the study of development

- produce a coherent written argument in response to a question about developmental psychology.

- understand the requirements of an answer to an unseen exam question.

- use electronic and other library resources to access the developmental psychology literature

4.3 Practical Skills

n/a

4.4 Transferable Skills

In the course of the unit, the student should be able to develop their ability to:

- Produce a coherent written argument in response to a question about developmental psychology
- Critically evaluate research in developmental psychology

5. ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

- **Coursework essay** (40%)

This should be submitted in the way specified in the Course Guide. Students may be required to provide electronic copy of written work submitted. In such instances, the individual student will be written to requesting electronic submission. Failure to provide electronic copy within TWO WEEKS of a written request will result in the work being deemed an incomplete submission, and no mark will be given. The work will then have to be referred for a capped mark. When Extenuating Circumstances have already been accepted for a unit, this will not negate the proper investigation of any component of that unit for any allegation of academic misconduct, nor the subsequent imposition of any appropriate penalty for proven misconduct.

- **Two-hour Unseen Examination** (60%)

Assessment criteria and feedback policy

Assessed work will be marked in accordance with Departmental level 2 criteria as published in the Course Guides.

Coursework Deadline

Unless you have obtained a formal extension from your year tutor, coursework submitted:

- up to two weeks after the deadline date will receive a maximum mark of the pass mark (40%)
- more than two weeks after the deadline will not be marked.

Extensions

Extensions are only granted for valid reasons (see Course/Field guide). Concrete evidence (e.g. medical certificate) will normally be required by the Year Tutor. If you want an extension of the deadline date, you must:

1) get a copy of the form for late submission from the School Office;

2) fill in Part A of the form, giving reasons why you cannot meet the existing deadline date;

3) supply the Year tutor with relevant documentary evidence;

4) ask the Year Tutor to fill in Part B – the decision whether to agree the request rests with the Year Tutor;

5) attach the form to the front of your coursework when you submit it (keep a copy for your records).

Note: each extension form is only valid for <u>one</u> piece of coursework.
The maximum extension period is two weeks

6.   FEEDBACK

Feedback will normally be given to students 20 working days after the submission of an assignment.

7.   INTRODUCTION TO STUDYING THE UNIT

7.1   Overview of the Main Content

Wk	Lecture Tuesdays 1pm – 3pm	Lecturer	Seminar Tuesday 3 – 5 pm
			Topic
1	Introduction to Developmental Psychology	EN	NO SEMINAR
2	Prenatal Development	EN	NO SEMINAR
3	Social Development	EN	Methodologies for studying pre- and post-natal development
4	Language Acquisition	EN	
5	**Reading Week. NO LECTURE OR SEMINAR**		
6	Cognitive Development 1	EN	Video on language development + discussion
7	Cognitive Development 2	EN	
8	Learning to read, draw and do mathematics 1	EN	Cognitive Development -journal article to be read and discussed
9	Learning to read, draw and do mathematics 2	EN	
10	Autism and Theory of Mind 1	EN	Seminar on learning to read, draw and do mathematics
11	Autism and Theory of Mind 2	EN	
12	Overview + Advice about Exam Essays	EN	

7.2 Overview of Types of Classes

Lecture Programme

The day, times and venue for lectures will be posted on Blackboard.

Seminar Programme

Seminar Topics

The seminar topics and readings are listed with the associated lectures in the week by week programme on pages 9-27.

Study Skill Development

Each seminar, in addition to problem-solving exercises and discussions on aspects of developmental psychology, will also involve discussion of study skills, such as essay writing, led by the tutor.

Attendance

You should attend a seminar every two weeks starting in weeks 3/4 (with additional break in Week 5 for all groups). Students will be assigned to particular groups with dates for attending. Details will be given at the introductory lecture and on Blackboard.

Also note Faculty policy on attendance at seminars. If you miss 2 or more seminars you will be required to explain your absence in writing and further action may be taken against you.

Seminar Groups

Please do not ask the tutors if you can change seminar groups. It will not be possible this year. Changes cause confusions with the records of attendance. Tutors will only be able to acknowledge those students on their authorised attendance registers. If you go to a tutor group other than the one allocated to you then you risk not being marked as having attended.

Communication Skills

In line with the Faculty policy on standards in communication skills students are expected to be active participants in learning and to acquire the written and oral communication skills of people who enter the graduate labour market.

Seminar Ethos

Seminars will be facilitated by the group tutor but the discussions should be student led. It is up to you to do the reading and preparation required for the seminars.

