

**Infant & Child Development Lab**  
**830:332:06 , Fall 2018**  
**Monday, 3:20pm – 06:20pm, Psy-105 (BUS)**

**Instructor:** Gala Stojnić

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

**Course Objectives:**

The aim of this course is to acquaint students with scientific research within the field of developmental 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

**Learning goals:**



This course has been certified as satisfying four of the Writing and Communication Learning Outcome Goals of the SAS Core Curriculum. Specifically, students will be able to:

- Communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English, to a general audience.
- Respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers, instructors, and/or supervisors through successive drafts and revision. [WCr]
- Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry. [WCd]
- 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:**

Throughout the course, students should adopt a scientist's approach to research experiences. The course is built around three primary study units and three corresponding hands-on studies in child development, to be conducted at the preschool located in the Institute for Food, Nutrition and Health (61 Dudley Rd, New Brunswick, NJ 08901). Therefore, this course requires 3 visits to the IFNH throughout the semester. Students are responsible for their own transportation to the IFNH and **timely attendance** is crucial!

The course content progresses from simpler to more complex research designs and statistical analyses. Mirroring the progressive structure of the course content, the assignments gradually 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. Most of your assignments will be done in the lab, during class hours, 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/s for the first and second (primary) units. For those assignments completed with a partner, your group 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., "Stojnic\_execfunc\_method.doc").

**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:

- **Grading:** Your final grade will be comprised of three components:
  1. Attendance/ Active Participation (15 points)
  2. Written Assignments (50 points)
  3. Final, Full Lab Report (35 points)
- Written assignments will mostly be completed during the lab hours, as a part of practicing how to properly write an APA style research paper.
- Grades are based on the total points your work has earned (A starts at 90, B+ starts at 87 and so forth).
- **Late assignments won't be accepted and will be given zero ("0") points** unless we have made special arrangements *in advance*.

## Attendance & Participation

- Regular attendance is mandatory.
- 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. Moreover, if you miss lab the week before the preschool visit, you will not know what to do with the children at the preschool. If you miss the day at the preschool, you will not have data to analyze the next week, and if you miss lab the week after the preschool, you will not have results to write about.
- Missing a class will result in -1.5 attendance points. However, note that **missing more than four (4) classes will result in an automatic "F" for the course. Hence, you can miss maximum 4 classes (which would result in -6 points).**

## 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)

# Weekly Schedule for Infant and Child Development Lab

Fall 2018, Stojnić

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

September 10: Introduction to Course and the Scientific Method

- Overview of syllabus, class assignments, and expectations
- Goals and techniques of science; Research design
- No assignments

September 17: Writing a research paper in APA style

- Main parts of APA research paper; proper writing in APA style
- **Assignment #1** *Structure of an APA research report (due the end of the class)*

September 24: Peer Interactions; Observational studies;

- Prepare for the observational study and the first preschool visit
- **Assignment #2** *Method section for PI (due the end of the class)*
- **Assignment #3** Introduction section for PI (due next week )
  - **Recommended literature:**
    1. Fabes, R.A., Martin, C.L., Hanish, L. (2003). Young Children's Play Qualities in Same-, Other-, and Mixed-Sex Peer Groups. *Child Development, Vol 74, No. 3, pp. 921-932*
    2. Howes, C. (1980). Peer Play Scale as an Index of Complexity of Peer Interaction. *Developmental Psychology, Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 371-372*
    3. Rothstein-Fisch, C., & Howes, C. (1988). Toddler peer interaction in mixed-age groups. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 9(2), 211 - 218*

**October 1: FIRST PRESCHOOL VISIT - Observational study**

October 8: Peer interaction data analysis

- Correlations and t-tests in SPSS;

- Writing Intro, Results and Discussion sections in APA style
- **Assignment #4** *Results and Discussion* for PI (**due the end of the class**)

October 15: Introduction to Executive Functions (EF)

- Preparing for the experiment on EF and the second preschool visit
- Practicing the method
- **Assignment #5** *Method for EF experiment* (due the end of the class)
- **Assignment #6** Introduction for EF (due next class)

**October 22: SECOND PRESCHOOL VISIT - experiment on EF**

October 29: EF data analysis: ANOVA

- **Assignment #7** Results and Discussion for EF (due the end of the class) March 12

November 5: Introduction to ToM

- Preparing the experiment on ToM and the final preschool visit
- Practicing the experiment for ToM
- **Assignment #8** Method for ToM (due the end of the class)
- **Assignment #9** Literature background report on ToM (due next class)

**November 12 : THIRD PRESCHOOL VISIT: experiment on ToM**

November 19: ToM data analyses

- **Assignment #10** Results and Discussion for ToM (**due the end of the class**)

**November 26:** Preparations for the Final Paper - review of APA rules; in class practices

December 3: Optional: Q&A

**December 10: no class (final paper due)**