



## **LNDN PSYC 3352: Child Development in a UK Social Context CAPA LONDON PROGRAM**

### **Course Description**

The course begins with an investigation of the aims and principles of developmental psychology as a scientific discipline, and describes the methods used to obtain knowledge about children. The course will also draw upon Childhood Studies by examining childhood from historical, global, socio-cultural and policy perspectives. This is followed by an exploration of the major topics of development that have been investigated by psychologists.

The course presents a socio-cultural approach to contemporary issues of children's development. The aim is to demonstrate the importance of understanding people in relation to their social world. The impact of global trends, social dynamics and the urban environment on children's lives will be explored. Students will gain an insight into life in the UK – including education and child care practices and policies – and explore how it shapes children's development. Issues such as children's early attachments, the emergence of consciousness and language, developmental disorders and the role of play will be examined.

### **Course Aims**

- To evaluate the major European theoretical models of child development.
- To develop analytical and research skills in interpreting children's development.
- To promote understanding of childhood in the context of globalization, social dynamics and the urban environment and explore how these factors shape children's development.

### **Requirements and Prerequisites**

The course caters for those who have no background in psychology as well as those who do.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- a. Students will gain an understanding of the methods used in developmental psychology and childhood studies to understand children's lives and development.
- b. Students will be able to recognize, describe, and interpret examples of the impact of globalization on children's lives.
- c. Students will develop a greater appreciation of cultural differences in concepts of childhood and child-rearing practices.
- d. Students will gain an understanding of how children's lives are shaped by cultural differences, the urban environment, political and historical factors.
- e. Students will develop their ability to critically evaluate theories and research within developmental psychology and childhood studies.

### **Developmental Outcomes**

Students should demonstrate: responsibility & accountability, independence & interdependence, goal orientation, self-confidence, resilience, appreciation of differences.

### **Class Methodology**

The course will involve: lectures; audio-video presentations; group discussions; and fieldtrips.

### **Field Components**

CAPA provides the unique opportunity to learn about the city through direct, guided experience. Participation in field activities for this course is required. You will actively explore the Global City in which you are currently living. Furthermore, you will have the chance to collect useful information that will be an invaluable resource for the essays/papers/projects assigned in this course.

## The assigned field component(s) are:

The Foundling museum gives an insight into the children's daily lives, taking students through significant Collections of eighteenth century art, period interiors and the story of composer George Frideric Handel's involvement with the Foundling Hospital.

The Victoria and Albert Museum of Childhood houses a collection of childhood-related objects and artefacts, spanning the 1600s to the present day. During and after the visits to the Foundling Museum and the Museum of Childhood History students are encouraged to explore the themes of childhood past and present, and reflect on how childhood has changed over the last centuries.

## Final Exam

The final exam consists of:

Two short essays on topics covered in class. The topics are:

1. Theoretical models of child development
2. Understanding Jean Piaget.
3. Childhood in historical and global perspective.
4. Childhood in crisis
5. Language
6. Play and bullying
7. Attachment Theory
8. Developmental Disorders

## Assessment/Grading Policy

Descriptor	Alpha	UK	US	GPA
Excellent	A	75+	93+	4.0
	A-	70-74	90-92	3.7
Good	B+	66-69	87-89	3.3
	B	63-65	83-86	3.0
	B-	60-62	80-82	2.7
Average	C+	56-59	77-79	2.3
	C	53-55	73-76	2.0
Below Average / Poor	C-	50-52	70-72	1.7
	D+	46-49	67-69	1.3
	D	40-45	60-66	0.7 1.0
Fail	F	<40	<60	0

## Grade Breakdown and Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Assessment Task	Grade %	Learning Outcomes	Due Date
Class participation/Small group discussion	10%	a, b, c, d, e	Weekly
Oral Presentation 1 X 10 min. group presentation	20%	a, e	Week 4
Paper assignment	30%	a, b, c, d, e	Week 11
Final Exam Two short essays	40%	a, b, c, d, e.	Week 14

## Assignments

**Oral presentation:** prepare a 5-10 minute presentation evaluating a recent study published in a peer reviewed journal. You will be given a list of possible articles to choose from. The purpose of the presentation is for you to develop an understanding of what is involved in carrying out a scientific study - including consideration of ethical issues - and develop your ability to critically evaluate the methods adopted and interpretations of the data.