Seminar times and locations

Seminars will take place in the following weeks dependent upon your group – this will be posted on Blackboard
(It is suggested that you put these times in your diary at the beginning):

Weeks 3, 6, 8, 10
        or
Weeks 4, 7, 9, 11

7.3   Importance of Student Self-Managed Learning Time

It is very important that you contribute more time per week outside the classroom to independent study than is allocated for lecture and seminar alone. Each week's programme includes a list of associated readings. These readings will help you develop your knowledge and understanding of the topics we look at. The readings, lectures and seminars will help you put together a set of notes from which you should be able to begin revising for the exam. If you rely on lecture notes alone you will not do as well as you otherwise might in this unit. Read the assessment criteria for the levels of award at Level 2. **There is a substantial difference from Level 1.** You are required to show a deeper level of understanding from last year. You are required to show a substantial degree of progression in your critical, evaluative and argumentative skills. This understanding will only come about from your own self-managed learning programme.

There are additional workshops and surgeries on offer for students experiencing difficulties in the university. For example, you could make reference to the classes and study materials available through the Learning and Development Centre (www.sbu.ac.uk/caxton).

7.4   Employability
Students should develop the ability to research and critically evaluate information from a variety of sources.

8.   THE PROGRAMME OF TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Week 1, **Topic 1: Introduction to Developmental Psychology**

Aim

This session aims to re-introduce students to the central ideas of Developmental Psychology and to describe the history of Developmental Psychology. The methods used in Developmental Psychology will also be reviewed.

Synopsis

The lecture will begin by considering key developmental questions and the range of topics covered by the discipline. This lecture considers issues surrounding the study of change. Major theoretical perspectives are summarised. The role of theories and hypothesis in the context of developmental work is addressed. Development can be investigated in many ways and the methods used to investigate development are evaluated and their strengths and limitations noted. Consideration is given to the special issues of studying children.

How this Developmental Psychology course will illustrate the issues surrounding the measurement of change and the major theoretical perspectives of development will be discussed.

Learning Objectives

The student should be able to:

- identify the central developmental questions;
- review the historical context and scope of developmental psychology;
- discuss methods commonly used to study child development.

References

Core Reading

Harris, M. & Butterworth, G. (2002). Developmental Psychology: A student's handbook. Hove: Psychology Press.

(Chapters 1, 2 & 3)

Week 2, Topic 2: Prenatal Development

Aim

The aim of this lecture is to describe the course of prenatal development from conception to birth, with special reference to emerging sensory-motor capabilities, and to consider the ways in which heredity and environmental factors shape the characteristics of the organism

Synopsis

The period from conception to birth is the most rapid stage of human growth and development, in which the course of development is influenced by a complex interaction between the genetic make-up of the organism and the characteristics of the prenatal environment.

Development during this period takes place in three stages, zygotic, embryonic, and foetal, each of which is marked by characteristic events. While a detailed picture of prenatal *physical* development has existed for some time, it is only relatively recently that technological advances have also allowed us to investigate the sensory, learning, and behavioural capacities of the foetus *in utero.* We will consider studies, which have provided evidence about the extent of foetal movement, foetal sensory abilities, and foetal learning, at different stages in the prenatal period.

We will consider how various factors (positive and negative) present in the prenatal environment of the organism can influence its development. Negative factors, such as smoking by the mother, may affect the status of the newborn, leading to conditions such as preterm delivery or low birth weight.

Learning Objectives

The student should be able to:

- Define the three stages of prenatal development and describe the major development that take place in each.
- Describe the sensory capacities of the neonate.
- Describe the pattern of sensory-motor and learning capacities, which emerges in the foetal period, citing relevant studies.
- Describe and explain how environmental teratogens, as well as maternal factors such as age, emotional well-being and nutrition can affect prenatal development.

- Describe methods of evaluating neonatal health and behaviour.
- Discuss complications of delivery and problems that may arise, in the short and long term due to the presence of obstetric medication, oxygen deprivation, preterm delivery and low birth-weight.

Core Reading

Harris, M. & Butterworth, G. (2002). Developmental Psychology: A student's handbook. Hove: Psychology Press.
 (Chapter 4)

Associated Seminar (Weeks 3 or 4)

Topic: Pre- and post-natal development

The seminar will focus on the different methodologies used to study Pre- and post-natal development.

Week 3, Topic 3: Social Development

Aim

This lecture will outline early social development.

