

**Infant & Child Development Lab**  
**830:332 , 2011**  
**Tillet 205**

**Course Objectives:**

The aim of this course is to acquaint students with scientific research within the context of child psychology. Upon successful completion of this course, students will

- **have a basic understanding of the methods and techniques related to research design**
- **understand the procedures of collecting and coding data in a daycare setting**
- **be able to use basic statistics and statistical software to analyze data**
- **be able to interpret the results of the statistical analyses**
- **produce an APA-style empirical paper.**

Upon successful completion, student will be able to:

- **Respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers, instructors, and/or supervisors through successive drafts and revision**
- **Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry.**
- **Evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly.**
- **Analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights.**

**Structure of the Course:**

This course is designed to place the student in the role of a research scientist studying psychology. The semester is built around three primary units and three corresponding hands-on studies in child development, to be conducted at the Douglass Child Study Center (DCSC) located in Douglass Campus. Therefore, this course requires 3 visits to the DCSC throughout the semester. Students are responsible for their own transportation to the DCSC and **timely attendance is crucial!**

The three studies associated with the course units progress from simpler to more complex research designs and statistical analyses.

Mirroring the progressive structure of the course content, the assignments build American Psychological Association (APA) report-writing skills and require increasingly independent use of these skills in your writing.

## **Assignments:**

You will write the 4 main contributing sections of an APA style research report (introduction, methods, results, discussion) for each of the three units during this course. For the third and final unit, you will be asked to submit a completed APA style research report to demonstrate your ability to incorporate everything that you have learned throughout the semester into a final, highly polished paper. You will be given ample in-class time to work on assignments, but also expect there to be out of class work, especially toward the end of the semester.

- **Collaborative Work:** You will work with a partner for the first and second (primary) units. For those assignments completed with a partner, the two of you will submit the same assignment (and therefore earn the same grade) that you have worked on collaboratively. Please use this time to learn from each other and to ask for assistance and feedback.
- **Individual Work:** For the third unit, you will work alone and will be asked to apply what you have learned in the course to demonstrate your knowledge of APA-style scientific report writing. During this unit, feel free to talk to others about their work and to ask me questions, but please do not share your written work with other students.
- **Submission Guidelines:** All written assignments are submitted through Sakai. Please clearly title your file with your last name(s) as well as the course unit and paper section (e.g., "Staples\_execfunc\_method.doc").

**Writing Guidelines:** When preparing the assignments, please review the appropriate standards (supplied during class and available on Sakai) and check your work to be sure it complies. The standards of APA-style writing should be constant point of reference during your completion of assignments!

**Peer Review:** The peer review process is consistently utilized throughout this course. When you are peer-editing another student's assignment, again refer to the resources provided and make your comments are based on these standards. Each peer-reviewed assignment will be graded (out of 2 possible points) based on your submission of a paragraph summarizing the edits and suggestions you and your partner made while peer reviewing. This paragraph will also be submitted on Sakai.

**Academic Integrity:** By participating in this course you will be accepting the principles defining academic integrity. You are responsible for knowing and following standards of academic integrity in all of your work. Please familiarize yourself with Rutgers' Policy on Academic Integrity: <http://teachx.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html>

## **Evaluation:**

- Evaluation of your work is based on the content as well as APA format.
- A penalty of one point per day will be administered for late assignments unless we have made special arrangements *in advance*.

- As the class is designed to give you additive experience in methodology within the field of psychology, the course builds on work completed in previous sessions and therefore, **your presence at all lab meetings is required.**
  - In all cases, if you are absent or need to leave class early, this must be justified with written documentation from the Dean's office.
  - One unexcused absence results in an official warning; Two unexcused absences results in an automatic final grade deduction of one full letter grade; Three unexcused absences results in an automatic final grade of F
- **Grading:** Your final grade will be comprised of three components:
  1. Attendance/ Active Participation 15%
  2. Writing Assignments 50%
  3. Final, Full Lab Report 35%

### **Helpful Links**

- Purdue Owl (more on APA style):  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
- Rutgers Learning Centers (provides academic coaching & writing assistance) -  
<http://lrc.rutgers.edu/>; 732-445-0986 (Busch), 732-932-1443 (CAC), 732-445-0986 (Livingston), 732-932-1660 (Cook/Douglass)
- Rutgers After-hours Escort – 732-932-7211 or use a campus emergency phone (blue light)

# Weekly Schedule for Infant and Child Development Lab

**\*SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO REVISION\***

**9//11:** Introduction to Course and the Scientific Method

*Topics:* Overview of syllabus, class assignments, and expectations

## **--- UNIT 1: Preschool Peer Interactions ---**

**9//11:** Infant-mother interactions and peer interactions

*Topics:* Correlational studies; SPSS; Determining hypotheses; Preparation for DCSC observation of peer interactions

**9//11:** DCSC observation of peer interactions

**10//11:** Peer interaction data analysis

*Topics:* Peer interactions in preschoolers; Correlations in SPSS; Writing Results and Discussion Sections in APA style

## **--- Language Learning ----**

**10//11:** Language acquisition

## **---UNIT 2: Theory of Mind ---**

**10//11:** Pretend play and theory of mind

*Topics:* PsychINFO; Prepare DCSC experiment on preschoolers' theory of mind

**10//11:** DCSC experiment on theory of mind

**11//11:** Theory of mind data analysis

*Topics:* Theory of mind in preschoolers, ANOVA; reporting ANOVA in APA style

## **---UNIT 3: Executive Functioning ---**

**11//11:** Executive Functioning

*Topics:* Intro to executive functioning in children; Prepare DCSC experiment (Card Sorting Task and Variation on Card Sorting Task)

**11//11:** DCSC experiment on executive functioning

**11//11: THANKSGIVING break, NO CLASS**

**12//11: Executive functioning data analysis**

*Topics: Repeated Measures ANOVA; reporting repeated measures ANOVA in APA style*

**--- What Remains ---**

**12//11: Wrap-up**

**--- Additional Dates to Note ---**

**11//11: Optional draft of peer reviewed Intro and Methods for final paper due at 12:00p**

**12//11: Final paper due by midnight**