

**SYLLABUS SUMMER 2017**  
**Psychology 363-AL1: Developmental Child Psych Lab**  
Lectures: Monday and Wednesday, 10:00 to 11:20 am  
Labs: Tuesday and Thursday, 10:00 to 11:20 am  
819 Psychology Building

### Course Goals

This course is designed to be a hands-on experience to introduce you to experimental psychology (that is, psychological research). We will learn the methods typically used to study child development, and will have opportunities to actually use those methods in student-designed research projects with children and adults. The goal of this course is to provide a basic foundation for understanding, critically analyzing, planning, conducting, statistically analyzing, and reporting psychological research. Material will be introduced in lectures and will be applied in hands-on individual and group exercises in lab. The course is intense and challenging, but also fair, fun, and fundamentally applicable.

### Instructor Information

Daniel Storage  
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### Teaching Assistant Information

Selim Jang  
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### Required Materials

1. **Textbook:** *Developmental Research Methods, 5<sup>th</sup> Ed.*, by Scott A. Miller.
  - a. ISBN-13: 978-1506332017
  - b. ISBN-10: 1506332013
    - i. Because the book is fairly expensive (~\$100), I strongly recommend buying a used copy or renting the book. It is also perfectly fine to buy older editions of the book at a lower rate, but make sure you are reading the right chapters (most do line up, especially for the 4<sup>th</sup> edition).
2. **Compass2g:** Compass will be the central hub for this course. Here I will post the syllabus, instructions for projects, lecture slides, sample questions for each exam, announcements, grades, additional resources and tutorials, and more. This is also where you will submit all written assignments and project components. We will grade your work and provide feedback directly via Compass. Check as soon as possible to make sure you have access to this course's Compass site. You can also download the student Blackboard App to get notifications when new content is added.
  - a. Link to Compass2g: <https://compass2g.illinois.edu>

## Grading Overview

	<i>Number of Components</i>	<i>Total Points</i>
<b>Attendance</b> (for both lecture and lab meetings)	24	10
<b>Observation Project</b> (research project in groups of 3 – 5)	4	30
<b>Individual Project</b> (research project on your own)	4	30
<b>Exams</b> (midterm and final)	2	30
<b>Extra Credit</b> (basics in R boot camp; details on Compass)	1	3
<b>Total</b>		100 (+3)

Letter grades will be assigned based on your total points (out of 100) at the end of the semester:

97 – 100 pts:	A+	87 – 89.99 pts:	B+	77 – 79.99 pts:	C+	67 – 69.99 pts:	D+
93 – 96.99 pts:	A	83 – 86.99 pts:	B	73 – 76.99 pts:	C	63 – 66.99 pts:	D
90 – 92.99 pts:	A–	80 – 82.99 pts:	B–	70 – 72.99 pts:	C–	60 – 62.99 pts:	D–

## Details for Each Course Component

	<i>Description</i>	<i>Total Points</i>
<b>Attendance</b>	Mandatory attendance for lecture and lab meetings	10

Class meetings for both lecture and lab are mandatory. I want everyone to do well in this course. Because this is a fast paced class with several large projects, the only way to succeed is to show up and work with us directly. Each class meeting will provide critical information to guide you along in your projects. Attendance may take the form of in-class activities, pop quizzes on the course material, or a simple attendance sheet. I will grant you two excused absences (e.g., due to illness, family, etc.), after which you will begin to lose points off your final grade. Contact me *24 hours before class* if you would like an excused absence.

## Observation Project

	<i>Description</i>	<i>Total Points</i>
<b>Observation Project</b>	Group project to test a developmental question	30
<b>Observation Project I</b>	Create a research question and design your study	5
<b>Observation Project II</b>	Test your question by observing at the CDL or ECDL	10
<b>Observation Project III</b>	Analyze your data; write a brief report of the findings	5
<b>Observation Project IV</b>	Create and present a poster depicting your findings	10

The Observation Project (OP) is a group project in which groups of about 3 – 5 students (depending on the class size) will design and test their own developmental psychological observation study. The project consists of four components:

1. *Observation Project I*. In groups and with the help of your TA and me, create a developmental research question you would be interesting in testing by observing

children. This research question needs to be *testable* through observation. Once you have your research question, design your study. How will you test this question? What operational definitions will you use? Lecture and labs will assist in helping you develop answers to these questions. Submit a brief write-up of your ideas (worth 5 points) to be approved by your TA.