Synopsis

Infants have the ability to interact with others and we will consider the importance of these interactions for socio-emotional development. We will look at how the infant learns to recognise themselves and others. How they learn through imitation and play. The lecture will also consider differences in interactions between boys and girls.

The second part of this lecture will cover material from early school years through to adolescence. Entry into school has a profound effect on a child's social development. For many this is a transitional period; from a home environment they have grown to understand to a new wider environment which will entail interacting with many adults and peers. We will look at how friendships are formed and why bullying can occur. We will consider various accounts of the development of moral reasoning.

Learning Objectives

The student should be able to:

- Describe recognition processes in infants.
- Discuss the role of imitation and play in development.
- Show an understanding of the significance early social experiences to the psychological development of the young child.
- Describe the development of gender identity in children.
- Show an understanding of social cognition and prosocial behaviour.
- Describe how friendships are formed and why bullying occurs.

- Critically discuss different theories of moral reasoning.

Core Reading

> Harris, M. & Butterworth, G. (2002). Developmental Psychology: A student's handbook. Hove: Psychology Press.
>
> **(Chapters 6, 10, 14 and 15)**

Background Reading

> Bremner, J G (1994). Infancy (2nd ed.) Oxford: Blackwell.
> Selected parts of
> **Chapter 5, Social Development, pp 177 – 255**
>
> Durkin, K. (1995). Developmental Social Psychology: From infancy to old age. Oxford: Blackwell
> **Chapter 2, Social Life and Infancy, pp 39 – 75.**

Week 4, Topic 4: The development of language

Aim

The aim of this lecture is to consider explanations of how language develops through a critical evaluation of two competing theories of language acquisition.

Synopsis

It takes several years for children to become fluent speakers and we will examine the factors which play a role in language development, from early babbling through to the use of grammatically complex sentences. We will examine the evidence for both linguistic (or 'inside out') and social interactionist (or 'outside in') theories of language development, and look at various methodologies for studying language development.

Learning Objectives

The student should be able to:

- Describe the development of language from birth to fluent speech.
- Discuss and evaluate using research evidence two competing theoretical frameworks encountered in work on language acquisition: linguistic/innatist theory and social interactionist theory.
- Show an understanding of some of the problems which can be associated with language development.

Core Reading

> Harris, M. & Butterworth, G. (2002). Developmental Psychology: A student's handbook. Hove: Psychology Press.
>
> **(Chapters 7 and 8)**

Hirsh-Pasek, K & Golinkoff, R.M. (1996) <u>The Origins of Grammar: Evidence from early language comprehension</u>. London: The MIT Press.
Chapter 1. Introduction
Chapter 2. Theories of language acquisition.

Associated Seminar (Week 6 or 7)

Topic: Language development

A video of language development will be shown. This will be followed by a discussion session of conceptual issues of language development.

Week 5 – NO LECTURE or SEMINAR

Weeks 6 and 7, Topic 5: Cognitive development

<u>Aim</u>

The aim of this lecture is to build on knowledge gained in the first year, looking at differing accounts of cognitive development.

<u>Synopsis</u>

Cognitive development has been a central topic in developmental psychology and Piaget's work has been very influential in setting the research agenda over several decades. Subsequent models of cognitive development have involved the idea of children's problem solving progressing by increasingly complex sets of strategies or rules (Siegler). Another recent model has been proposed by Karmiloff-Smith has suggested children's understanding progresses from implicit (non-conscious) to explicit (conscious) representations. Both these theories will be evaluated in relation to children's understanding of balance.

<u>Learning Objectives</u>

The student should be able to:

• Demonstrate an understanding of the historical origins of research into cognitive development.

• Describe the methods used to investigate cognitive development.

• Discuss findings about cognitive development and evaluate different theories.
• Critically discuss the modularity debate.

<u>Core Reading</u>

Harris, M. & Butterworth, G. (2002). <u>Developmental Psychology: A student's handbook</u>. Hove: Psychology Press.

(Chapters 5, 9 and 11)

<u>Background Reading</u>
Karmiloff-Smith, A. (1992) <u>Beyond Modularity: A developmental perspective on cognitive science</u>. Cambridge, MA: M.I.T.Press.
Read Chapter 1 for an outline of the model and background; Chapter 3 for her analysis of the balance beam task.

McShane, J. (1991). <u>Cognitive Development:An Information Processing Approach.</u> Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
Excellent background reading on Piaget and Siegler.

Karmiloff-Smith, A. (1994). Precis of Beyond Modularity**.** <u>Behavioural and Brain Sciences</u> <u>17</u>, 695-745.