Your report should consider:

- 1) What did the researchers claim to find?

- 2) Describe the methods used.
  - 3) What are the limitations of the methods used?
  - 4) What may be possible alternative interpretations of the data?
  - 5) What possible changes could be made to the study?
- In addition you must submit a **500 word written summary** of your proposal.

**Paper assignment:**

Chose one of the following questions, answering in no more than **1250 words**.

- Discuss the significance of social relationships and cultural context in children’s development.
- Is childhood in crisis globally?
- What is the significance of early relationships for later development?
- Is ‘childhood’ a universal concept that has always existed?
- What has Piaget contributed to our understanding of children’s minds?
- Assess the claim that language is innate.
- Critically evaluate the impact of anti-bullying policies? This should be done in the context of discussing the role of unsupervised play in children’s development.
- How ‘real’ are developmental disorders?

**Course Materials**

**Required Readings:**

**One of the following textbooks:**

*Fundamentals of Developmental Psychology* by Peter Mitchell and Fenja Ziegler, 2013.  
*Introducing Child Psychology* by H. Rudolph Schaffer. Blackwell Publishing, 2004,  
*Understanding Children’s Development* by Peter K. Smith, Helen Cowie and Mark Blades. Blackwell Publishing, 2003.

**Recommended Reading(s):**

Handbook of Cultural Developmental Science  
<http://lchc.ucsd.edu/People/MCole/Cognition.pdf>

UNICEF, Child poverty in perspective: An overview of child well-being in rich countries  
[http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/rc7\\_eng.pdf](http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/rc7_eng.pdf)

BBC News, Is the Teen Rebel a Dying Breed?  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-19786264>

Should We Rethink Our Anti-Bullying Strategy?  
<http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2095423,00.html>

Review of Sticks and Stones: Defeating the Culture of Bullying and Rediscovering the Power of Character and Empathy by Emily Bazelon.  
<http://www.spiked-online.com/newsite/article/13666#.Upc6eNK-068>

Breuer, Revisiting the Myth of the First Three Years  
<http://blogs.kent.ac.uk/parentingculturestudies/files/2011/09/Special-briefing-on-The-Myth.pdf>

Guldberg, The Determinist Myth of Early Years  
<http://www.spiked-online.com/newsite/article/13814#.Upc8qNK-068>

Sampson, There is No Language Instinct  
<http://www.grsampson.net/ATin.html>

Christopher Lane talks to spiked about the new edition of DSM.  
<http://www.spiked-online.com/newsite/article/13688#.Upc6GdK-068>

Questioning Psychiatry, Sandy Starr  
[http://www.spiked-online.com/newsite/article/questioning\\_psychiatry/14441#.UsBG\\_tJdWSo](http://www.spiked-online.com/newsite/article/questioning_psychiatry/14441#.UsBG_tJdWSo)

