

EPSY 6010: Development for Education
Spring, 2003; 4:45-7:45 Mondays (plus May 1--see UGA calendar)
412 Aderhold Hall

Basic Info:

Instructor: Nancy Knapp
Office: 325S Aderhold Hall, 542-4255
Email address: NKnapp@coe.uga.edu (use only in emergencies--use Web-CT when possible)
Home Phone: 548-9989
Office Hours: 3:30-4:30 Mondays and by appointment

Required Text (available at bookstore): Shaffer, D. R. (1994). Social and personality development (4th ed.). Wadsworth Publishing.

Required CoursePaks - There will be two small coursepaks. The first is available at Bel-Jean now. The second will be available by February 24.

Required Web-CT site--After drop/add, I will be adding your name and email to the course Web-CT site, which you will need to check each week for assignments, etc. in order to access this site, you will need to get a UGAmyID, if you do not already have one. Check with OIT (232 Aderhold) for how to do this

What you may get from this course:

We are all in this course for a variety of reasons. For example, I am here because it is part of my job to teach courses like this, I am interested in how to make psychological theories useful to teachers and other practitioners, and I want to think more about how children's development influences and can be influenced by their educational experiences. You may be here for a similar combination of practical and intellectual goals.

This course focuses mainly on ideas about child development, especially as they relate to education during the preschool and K-12 years. This course will NOT tell you everything you need to know about child development. It will not lay out an organized sequence of stages through which all "normal" children can be expected to pass at certain known ages. This is in part because nobody, including educational psychologists, yet knows all we need to know about child development, and in part because many people (including me) suspect that different children develop differently, especially in different situations. This course has four objectives:

1. Students will become familiar with common theories and ideas about child development.
2. Students will develop the ability and disposition to examine such theories critically, in light of their other knowledge and experience.
3. Through examining these ideas, students will begin to formulate their own theories of child development.
4. Students will investigate potential implications of their own and others' ideas for their future practice, whether in schools, in private practice, or in research.

Your role:

This class is partially structured around the real questions and experiences you and your fellow students bring with you to the class. Therefore, as you participate in all the different activities and assignments in this course, I want you to *try to understand what you hear and read*, but also to *think about what you hear and read*--to ask questions, to agree or disagree, to connect it with other things you have heard or done or read in your life and in this class. Finally, I will ask you to *share your thinking* both in class discussions and in writing. Sharing your thinking can feel very risky; we all have felt the fear that we will ask some stupid question (There are no stupid questions!) or put forward some naive interpretation or unpopular idea. But I will expect you to take those risks anyway. It may help to know that I will *not* expect you necessarily to agree with me or your classmates or with any of our readings. If you find yourself disagreeing (and I myself disagree with some of the ideas we will be discussing), I will only expect you to disagree with respect for others' ideas, and to do your best to explain *why* you disagree--that is how you will help the rest of us learn. Also, most assignments will have elements of choice, and you are encouraged to bring in readings and to propose alternative methods and ideas at any time.

More specifically, the course requirements include:

Readings - from the text and the coursepaks. A list of the first six weeks' readings and due dates is attached. To learn the most from this class, and to contribute to the learning of others, you will need to do the readings before the class day on which they will be discussed. But, as you read, do *not* try to memorize or take traditional notes on what you read. I will *never* ask you to tell me from memory who said what when--all activities, including the final exam, will be "open book." Instead, as you read, I want you to do two things. First, try to understand what the authors are trying to say and why they are trying to say it. Second, "talk with" the authors in your head: Ask questions where their ideas seem to be unclear. Notice the ideas that seem particularly interesting or horrible to you. Remember things in your own life, or that you have read or heard elsewhere, that seem to support or contradict what the authors are saying. Try to imagine what various authors' theories might imply about teaching and schools. Be open to new ideas or inspirations that come to you, even if they are only indirectly related to what you are reading. *As you read, note down these thoughts briefly in the margins in your own intellectual shorthand* (or on separate paper, if you really prefer). These notes will be your initial record of the "conversation" you had with these authors.

By the way, the same technique applies to note-taking in class. By all means, write down anything I or someone else says in class that really strikes you, but also be sure to write down the questions you develop, the ideas you have, and the connections you make.

Reflective Journals (60 points) - **Due most Mondays** (see schedule). You will be writing weekly journals about the readings and discussions we have in class. These journals have two purposes: to give you a formal opportunity to think more deeply about particular aspects or issues we cover in the previous week, and to help me get an idea of what you are thinking about, what interests you, what seems confusing, etc. To these ends, in each journal entry I will ask you to do two things:

1. Address a specific question that I will post on Web-CT each week. This will be a multifaceted question that relates to the reading for the coming week. Every student will address this question.
2. Discuss at least two issues or examples or ideas that really struck you in the coming or previous weeks' readings or discussions. In discussing these, talk about why they seemed significant to you and whether and why you agreed/disagreed with the authors/speakers. Many times you will want to draw connections between the ideas you are writing about and things we have already read or discussed, things you have read outside of this class, or your own personal experiences. NOTE: Real life experiences are *at least* as important to consider in discussing the ideas we will study as other academic writings or theories.