Associated Seminar

Topic: Cognitive development (Week 8 or 9)

Students will be given a copy of, and expected to have read the following journal article:

> Spitz, H. H. (1995). Calendar calculating idiots savants and the smart unconscious. New Ideas in Psychology, 13, 167-182.

The seminar will use this paper as a basis for a discussion about the development of cognition, with particular emphasis on the modularity debate.

Weeks 8-9, Topic 6: Learning to read, draw and do mathematics

<u>Aim</u>

The aim of this lecture is to outline and evaluate selected theories about how children learn to read, draw and do mathematics.

<u>Synopsis</u>

We will cover theories of learning to read both alphabetic and non-alphabetic scripts and Braille. We will also look at predictors of reading success and at atypical reading development. The lecture will also look at how children acquire early number knowledge and how their mathematical abilities develop. We will also look at cross-cultural differences in mathematical ability.

<u>Learning Objectives</u>

The student should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the development of reading skills.

- Demonstrate an understanding of the development of mathematical skills.

- Discuss some of the difficulties which may arise during the development of these skills.

<u>Core Reading</u>

> Harris, M. & Butterworth, G. (2002). <u>Developmental Psychology: A student's handbook</u>. Hove: Psychology Press.
> **(Chapters 12 and 13)**

<u>Background Reading</u>

Associated Seminar

Topic: Learning to read, draw and do mathematics (Week 10 or 11)

The seminar will look at reading and mathematics in education. We will look at national educational attainments targets and what happens when a child does

not follow a normal developmental trajectory. We will also look at screening processes for dyslexia and dyscalculia and discuss these conditions.

Weeks 10-11, Topic 7: Atypical development including Theory of Mind and Autism

Aim

The aim is to develop an understanding of research that has been conducted about children's theory of mind and the way that this research has been used to explain the development of autism. Alternative explanations of autism also will be considered. Other atypical developmental disorders will be briefly introduced.

Synopsis

It has long been recognised that children do not always understand what other people are thinking. Piaget used the term egocentric to refer to this process. More recently a great deal of interest has been generated in the claim that the ability to understand that other people have different thoughts and beliefs occurs at about 4 years of age – such children are said to have a theory of mind.

Autism is a rare condition, which involves impaired social relationships, impaired communication and restricted/stereotyped behaviours. It has been found that the majority of children with autism are not able to succeed on tasks used to assess the presence of a theory of mind, this has lead to suggestions that their difficulties are due an inability to understand and predict what other people are thinking. However, there are problems with this account. Two other attempts to explain autism have involved impairments in executive functioning and impairments in central coherence.

Learning Objectives

The student should be able to:

- Describe the methods used at assess a child's theory of mind.

- Describe the characteristics of autism.

- Discuss psychological explanations for autism involving theory of mind, central coherence and executive functioning.

- Demonstrate an understanding of some of the different developmental disorders there are and how they can sometimes coexist.

Core Reading

Baron-Cohen, S. (2002). The extreme male brain theory of autism. Trends in Cognitive Sciences 6:248-254. A pdf file of this paper will be placed on blackboard.

Dumas, J E & Nilson, W J (2003). Abnormal Child and Adolescent Psychology. London: Allyn & Bacon.
Chapter 4: Autism and Other Pervasive Developmental Disorders, pp 86-107.

Background Reading

Frith, U & Happe, F (1998). Autism : Beyond a theory of Mind. In D. Messer & J. Dockrell (1998) Developmental Psychology: A reader. London: Arnold.

Mitchell, P. (1997). Introduction to Theory of Mind. Arnold: London.

Powell, S D (1999). Autism. In D. Messer & W.S. Millar (Eds.) Exploring Developmental Psychology. London: Arnold

Williams, D. (1993). Nobody nowhere. London : Corgi.

Week 12

Topic: Unit overview and advice about revision and

writing exam essays

Week 13

No lecture

9.   LEARNING RESOURCES

9.1   Core Materials:

Harris, M. & Butterworth, G. (2002). Developmental Psychology: A student's handbook. Hove: Psychology Press.

Highly recommended reading:

Harris, M. (2008). Exploring Developmental Psychology. London: Sage.

Although the text is comprehensive, you will be expected to read original journal articles to supplement your knowledge of the topic. These will be annotated either:

Core reading – you are expected to have read these and may be examined on their content.

Or,

Background reading – these will be more specific to individual topics and although not directly examined, will lead to a better understanding of the subject overall.

Occasionally, additional readings in preparation for seminars may be given out in the lectures. These should be treated as core reading.