**Weekly Course Schedule**

WEEK 1	
Lesson title	Theoretical models of child development
Meeting time and	

Venue	
In-class activity	We will discuss what it means to be a 'child' and explore different theoretical models of child development.
Readings	Read the selected chapters from <i>one</i> of the textbooks: -Mitchell & Ziegler, chapter 1 (Themes and perspectives in developmental psychology) and chapter 11 (The Role of heredity and environment in intelligence). -Schaffer, chapter 2 (The Nature of Childhood) and chapter 7 (The child as apprentice: Vygotsky's theory of socio-cognitive development) -Smith et al, chapter 2 (Biological and cultural theories of development) and chapter 15 (Learning in a social context).
<b>WEEK 2</b>	
<b>Lesson title</b>	<b>Research methods in developmental psychology and childhood studies.</b>
Meeting time and Venue	
In-class activity	We will summarize and evaluate different methodologies. We will view video footage of different methods (qualitative and quantitative) used in developmental psychology and childhood studies, and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses.
Readings	Read the selected chapters from <i>one</i> of the textbooks: -Mitchell & Ziegler, chapter 2 (Methodological approaches) -Schaffer, chapter 1 (Finding out about children) -Smith et al, chapter 1 (Studying development).
<b>WEEK 3</b>	
<b>Lesson title</b>	<b>Understanding Jean Piaget.</b>
Meeting time and Venue	
In-class activity	We will evaluate Piaget's contribution to developmental psychology by observing video footage of his famous tests and adaptations of his tests and evaluating what they tell us about children's minds.
Readings	Read the selected chapters from <i>one</i> of the textbooks: -Mitchell & Ziegler, chapter 3 (The development of thinking) & chapter 4 (Does Piaget's theory stand up to examination?) & chapter 5 (What children understand about the mind). -Schaffer, chapter 6 (The child as scientist: Piaget's theory of cognitive development) -Smith et al, chapter 12 (Cognition: Piaget's theory) and chapter 14 (Children's understanding of mind).
Notes	In advance of the class, think about what Piaget has contributed to our understanding of children's minds.
<b>WEEK 4</b>	
<b>Lesson title</b>	<b>Oral presentations</b>
Meeting time and Venue	
Assignments	10-minute presentations summarizing and evaluating a recent research paper that has been published in a peer reviewed journal (see more detailed description above, under <b>Assignments</b> ).
<b>WEEK 5</b>	
<b>Lesson title</b>	<b>Childhood in historical and global perspective.</b>
Meeting time and Venue	
In-class activity	We will discuss how the concept of childhood has changed throughout different historical periods and in different cultures.
Readings	Read the selected chapters from <i>one</i> of the textbooks: -Schaffer, chapter 2 (The nature of childhood); -Guldberg, H, <i>Reclaiming Childhood</i> , chapter 3 (Childhood in historical perspective).
Notes	In preparation for the class, consider whether 'childhood' as a concept has always existed.
<b>WEEK 6</b>	
<b>Lesson title</b>	<b>Field-trip to V&amp;A Museum of childhood history</b>
Meeting time and Venue	

Optional Readings	<a href="http://www.vam.ac.uk/moc/whatson/">http://www.vam.ac.uk/moc/whatson/</a>
<b>WEEK 7 Midterm break</b>	
<b>WEEK 8</b>	
<b>Lesson title</b>	<b>Childhood in Crisis</b>
Meeting time and Venue	
In–class activity	We will interrogate the idea of ‘childhood in crisis.’
Readings	_UNICEF, Child poverty in perspective: An overview of child well-being in rich countries <a href="http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/rc7_eng.pdf">http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/rc7_eng.pdf</a>
Notes	In advance of class, look at one of the six ‘dimensions’ of child wellbeing assessed by UNICEF and consider what the data may tell us about children’s lives.
<b>WEEK 9</b>	
<b>Lesson title</b>	<b>Developmental Disorders</b>
Meeting time and Venue	
In–class activity	We will discuss what ‘developmental disorders’ are and evaluate medical and non-medical perspectives.
Readings	Mitchell & Ziegler, chapter 6 (Developmental disorders) & chapter 7 (Autism).
Notes	In advance of the class, consider what may be potential benefits and draw-backs in diagnosing children with developmental disorders, such as ADHD.
<b>WEEK 10</b>	
<b>Lesson title</b>	<b>Language development.</b>
Meeting time and Venue	
In–class activity	We will outline and discuss what language is and how it differs from communication, and consider whether language is unique to human beings. We will also evaluate theories of language development.
Readings	Read the selected chapters from one of the textbooks: -Mitchell & Ziegler, chapter (Language development) & chapter 13 (Developing an ability to communicate) -Schaffer, chapter 9 (Using language) -Smith et al, chapter 11 (Language).
<b>WEEK 11</b>	
<b>Lesson title</b>	<b>Attachment Theory</b>
Meeting time and Venue	
In–class activity	We will critically evaluate Attachment Theory.
Readings	Read the selected chapters from one of the textbooks: -Mitchell & Ziegler, chapter 14 (Parenting and the development of love and attachment) -Schaffer, chapter 4 (Forming relationships) -Smith et al, chapter 4 (Parents and families) and chapter 17 (Deprivation and enrichment: risk and resilience)
Notes	In advance of the class, consider whether experiences in infancy have a determining effect on the rest of our lives.
Assignments	Paper assignment due (see more detailed description above, under <b>Assignments</b> ).
<b>WEEK 12</b>	
<b>Lesson title</b>	<b>Foundling Museum</b>
Meeting time and Venue	
Out–of–class activity	Visit to the Foundling Museum
Readings	<a href="http://www.foundlingmuseum.org.uk/">http://www.foundlingmuseum.org.uk/</a>
Notes	Consider what the museum tells us about childhood in different historical periods.

