

BROCK UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF CHILD AND YOUTH STUDIES

CHYS 3P65 THINKING AND DEVELOPMENT – FALL 2010

Instructor: Dr. Anthony Volk
Office and Phone: AS 432A, 688-5550 (ext. 5368)
Office Hours: By appointment
E-mail: tvolk@brocku.ca

Lectures: Thursdays 11:00 –14:00, TH 255

Text: Bjorklund, D. F. (2005). *Children's Thinking: Cognitive Development and Individual Differences* (4th ed.). Stamford, CT: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning. Required.

Course Description:

This course focuses on cognitive development from infancy through adolescence. It involves gaining an understanding of the theoretical concepts underlying child cognitive development and how they can be applied to understanding, and working with, children. In lectures, the course will spend the first half of the semester examining the theoretical perspectives that frame our understanding of cognitive development. In the second half of the semester, lectures will focus on how these theories are applied to specific aspects of child development.

Course Objectives:

The goal of the course is to teach students how children think, and how children's thinking changes over the course of development. By the end of the year, students should be able to describe how children's thinking changes over time, why those changes occur, and what can be done at the practical and/or clinical level to encourage or alter child cognitive development.

Course Evaluation:

Mid Term 1- 20%
Mid Term 2- 30%
Final Exam - 30%
Class Q&A – 20%

Tests:

The mid-term exams will consist of short answer and essay questions on Chapters 1-4 and on Chapters 5-6 & 10-11 respectively. Each test will cover lecture material and the chapters indicated on the course schedule listed below. The final exam will test for Chapters 12-15, as well as some applied questions that may require knowledge from all of the Chapters. Additional information about the format and content of each test will be provided in class.

Missed Exams:

When possible, missed are to be supported by appropriate documentation (e.g., Doctor's note) by the student or the student may receive a grade of ZERO on that exam or presentation. Possible circumstances for missing an exam may include religious or cultural reasons or may be due to illness. If at all possible, the instructor should be informed prior to the date of the scheduled exam. If you have any doubt about whether an event, illness, or circumstance qualifies for an exemption or deferral, please contact the instructor ASAP.

Missed mid-term exams will have their grades added to later exams (equally). There WILL NOT be make-up exams for the mid-term exams. Make-ups for the final exam will be scheduled as required.

Class Q&A:

At the end of the classes from Week 6 (inclusive) onwards, there will be a Q&A period for the class. This will consist of students getting into groups of 5 students or fewer and coming up with a good question relating to the class content. Students will present that question in writing to me, with a first-come, first-serve priority if two groups come up with the same question. Once all the questions are in, I will read them out loud and ask the group who asked that question to answer that question. A very good question will be worth 2%, a very good answer will be worth 2%. Average questions and answers will be worth 1%. As there are 6 sessions, students can miss one session without penalty. More than that and students must bring in documentation to avoid a penalty. Students who complete all six sessions will get any extra marks as a bonus.

WebCT:

WebCT has been offered as a resource where you can communicate with your classmates and the instructor about course content and any related questions. It will include postings of course business, and lecture notes. WebCT is an optional resource, and is not required for successful completion of the course. Please note that while all reasonable efforts will be made, the instructor is not required to accommodate all students with course notes that they deem satisfactory. Course notes are an optional supplement, not a mandatory requirement, of the course.

Course Outline:

Week 1 – September 9

Introduction to Cognitive Development & Biological Bases of Cognitive Development

Read: Chapters 1 & 2

Week 2 – September 16

Sociocultural Perspectives

Read: Chapter 3

Week 3 – September 23

Piaget & Neo-Piagetians

Read: Chapter 4

Week 4 – September 30

Mid-Term 1

Week 5 – October 7

Information Processing / Strategies & Cognitive Development

Read: Chapter 5 & 6

Week 6 – October 14

Memory Development

Read: Chapter 10

Week 7 – October 21

Language Development

Read: Chapter 11

Week 8 – October 28

Problem Solving and Reasoning

Read: Chapter 12

Week 9 – November 4

Mid-Term 2

Week 10 – November 11

Social Cognition

Read: Chapter 13

Week 11 – November 18

Schooling and Cognition

Read: Chapter 14

Week 12 – November 25

Intelligence and Epilogue

Read: Chapter 15 and Epilogue

Department of Child and Youth Studies

Important Academic Announcements – Please Review!

Course Withdrawal Without Academic Penalty:

The deadlines for withdrawal from courses without academic penalty are as follows:

D2 (September to December): **November 5, 2010**

D1 (September to April): **January 21, 2011**

D3 (January to April): **March 4, 2011**

The instructor will communicate to students a minimum of 15% of the final course grade no later than the week prior to the applicable deadline. *In cases where, due to the nature of the course, this requirement cannot be met, the instructor shall inform students in the course syllabus.*

Academic Misconduct:

Because academic integrity is vital to the well-being of the university community, Brock University takes academic misconduct very seriously. Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, which involves presenting the words and ideas of another person as if they were your own, and other forms of cheating, such as using crib notes during a test or fabricating data for a lab assignment. The penalties for academic misconduct can be very severe. A grade of zero may be given for the assignment or even for the course, and a second offence may result in suspension from the University. Students are urged to read the section of the Brock University Undergraduate Calendar that pertains to academic misconduct. Students are also reminded that the Student Development Centre (Schmon Tower, Room 400) offers free workshops on writing and study skills and on avoiding plagiarism.

Phrase Matching Software (i.e., Turnitin.com):

Instructors may take advantage of a number of different phrase matching software programs to assist them in the detection of plagiarism during the course of evaluating essays, assignments and other work that is required for a given course. However, if an instructor has decided to employ such systems, students must be informed in writing at the beginning of the course.

Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy:

Brock University's "Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy" applies to all students, course participants, staff, faculty and volunteers of Brock University. The purpose of this policy is to:

- Develop and support a work and learning culture that values diversity and inclusion, fosters respect, and does not tolerate prejudice, discrimination, harassment and/or bullying;
- Outline rights, responsibilities and types of behaviour which fall within the scope of this policy;
- Make provision for support services, including training and awareness initiatives, to promote a respectful work and learning environment; and
- Outline procedures for handling and resolving complaints when this policy is breached by discrimination, harassment and/or bullying.

The policy may be viewed at <http://www.brocku.ca/secretariat/admin/>.

Personal Safety:

For those in evening classes, BUSU offers a "foot patrol" to safely escort students to their vehicles. Call extension 4700 to request assistance.