



EDUC/PSYCH/SOC 430: Human Development in Culture
Course Syllabus
Fall 2024

Instructor: Natascia Petringa, PhD

Credits: 3

Contact Hours: 45

Prerequisites: None

Class Meeting Days & Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:45-12:15

Office Hours: By appointment via email. Your Professor is usually on campus before or after class.

Course Type: Course with a Service Learning component

Course Fee: 5 USD

Course Description

This course provides students with an overview of main approaches in human development. Students are introduced to psychological and anthropological theories about childhood and the role of culture. The course content reflects the fact that “culture” means different things to different people and is conceptualized at many different levels of organization, from the national and supra-national (e.g., Asian vs. Western) to home, family, and local community. The readings cover different areas within the psychological sciences, including developmental, educational, social, and cognitive psychology. Implications and limitations of such studies will be amply discussed in class. While learning about theories and methods, students will *use* contemporary research tools for analyzing scientific publications about childhood, learning, and human development.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- *Identify* the main approaches used by scholars for studying cognitive, learning and socio-emotional development;
- *Enhance* knowledge about concepts of human development with a lens on culture;
- *Identify* the methodologies used to study childhood, adolescence and early adult development;
- *Explore* the opportunities and challenges of cross-cultural psychology; and
- *Examine* human development through culturally diverse peer-reviewed literature sources.

Course Materials

A course reader, including all the indicated readings, will be available. The course’s Moodle site is the primary location for readings and assignments.

Assessment

10%	Attendance
5%	One-to-one meeting with professor (office hours) twice during the semester (2.5% each)
10%	Weekly quizzes on Moodle (10 weeks)
15%	Weekly course journal entries on the readings (graded <u>three</u> times during the semester)
10%	Service Learning Project
20%	Midterm exam
25%	Final exam
5%	End of semester Community Engagement Presentations

Grading

Students are reminded that it is their responsibility to note the dates of exams and other assignments. No alternative exam dates will be offered and professors are not required to give partial credit for any late work (they do so at their discretion: the Institute's default policy is no extensions and a zero for any work turned in late). Students who book travel when they have an exam or other assessment will have to change their plans or accept a zero. Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

Letter Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A A-	93% - 100% 90% - 92%	Exceptional Excellent
B+ B B-	87% - 89% 83% - 86% 80% - 82%	Superior
C+ C C-	77% - 79% 73% - 76% 70% - 72%	Satisfactory
D+ D D-	67% - 69% 63% - 66% 60% - 62%	Low Pass
F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)

Please note: decimal numerals between 1-4 are rounded down while 5-9 are rounded up: e.g., expect 89.4 to be 89.0 while 89.5 to round up to 90.

Course Requirements

Assignments will follow an incremental approach simulating a scientific investigation. Using research platforms and scientific papers, you will play the role of a social scientist. Once you have identified a topic of interest, you will learn how to conduct a literature review, how to examine peer-review publications, and how to critically evaluate their differences and similarities. Grades for this course are based on the following criteria.

Attendance (10%)

Attendance is an essential part of this course. If you attend all the meetings, you will receive a full grade. There is no make-up offered for attendance.

One-on-one meetings with professor (office hours) (5%)

Students are expected to sign up for **two** slots of 20 minutes for a 1:1 meeting during my office hours. The rationale for this will be shared with the class. Getting to know your professor makes you more comfortable with that person and therefore more likely to ask for help. It might also help you to ask questions about the various assignments. In this course, 2.5% of your grade will be allocated to you for every time you visit me. This amounts to a total of 5% on your overall grade. I would suggest a fairly early visit and then an intermediate one. **Don't wait until the end of the semester!**

Weekly Quizzes on Moodle (10%)

Students will be assigned a short quiz (approx. 3-5 questions) every week on Moodle and it is not timed. These will be a combination of content, methodological, and technical questions. The content questions will help students zoom in on the most important ideas of the readings. The methodological questions will test skills that will pop up every week, like finding an author's argument, assessing sources etc. Whereas the technical questions will help students learn the class's policies and administrative procedures.

Weekly Course Journal Entries (15%)

Students will keep a Weekly Course Journal (written format preferred; digital is also possible) which they will use as a personal space to reflect on course material and ideas. At the end of each class, students will be given a question to answer in their course journal. Entries in your course journal will be graded three times throughout the semester, i.e., early in the semester (Week 4), around mid-semester (Week 8) and at the end of the course (Week 12).

Service Learning Project (10%)

Students will investigate the principles and psychological outcomes of the Italian and American education systems through theoretical and direct experience in the Italian classroom setting. Students will prepare and lead cultural-based English language activities in a primary school class. This will allow students to collect data on students' responses and interactions while teaching a language.

Midterm Exam (20%)

On Week 6, students will take an in-class midterm exam. A detailed prompt will be available on Moodle.

Final Exam (25%)

During Week 13, the students will take an in-class final exam. A detailed prompt will be available on Moodle.

End of Semester Community Engagement Presentations (5%)

During Special Academic Events Week, the class will present a 15-minute summary of the project experience to the Umbra community during the **Community Engagement Final Presentations on Wednesday, December 11**. Students will receive the guidelines and presentation order after the mid-semester break. Participation in this event is MANDATORY and an integral part of the community engagement grade.