WEEK 13	
Lesson title	Play and bullying
Meeting time and Venue	
In-class activity	We will look at what developmental psychology can tell us about the prevalence and impact of bullying and the efficacy of anti-bullying campaigns. We will watch 'Bully' – and anti-bullying awareness raising video - and discuss its strengths and weaknesses. We will also explore what developmental psychology can tell us about the role of play in children's development.
Readings	Read the selected chapters from one of the textbooks: -Schaffer, chapter 4 (Forming relationships) -Smith et al, chapter 5 (The peer group) and chapter 7 (Play)
Notes	In advance of class, consider how one may define 'bullying'.
WEEK 14	
Lesson title	Examination
Meeting time and Venue	
Assignments	Write two short essays (selecting two from a list of eight questions)

## Attendance, Participation & Student Responsibilities

**Attendance:** CAPA has a mandatory attendance policy. Attendance is taken at the beginning of every class. Unauthorized absence from class will result in a reduction of the final grade and potentially a failure for the course.

**Missing classes for medical reasons:** If you need to miss a class for medical reasons or for a family emergency, **you must send an e-mail** to let the Associate Director of Academic Affairs (ADAA) know at least one hour in advance of your class or meeting at the following e-mail: [excused.absence@capa.org](mailto:excused.absence@capa.org). Note that calling the CAPA Centre (0207 370 7389) is acceptable only if you do not temporarily have access to the internet. An e-mail is still required as quickly as you can get access to the internet again. You will need to provide evidence of the reason for your absence. Unexcused absences will result in a grade reduction. In the event of a missed class or field trip, it is your responsibility to contact your instructor and make up any missed assignments.

**Class Participation:** Students are expected to participate actively and critically in class discussions, and the participation portion of the class will be graded accordingly. Students must read assignments BEFORE the class, and come in on time. Participation is a vital part of your grade: students are expected to participate orally in seminars and in online forums and discussions in a critical and evaluative manner; to interact with the faculty and fellow students with respect and tolerance; and to actively engage in discussion. Derogatory or inflammatory comments about the cultures, perspectives or attitudes of others in the class will not be tolerated.

**Academic Integrity:** A high level of responsibility and academic honesty is expected. Because the value of an academic course depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student, it is imperative that a student demonstrates a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work and class behavior. Plagiarism and cheating will result in dismissal from the program. See the Handbook of CAPA Academic Policies for more information and resources on plagiarism.

**Use of electronic equipment in class:** All devices such as laptops, i-pods, i-pads, netbooks, notebooks and tablets, smartphones, cell phones, etc. are **NOT** allowed unless you have express permission from the faculty or you have been instructed to do so. If you require an accommodation to use any type of electronic equipment, inform the Associate Director of Academic Affairs at the beginning of Term.

**Use of Electronic Translators:** In Language courses students are NOT allowed to use electronic translators for writing texts in the target language: those submitting compositions and texts of whatever kind translated in such a fashion will receive a final F grade for the course.

**Late Submission:** Late submission of papers, projects, journal entries, pieces of homework and portfolios is only permitted with prior approval. A request must be made to the relevant Faculty member no later than two days prior to the due date. Late submission without prior approval will result in a full alpha grade penalty. In either case, work cannot be submitted after feedback has been provided to the rest of the class on the relevant assessment or one week after the due date whichever comes first, after which point a grade of F will be given for the assessment.

**Behaviour during Examinations:** During examinations, you must do your own work. Unless specifically instructed by the lecturer or instructor, talking during an exam is not permitted, nor may you compare papers, copy from others, or collaborate in any

way. Any failure to abide by examination rules will result in failure of the exam, and may lead to failure of the course and disciplinary action.