

**Infant & Child Development Lab**  
**830:332:04 Spring, 2012**  
**Thursdays, 8:40a-11:40a, Tillett 205**

**Instructor:** Alison Staples

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**Office Hour:** By appointment in Room 219 in the Psychology building on Busch campus. Or, after class in Tillet 205 (our lab).

**Course Objectives:**

The aim of this course is to acquaint students with scientific research within the context of child psychology. In particular, we will focus on:

- Methods and techniques related to research design
- Procedures of collecting and coding data
- Using statistics and statistical software to analyze data
- Interpreting the results of the analyses
- Professional writing of empirical papers in the field of Psychology

**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%

# Weekly Schedule for Infant and Child Development Lab

Spring, 2011: Staples

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

**1/26/12:** Introduction to Course and the Scientific Method

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

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

**2/2/12:** Infant-mother interactions and peer interactions

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

**2/9/12:** DCSC observation of peer interactions

**2/16/12:** Peer interaction data analysis

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

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

**2/23/12:** Language acquisition

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

**3/1/12:** Pretend play and theory of mind

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

**3/8/12:** DCSC experiment on theory of mind

**3/15/12: NO CLASS SPRING BREAK**

**3/22/12:** Theory of mind data analysis

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

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

**3/29/12:** Executive Functioning

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

**4/5/12:** DCSC experiment on executive functioning

**4/12/12:** Executive functioning data analysis

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

**4/19/12:** Executive functioning data analysis continued

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

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

**4/26/12:** Wrap-up

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

**4/9/12:** Optional draft of peer reviewed Intro and Methods for final paper due at 12:00p

**4/27/12:** Final paper due by midnight

## Overview of Assignment Due Dates and Points

[Due by the end of class on class days or midnight on a non-class days]

#	Unit	Assignment	Due Date	Points	Writing Notes
1		Research Design	Thurs, Jan 26	5	written in class with a small group
2	Peer Interactions	Method [instructor will grade]	Thurs, Feb 2	10	written in class with a partner
3		Introduction [peer review only]	Thurs, Feb 9	2	written with partner and peer reviewed
4		Results and Discussion [instructor will grade]	Thurs, Feb 16	10	written with partner in class
5	Language Learning	Results [peer review only]	Thurs, Feb 23	2	written in class with partner
6	Theory of Mind	Method [peer review only]	Thurs, March 1	2	written with partner and peer reviewed in class
7		Introduction [instructor will grade]	Thurs, March 8	10	written out of class with your partner
8		Results and Discussion [peer review and instructor will make comments]	Thurs, March 22	2	written with partner and peer reviewed in class
9		Results and Discussion Revise & Resubmit [incorporate peer review and instructor comments]	Thurs, March 29	10	
10	Executive Functioning	Method [peer review only]	Thurs, April 5	2	written out of class individually; peer-review out of class; negotiate exchange dates with your partner
11		Introduction [peer review only]	Thurs, April 12	2	
12		Optional: Draft of Peer-Reviewed Intro & Method [instructor will comment]	Monday, April 9		
13		Results and Discussion [peer review only]	Thurs, April 19	2	
14		Full Paper	Fri, April 27	25	finish out of class individually
15		Participation		10	