2. *Observation Project II.* Test your research question by observing children at the Child Development Lab (CDL) or Early Child Development Lab (ECDL). Where you choose to test will depend on the age group you are interested in. You will need to observe on at least two different occasions, and everyone in your group is required to attend at least once. You will need to take notes during your observations and submit those notes to your TA for 10 points (with penalties for absences).
3. *Observation Project III.* Create a clear, organized dataset in Excel based on the data collected in *Observation Project II*. Using R statistical software, analyze your data. I will assist in teaching you how to use R, and will advise you on how to conduct your analyses. R is probably the most powerful and useful statistical software in existence, but it is challenging to learn; please come to me for help! Submit a brief report of your findings (including descriptive and inferential statistics) to me, and I will grade the accuracy of your analyses. This brief report will be worth 5 points.
4. *Observation Project IV.* Finally, groups will design a research poster in APA style (typical of what you would see at academic research conferences) to display your findings. Each group will present their project to the class at the end of the semester. This will be done in PowerPoint, and clear demos, instructions, and templates will be provided by your TA and me. This will be worth 10 points, dependent on the quality of your group's poster and presentation. I will grade *Observation Project IV*.

### Individual Project

	<i>Description</i>	<i>Total Points</i>
<b>Individual Project</b>	On your own, test a research question on adults	30
<b>Individual Project I</b>	Design a research question and survey for adults	5
<b>Individual Project II</b>	Collect subjects and analyze the data; report findings	10
<b>Individual Project III</b>	Write a rough draft of a research paper in APA	5
<b>Individual Project IV</b>	Write a final draft of a research paper in APA	10

The Individual Project (IP) is, as the name implies, a research project to be conducted individually by each student. You will design a research question relating to development to test on adults. For example, you may want to know about the effect of parenting styles on well being, or whether childhood experiences have an impact on later happiness. This project will culminate in an APA-style research paper.

1. *Individual Project I.* With the help of your TA and me, you will design a simple, testable question that you would be interested in investigating. This question must at least loosely pertain to development (see above for suggestions, and of course brainstorm with us). Once your research question has been approved by your TA, design a survey to test this question. If you wish to collect data online (e.g., via Facebook &c.), Google Forms is an excellent, free platform to create surveys. If you

- plan to collect data in person, a Word document is completely fine. Submit your research question and a link or printout of your survey to your TA (5 points).
2. *Individual Project II.* Collect at least 30 subjects (either online or in person) using the survey you have designed. Create a dataset in Excel containing the data you collected. Using R, analyze your data (again, I will help you every step of the way). Write a brief report of your findings. You will receive 10 points for having a clean dataset, accurate analyses, and a clear description of your results.
  3. *Individual Project III.* Write a rough draft of an approximately 10-page research paper describing your study and its findings. This paper should be in APA-style (which you will learn all about in class). This will be worth 5 points, graded by your TA. Your paper should include the following components:
    - a. A title page and abstract (1 point)
      - i. Your abstract should briefly describe your hypothesis, methods, and results, and should be no more than 250 words.
    - b. An introduction and literature review (1 point)
      - i. Introduce your topic of interest and write a brief review of the preexisting literature on the topic (cite at least 5 papers).
    - c. A methods section (1 point)
      - i. Detail your design; as a general rule, a novice should be able to read your methods section and replicate your study almost exactly.
    - d. A results section (1 point)
      - i. Describe what you found, reporting your statistics in APA-style (with graphs) and interpreting each analysis in ordinary language.
    - e. A discussion section and references (1 point)
      - i. Briefly reiterate your research question and summarize what you found; discuss the limitations of your study and potential directions for future research. Include an APA-style reference page.
  4. *Individual Project IV.* Taking into account the comments and feedback from your TA, revise the rough draft of your research paper. Submit a final draft of your research paper, worth 10 points, graded by me.

## Exams

	<i>Description</i>	<i>Total Points</i>
<b>Exams</b>	Two exams testing understanding of course content	30
<b>Midterm Exam</b>	In-class exam on the first half of the course	15
<b>Final Exam</b>	In-class exam on the second half of the course	15

This course consists of two exams. The Midterm Exam will be given roughly half way through the semester, and will test your understanding of the course content in the first half of class. At the end of the semester, you will have a “semi-cumulative” Final Exam, which will test your broad understanding of research methods and statistics. This exam is “semi-cumulative” in that, although I will not explicitly test on material from the first half of the course, material builds on itself. As a result, concepts from the first half of the course may appear in some form or fashion on the Final Exam. We will hold a review session prior to each exam.

## Course Calendar

Below, please find the course calendar (subject to change). Please consult this calendar very often, as there are many dates (e.g., due dates for assignments) that you will need to be aware of.

Rows highlighted in **BLUE** indicate exam days, whereas rows highlighted in **RED** indicate class time devoted to working on your various research projects (i.e., class is optional).

