

EPSY 6010: Development for Education

Summer, 2005; 2:15-4:30 daily

317 Aderhold Hall

Basic Info:

Instructor: Nancy Knapp
Office: 325 S Aderhold Hall, 542-4255
Email address: NFKnapp@uga.edu (use only in emergencies--use Web-CT when possible)
Home Phone: 548-9989
Office Hours: 1:15-2:15 daily and by appt.

Required Text (available at bookstore): Shaffer, D. R. (). Social and personality development (5th ed.). Publishing.

Required CoursePak - The coursepak is available at Bel-Jean (163 E. Broad St.) now. You will need it to take the course--the readings in it are required, not extra.

Web-CT site--After tomorrow, 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 coursepak. A list of the 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.

In-class Reflections (75 points) - Sometime during each class period, I will ask you to write a short (10-15 minute) reflection on some aspects of the readings or discussions for that day. Reflection questions for each day will also be posted on the Calendar on WebCT, in class you miss a day. These reflections should be very informal and should be kept all together in a folder. Think of these reflections as a continuing record of some of your thoughts in the class, a place to ask questions, argue with me or the author(s) of the reading(s), make connections with other things you have read or experienced, etc. I will collect your reflection folders at the end of each week, read them, respond to them by the following Monday. 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 daily reflections you will write is worth four (4) points. I will give the full four points to every reflection that *thoughtfully* addresses the question(s) posed that day; reflections are evaluated on content alone, not grammar or other writing mechanics (as long as I can tell what you are trying to say).

In-class activities (75 points) - Every day in class, you will work (often in pairs or groups) to apply some of the ideas you are learning. In order to do the in-class work, you will need to have read the readings for that day. Each of the 19 in-class activities will be worth 4 points and will be evaluated on the following scale: 4 points = thoughtful, informed responses; 3/2 points = less thought taken; 1 point = significant lack of or misinformation; 0 points = did not participate.

Article analyses (25 pts. each) - During the first two days 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 & accompanying assignment sheet for details). A discussion of all three articles and their implications will be the first question on the final exam.

Final exam (75 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). Another exam question will be based on an extended scenario that I will give you. 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 pre-read 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 300 points are possible. I anticipate using the following grade distribution for final grades:

A = 270 and over

B = 240 -269

C = 210 -239

D = 180 - 209

F = below 180

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!