

Infant & Child Development Lab
Summer 2015
Tu&Th 9:00AM – 12:00pm, Tillett 205

Instructor: Michelle Cheng

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Office: Busch Psychology Building, Rm. 133A. Office hours by appointment.

Course Objectives

This class will acquaint students with scientific research in the field of child psychology, in particular the methods used to design studies, collect, code, analyze, and interpret data, as well as present research results in a professional format.

Structure of the course

Throughout the course, students should adopt a scientist's approach to research experiences. The course is designed around three hands-on studies in child development to be conducted at the Douglass Child Study Center located in Douglass Campus. This requires 3 visits to the DCSC during the session/semester.

You will have to write one full research reports throughout the course. For the first unit, you will work with partners. Most of your assignments will be done in the lab. Please use this time to learn from each other and to ask for my help too. For the second and third unit, you will work alone and you will be asked to apply what you learned so far in the course to demonstrate you know how to write a scientific APA style report.

Assignments & Course policy

- All written assignments are submitted through Sakai. Please clearly title your file with your first and last initials and upload as a .pdf. (e.g., PI_Method_MC&JH.pdf)
- Evaluation of your work is based on the content as well as the APA format. When preparing the assignments, please review the appropriate standards and check your work to make sure it complies. The standards should be a constant point of reference for you to determine whether you are on track to acquiring and using the psychology writing skills that are a crucial part of this course.
- A penalty of one point per day late is assessed for overdue assignments unless special arrangements are made *in advance*. Assignments past 3 days of the due date will **NOT** be accepted.
- As the class is designed to give you experience with methodology in the field, **your presence at all lab meetings is mandatory**. In all cases, an absence must be justified with written documentation from the Dean's office.
- **Academic integrity:** By participating in this course you will be accepting the principles defining academic integrity. Please familiarize yourselves with Rutgers' Policy on Academic Integrity: <http://teachx.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html>

Attendance & Participation

- Regular attendance is mandatory and vital for this course. Although I understand that Rutgers' transportation is often unreliable, it is your responsibility to account for this ahead of time and arrive on time every week.
- If you miss a class or need to leave early, you must receive an official excuse from the Dean. This will excuse you from that part of the assignment. Unexcused missed

assignments will be given a “0.” Please keep in mind that most coursework is done in class with a partner. If you do not show up to class, you are hurting your partner as well as yourself. Unfortunately, I will not be able to offer make-up classes.

- Missing one class will result in an official warning and one letter grade reduction in your final grade (unexcused). Missing two or more classes will result in an automatic “F” for the course.
- If there is a date you know you absolutely will not be able to attend, please notify me well in advance (at least two weeks beforehand, if not earlier), so that proper arrangements can be made.
- Active participation in the lab is *highly* encouraged. Student participation can add greatly to your learning and enhance the experience for the whole class. It will be consistently noted and factored into your final grade.

COURSE SCHEDULE

BASICS

- 5/26/15 Introduction to course, the scientific method
- Overview of syllabus, class assignments, and expectations
 - Goals and techniques of science; Research design; ethics; APA style

UNIT 1: Preschool Peer Interactions

- 5/28/15 Infant-mother interactions and peer interactions
- Correlational studies; Infant-mother interactions; Prepare DCSC observation of peer interactions; Determining hypotheses
- 6/2/15 DCSC observation of peer interaction
- 6/4/15 Peer interaction data analysis
- Peer interactions in preschoolers; Correlations in SPSS

UNIT 2: Theory of Mind

- 6/9/15 Theory of mind
- Prepare DCSC experiment on preschoolers’ TOM; PsycINFO Language Acquisition
- 6/11/15 DCSC experiment on theory of mind
- 6/16/15 Theory of mind data analysis, introduction, & discussion

UNIT 3: Executive Function

- 6/18/15 Introduction to EF and experiment design.
- Prepare DCSC experiment; review of statistics and when they are used
- 6/23/15 DCSC experiment
- 6/25/15 Executive Functioning data analysis, introduction & discussion
- 6/30/15 Finishing Up
- 7/2/15 No Class – Final Paper Due

Due Date			Assignment
Introduction			
Tuesday	5/26/15	12:00pm	Research Design (CA1)
Unit 1: Peer Interaction			
Thursday	5/28/15	12:00pm	PI Method (CA2)
Tuesday	6/2/15	9:00am	Read Fabes et al. (2003) and Howes (1980); PI Background Info.
Thursday	6/4/15	9:00am	Read Saffran et al. (1996)
Unit 2: Theory of Mind			
Thursday	6/9/15	9:00am	Read Baron-Cohen et al. (1985)
Tuesday	6/9/15	12:00pm	ToM Method (CA3); Choose 2 relevant articles from Psychinfo
Friday	6/12/15	12:00pm	ToM Introduction & References (WA1)
Tuesday	6/16/15	12:00pm	ToM Peer Edits (CA4), Results (CA5), & Discussion Outline (CA6)
Unit 3: Executive Functioning			
Thursday	6/18/15	9:00am	Read Zelazo (2006)
Thursday	6/18/15	12:00pm	EF Method (CA7); Choose 2 relevant articles from Psychinfo
Wednesday	6/24/15	12:00pm	EF Introduction & References (WA2)
Thursday	6/25/15	12:00pm	EF Peer Edits (CA8) & Results (CA9), & Discussion Outline (CA10)
Final			
Tuesday	7/2/15	12:00pm	ToM or EF Final Paper (FP)

In-Class Assignments are labeled as CA; Written Assignments are labeled as WA; Final Paper is labeled as FP

Grade Calculation:

In-Class Assignments (50 points)

Written Assignments (20 points)

Final Paper (30 points)

Note: Subject to change. Changes will be posted in Sakai and announced in class.