Date	Meeting	What's Happening	What's Due
Week 1			
12-June	Lecture	<i>PSYC 363 Intro: Syllabus, Expectations, &amp; Overview</i>	
13-June	Lab	<i>Lab Intro: Group Assignment &amp; Lit Search Tutorial</i>	
14-June	Lecture	<i>How To Approach Scientific Research</i>	
15-June	Lab	<i>Where You'll Collect Data: Tour of the CDL and ECDL</i>	Meet at CDL
Week 2			
19-June	Lecture	<i>Best Practices for Measurement in Research</i>	Read Ch. 4
20-June	Lab	<i>Measurement Lab: Hands-on Measurement Practice</i>	
21-June	Lecture	<i>Ethics in Research With Children</i>	Read Ch. 10
22-June	Lab	<i>OP Topic Development; Operational Definitions</i>	
Week 3			
26-June	Lecture	<i>Research in Developmental Psychology</i>	Read Ch. 7
27-June	Lab	<i>How to Write and Cite in APA-style</i>	<b>Due: OP I</b>
28-June	Lecture	<i>Research Design; Exam Review Session</i>	Read Ch. 12
29-June	Lab	<i>IP Topic Development; Survey Design Tutorial</i>	
Week 4			
03-July	Lecture	<b>Exam 1</b>	<b>Due: IP I</b>
04-July	Off	<i>Off for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July</i>	
05-July	Off	<i>OP: Observation Time (1<sup>st</sup> of 2)</i>	Observe at CDL
06-July	Optional	<i>Help With OP or IP</i>	
Week 5			
10-July	Lecture	<i>Research Best Practices; Observation Discussion</i>	
11-July	Off	<i>OP: Observation Time (2<sup>nd</sup> of 2)</i>	Observe at CDL
12-July	Lecture	<i>Descriptive and Inferential Statistics in Research</i>	<b>Due: OP II</b>
13-July	Lab	<i>Statistics Workshop: Hands-on With R (With Daniel)</i>	Read Ch. 9
Week 6			
17-July	Lecture	<i>Inferences and Conclusions</i>	<b>Due: IP II</b>
18-July	Optional	<i>Help with OP III and IP III</i>	
19-July	Lecture	<i>How to Present Data; Poster Preparation</i>	<b>Due: OP III</b>
20-July	Lab	<i>Exam Review Session</i>	
Week 7			
24-July	Lecture	<b>Exam 2</b>	
25-July	Lab	<i>Poster Workshop: Hands-on Poster Development</i>	
26-July	Lecture	<i>How to Write Like a Scientist</i>	
27-July	Optional	<i>Help with OP IV</i>	<b>Due: IP III</b>
Week 8			
31-July	Lecture	<i>Observation Project Poster Presentations</i>	<b>Due: OP IV</b>
01-Aug	Lab	<i>What Does Research Look Like? Lab Tours</i>	Meet at R. 157
02-Aug	Lecture	<i>Final Thoughts and Main Takeaways of the Course</i>	<b>Due: IP IV</b>
03-Aug	Off	<i>Reading Day</i>	
End of the semester ☺			

## How to Succeed

We understand that people take courses for many different reasons, and that your interest in psychology does not necessarily mean that you find research methods to be interesting. We hope, however, that this course will still instill an appreciation for sound methodology and an overall understanding of the research process. Here are a few suggestions to help:

1. Come to class. Ask questions. Meet with us. We are here to help and advise!
2. Try to develop research questions that really interest you, and think carefully about what they mean and why they are important. Interest → Engagement → Achievement.
3. Pay attention to what methods we use and the many factors that developmental psychologists have to pay attention to in the service of furthering our understanding of development and of why people become who they are.

## Course Policies

*Late Assignments.* Assignments are due at the beginning of class meetings. Late assignments will receive a 0.5-point reduction for each day late (e.g., submitting an assignment after class on a given due date results in a 0.5-point penalty; submitting an assignment the day after class results in a 1-point penalty; etc.).

*Make-up Exams.* Make-up exams will only be given to those with a valid, documented excuse. Please contact us as soon as possible (or, rather, as far as possible ahead of time) if you will need a make-up exam.

*Grade Changes.* Grade changes will not be made except in the case of miscalculations or errors on the part of your TA or me. In the interest of consistency and fairness for everyone, borderline grades (e.g., 89.6%) will not be rounded up.

*Academic Integrity.* I take academic dishonesty very seriously, as it creates an uneven playing ground for students and challenges the collaborative learning environment I am trying to cultivate. As a result, plagiarism, cheating, and all forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Students are expected to abide by the University's policies concerning academic integrity (<https://tinyurl.com/43nenc4>).

*Special Needs.* Students that require additional accommodations or assistance (e.g., hearing, vision, learning, medical, etc.), or have any religious practice that may conflict with the class, should let us know as soon as possible. We are more than willing and happy to accommodate and provide assistance. Please consult the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) office (<http://www.disability.illinois.edu/>).

## Additional Information

Child Development Lab (CDL)  
1105 W. Nevada Street  
Urbana, IL 61801

Early Child Development Lab (ECDL)  
1005 W. Nevada Street  
Urbana, IL 61801

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I am very much looking forward to working with you all this semester!

Please never hesitate to get in touch if you need assistance, guidance, or advice.

I hope you all have a positive experience in this course! 😊  
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