These journals may be handwritten or typed. They are NOT to be polished formal papers, and I am NOT looking for "right" answers or summaries of the course readings (I've already read them). Rather, these journals are places for you to think aloud informally, to argue, to ask questions, to suggest new ideas, to make connections with other things you have learned in school or through your own experiences, or to speculate about possible applications and implications of the ideas you are studying. I would recommend keeping these journal entries, because they will form a main part of the record you will have of your thinking and learning in this class. You may want to refer to them as you prepare to take the exam. You may even find them useful later in your university or teaching career (I have).

I will read and comment on these journals each week. In this way, I hope to be able to address questions you still have and also to get to know each of you better than I can during class discussions. Each of the nine journals you will write is worth seven (7) points. I will give the full seven points to every journal entry that *thoughtfully* addresses *all* of the requirements outlined above. I expect most people who spend time and thought on the journals will get sevens on most journals. Journals that do not address all the requirements or seem to show only perfunctory thought in addressing them will given less than the full seven points. Although there is no official page limit, I think it would be very hard to write a decent journal entry that was under two pages; many entries run 3-5 pages.

In-class group work (60 points) - Every class period, you will work in pairs or groups to apply some of the ideas you are learning. In order to do the group work, you will need to have read the readings for that day. Each of the 13 in-class activities will be worth 5 points and will be evaluated on the following scale: 5 points = thoughtful, informed responses; 4/3 points = less thought taken; 2/1 points = significant lack of or misinformation; 0 points = did not participate.

Article analyses (20 pts. each) - During the first two weeks of class, you will choose a specific topic related to child development on which you want to become more expert. You will find and analyze three scholarly articles on this topic over the course of the semester (see attached schedule & assignment sheet for details). A discussion of all three articles and their implications will be the first question on the final exam.

Final exam (70 points) - The exam will focus on ways to use the ideas we have been studying with real kids in real school situations. In addition to your written cross-article discussion, you will also present what you have learned about your focus topic to the whole class as part of your final exam (see assignment). Two other exam questions will be based on an extended scenario on which you will have already worked in small groups. The last question will ask you to discuss what you have learned in the class. You will receive all questions and instructions for the final exam well ahead of time.

My role:

Setting up and focusing: As outlined above, I will be setting up the main readings, classroom activities, and assignments. I am responsible for keeping our whole class discussions (kind of) on track. However, the course is designed to encourage input from you about readings, activities, assignments, and topics. This course will be better if we all think of good questions to ask and discuss than if I try to do all the thinking alone.

Sharing ideas: As you can probably tell, I come to this course, as we all do, with some ideas about development. I will also, no doubt, develop more ideas as I reread the readings with you and respond to your reflections and other writings. I will be happy to share these ideas with you, both in class discussion and in my written feedback on your writings. Also, I will often share in class some background information or further explanation on a topic that I think will be useful to you. However, I may sometimes keep a rather low profile, especially at the beginning of a discussion. This is not because I want you to try to guess what I "really" think, or because I am trying to pretend I have no opinions. It is just that, if I am not careful, my voice, as teacher, can get to be too "loud," to the point where the rest of you won't have as much room to think and talk as I want you to. I believe this is a constant danger in teaching, both because of the inherent unequal situation, and because people who become teachers often like to hear themselves talk (as I do).

Helping students: My office hours are listed above. I will also be available outside these hours by appointment, if you cannot come in during regular times. During these times I will be happy to discuss, explain, or argue about any of the ideas that have come up in the readings or in class. I will also be happy to clarify my ideas on the various assignments, and give you a "leg-up" in thinking about how to get started, or to discuss my feedback on any completed assignments. I will not preread completed assignments in detail or proofread, as I think this would be unfair to other students, although you should certainly feel free to ask a question about a particular phrase or point you want to make. You also have my home phone above, and I do not mind at all if you call me with brief questions about assignments, etc., although I am not open to helping you construct an entire assignment or having long debates over the phone.

Grading: You will not be competing for grades; I do not grade on a curve. I would be perfectly happy to give out all As; indeed, that would be the ideal outcome if you and I are both doing our jobs very well. Each element of the course is worth a certain number of points (see above); a total of 250 points are possible. I anticipate using the following grade distribution for final grades:

A = 225 and over
B = 200 -224
C = 175 -199
D = 150 - 174
F = below 150

Incompletes are rare and are only given with the advice of Student Affairs. Withdrawals will follow the University policy. The University's policies on academic honesty are followed scrupulously in this course. Please consult "The Student Guide to Academic Honesty" for these guidelines.

Learning: I am always learning when I teach this class, from each of you and from the discussions we will have together. I will try to compile some of the ideas you generate in small groups and reflections to share with the class as a whole. So if you see me scribble something down while you're talking, don't worry--it's probably just because it was such a good idea!