

Sabancı University
Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences
PSY 322: Lifespan Psychological Science
Spring 2021

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Course Description:

This course aims at providing students with an understanding of long-term developmental effects. It examines widely-held but scarcely tested assumptions of psychological theories on long-term developmental processes, such as the effects of early life events on adult life outcomes as well as changes in personality and contexts across adulthood. The course introduces existing long-term longitudinal studies, provides examples from popular hypotheses about long-term effects on behavior, surveys evidence on whether these hypotheses are supported and if yes, discusses which mechanisms are responsible for producing these long-term effects.

Required Reading: A reading list has been assembled from top scientific journals in the field. Together the readings provide a sampling of the major topics, issues, theories, and methods on studies of long-term development. It is totally fine if you are not able to follow all the technical details in a paper; but do try your best to understand the main ideas.

Lectures: I will be posting video lectures on either assigned readings or new material or both.

Zoom meetings: The meetings will take place on Tuesdays at 16:40-17:30 (See SUCourse+ for the link). We will not meet every week. The course outline indicates the dates on which meetings will take place. I will not be lecturing during these meetings. The aim of these meetings is to answer **your** questions about the lectures, readings, assignment, and exams.

Exams: There are two take-home exams. The due dates are indicated on the course outline.

“Translate the Findings” Essay: An important part of undergraduate psychology training is acquiring skills to communicate research findings to general audience. Thus, one of the course requirements is to write a short essay describing a research finding from the course to readers who do not have psychology training. This 750-word essay will follow a blog post format (see the [Character & Context](#) blog for an example). You will pick one topic, research finding, or reading from the course and describe it to general audience in a style that everyone, regardless of their psychology knowledge, could understand. More details on this assignment will be provided during the semester.

Course Assessment:

Exam I: 40%

Exam II: 50%

Essay: 10%

Grades: The following grading scheme is used to assign the final grade for the course. No changes can be made to your final grade unless there has been an arithmetical error.

A	100-90	B	79.99-75	C	64.99-60	D	49.99-45
A-	89.99-85	B-	74.99-70	C-	59.99-55	F	44.99-0
B+	84.99-80	C+	69.99-65	D+	54.99-50		

Make-up for assignment or missed exams: In order to be eligible to take a make-up for the assignment or exams, you should have a valid and documented excuse.

Research Participation: Students can optionally serve as participants in research that is run by Sabancı University researchers. By participating in research, you can get extra points. For this course, you will be able to earn up to 3 bonus points. Six research points (1 research point equals ~ 30 minutes of research participation) will be converted to 3 bonus points added to your overall total at the end of the semester. More information on the available research projects will be provided during the semester. You will be able to sign up for the experiments and get your research participation points through the online SONA system at <http://sabanciuniv.sona-systems.com>. Please carefully read the Guide for Students: Sabancı University Experiment Credits System (SONA) posted on SUCourse.

Academic Integrity: Every student in this course is expected to abide by the Sabancı University Academic Integrity Statement. Please see <https://www.sabanciuniv.edu/en/academic-integrity-statement>

Tentative Course Outline *(subject to change)*

Week 1 (February 22nd-26th)

February 23rd: Zoom meeting on introduction & course overview

Part I: “...who considers the things in their first growth and origin will obtain the clearest view of them:” Early life effects on development

Week 2 (March 1st-5th)

Video Lecture(s): Life History Theory: How does early life environmental unpredictability affect developmental trajectories?

Readings: Szepeswol, O., Simpson, J. A., Griskevicius, V., & Raby, K. L. (2015). The effect of unpredictable early childhood environments on parenting in adulthood. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 109, 1045–1067.

Pesonen, A. K., Räikkönen, K., Heinonen, K., Kajantie, E., Forsén, T., & Eriksson, J. G. (2008). Reproductive traits following a parent–child separation trauma during childhood: a natural experiment during World War II. *American Journal of Human Biology: The Official Journal of the Human Biology Association*, 20, 345-351.

Week 3 (March 8th-12th)

Video Lecture(s): What mediates the effects of early life environment on development?

Readings: Simpson, J. A., Collins, W. A., Tran, S., & Haydon, K. C. (2007). Attachment and the experience and expression of emotions in romantic relationships: A developmental perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 92, 355-367.

Belsky, J., Schlomer, G. L., & Ellis, B. J. (2012). Beyond cumulative risk: Distinguishing harshness and unpredictability as determinants of parenting and early life history strategy. *Developmental Psychology*, 48, 662-673.

Week 4 (March 15th-19th)

Video Lecture(s): What mediates the effects of early life environment on development? (cont'd)

Video Lecture: Estimating health costs of early environmental harshness

Week 5 (March 22nd-26th)

Video Lecture(s): Early socioeconomic status and later development: Can we overcome the adverse effects of poverty?

Readings: Kağıtçıbaşı, C., Sunar, D., Bekman, S., Baydar, N., & Cemalcılar, Z. (2009). Continuing effects of early enrichment in adult life: The Turkish Early Enrichment Project 22 years later. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 30, 764-779.

Reynolds, A. J., Temple, J. A., Ou, S. R., Arteaga, I. A., & White, B. A. (2011). School-based early childhood education and age-28 well-being: Effects by timing, dosage, and subgroups. *Science*, 333, 360-364.

Week 6 (March 29th-April 2nd)

March 30th: Zoom meeting on your questions about lectures and exam.

Week 7 (April 5th-9th)

April 9th: Exam I due.

Week 8 (April 12th-16th)

Video Lecture(s): One marshmallow now or two marshmallows later: How does resisting to temptation (and other individual differences) affect developmental trajectories?

Readings: Watts, T. W., Duncan, G. J., & Quan, H. (2018). Revisiting the marshmallow test: A conceptual replication investigating links between early delay of gratification and later outcomes. *Psychological Science*, 29, 1159-1177.

Tang, A., Crawford, H., Morales, S., Degnan, K. A., Pine, D. S., & Fox, N. A. (2020). Infant behavioral inhibition predicts personality and social outcomes three decades later. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 117, 9800-9807.

Part II: Change in Contexts and Characters across Adulthood

Week 9 (April 19th-23rd)

Video Lecture(s): Change in personality

Readings: Damian, R. I., Spengler, M., Sutu, A., & Roberts, B. W. (2019). Sixteen going on sixty-six: A longitudinal study of personality stability and change across 50 years. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 117, 674-695.

Hoff, K. A., Einarsdóttir, S., Chu, C., Briley, D. A., & Rounds, J. (2021). Personality Changes Predict Early Career Outcomes: Discovery and Replication in 12-Year Longitudinal Studies. *Psychological Science*, 32, 64-79.

Week 10 (April 26th-30th)

Video Lecture(s): Change in social relationships & well-being

Readings: English, T., & Carstensen, L. L. (2014). Selective narrowing of social networks across adulthood is associated with improved emotional experience in daily life. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 38, 195-202.

Stephoe, A., Deaton, A., & Stone, A. A. (2015). Subjective wellbeing, health, and aging. *The Lancet*, 385, 640–648.

Week 11 (May 3rd-7th)

May 4th: Zoom meeting on your questions about lectures, exam, and assignments.

Week 12 (May 10th-14th)

No class – Eid al-Fitr (Ramazan Bayramı)

Week 13 (May 17th-21st)

May 21st: Exam II due.

Week 14 (May 24th-28th)

May 28th: “Translate the Findings” essay due.