Extension & Submitting Late Work

Work submitted after the deadline will receive a grade of zero, not partial credit. Each student is allowed one extension of 24 hours over the entire semester. This can be used for any assignment but the final project. Students need to email the instructor before the deadline and inform the instructor of their use of the extension. Any work submitted after the 24-hour extension will be marked zero. As for all policies, exceptions can be made by the Director for students with special accommodations or in case of medical emergencies, etc.

Attendance & Lateness Policy

Attendance is expected and mandatory for classroom times and co-curricular activities. Regular attendance is a critical component of academic success and students are expected to attend all scheduled classes unless there is a legitimate reason for absence. Students are also expected to be on time for all classes and co-curricular activities.

Each unexcused absence will affect the final grade by 1.5% up to a maximum of 10%. Each incident of tardiness (late arrivals to or early departures from class) is 0.5% off the final grade. Excessive unexcused absences (8 or more) may result in a failing grade or disciplinary action. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the number of absences or late arrivals for each course, and to ask the instructor when in doubt.

If students miss class, they are responsible for obtaining class notes from other students and/or for meeting the professor during office hours. Any work missed in class because of an excused absence may be made up within one week of the return to the class. Any work missed that was a quiz or other test must be made up outside of class time and will, in the interest of intellectual honesty, be a slightly different test than the one given in class.

Presence during mandatory field trips is especially important. Missing a mandatory field trip for a course, unless for a very serious reason that is communicated to Umbra staff in a timely manner, will be considered the equivalent of two unexcused absences. As such, absence from the co-curricular field trip will lower students' final grade in that course by 3% (the equivalent of two unexcused absences).

Legitimate reasons for an excused absence or tardiness includes death in immediate family, religious observances, illness or injury, local inclement weather, and medical appointments that cannot be rescheduled. Absences relating to illness may be excused by the Director but only if a medical certification is provided. Students who

request an approved absence to observe a religious holiday must submit a formal request to the Institute's Director within one week after the add/drop period when course schedules, including any field trips, are finalized. No exceptions will be made after this deadline.

Except in the case of medical emergencies, absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up. Furthermore, scheduled times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason. Even if more sections of the same class are activated, students may only take exams during the scheduled times and dates for the section they are enrolled in.

Academic Integrity

All forms of cheating (i.e., copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes) and plagiarism (i.e., presenting the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation without acknowledging the source) will be handled according to the Institute Academic Policy, which can be found in the Umbra Institute Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

Utilizing ChatGPT or other artificial intelligence (AI) tools for the generation of content submitted by a student as their own as part of any assignment for academic credit at the Institute constitutes a form of plagiarism. Should the Institute become aware of a student's use of such platforms and services, the student will be subject to the same consequences and judicial proceedings as are in place for plagiarism (defined above).

Classroom Policy

Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate respect for the historical premises that the school occupies. Please note that cell phones must be set on silent mode before the beginning of each class. Computers and other electronic devices cannot be used during class lectures and discussions for anything other than note-taking, unless there has been a specific academic accommodation.

Laptop/Smartphone Policy

I, as an instructor and as a person, am dependent on both my computer and my telephone. That said: An ever-increasing body of research shows that open laptops and telephones in the classroom create distraction (both visual and auditory) for those using them and those around them. You can type faster than you can write, and as a result you end up processing less when you're simply typing notes. For this reason, I have a physical notebook policy: I ask you to leave your computers in your bags and phones in your pockets and use a regular notebook. There are three exceptions: 1) if you have accommodations related to your vision; 2) if you make an office hours appointment with me to discuss the use of a computer; 3) if we have an in-class tutorial about online research tools.

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

Most **weekly readings** will come from:

Siegler, Robert S., Jenny Saffran, Elizabeth T. Gershoff, Nancy Eisenberg, and Campbell Leaper. 2019. *How Children Develop*. Worth Publishers.

WEEK 1 (SEPTEMBER 9 - 13, 2024)

Introduction and Welcome to Human Development in Culture

Meeting 1: *Welcome and introduction to the course*

Please check Moodle and do each weekly assignment **BEFORE** the weekly meeting. For example, Siegler, Robert S., Jenny Saffran, Elizabeth T. Gershoff, Nancy Eisenberg, and Campbell Leaper. 2019. *How Children Develop*. Worth Publishers. (Chapter 1, **STOP** reading at Section 7 entitled “*Research and Children’s Welfare: How Can Research Promote Children’s Well-Being?*”) will need to be done **BEFORE** our Meeting 2 class. This is how the syllabus works.

Meeting 2: *What is the study of human development?*

Reading:

Siegler, Robert S., Jenny Saffran, Elizabeth T. Gershoff, Nancy Eisenberg, and Campbell Leaper. 2019. *How Children Develop*. Worth Publishers. (Chapter 1, **STOP** reading at Section 7 entitled “*Research and Children’s Welfare: How Can Research Promote Children’s Well-Being?*”).

Service Learning Project - Project Presentation and Overview (Mr Manuel Barbato and Ms Margherita Garilli)

Assignment:

Weekly Moodle Quiz

WEEK 2 (SEPTEMBER 16 - 20, 2024)

Cultural Psychology, Cross-Cultural Psychology and Human Development

Meeting 1: *What is cultural psychology? Why is it important?*

Reading:

Shweder, Richard A. “**Cultural Psychology** – What Is It?” Introduction. In *Cultural Psychology: Essays on Comparative Human Development*, edited by James W. Stigler, Richard A. Shweder, and Gilbert Herdt, 1–44. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990. (35 pages).

Meeting 2: *What is cross-cultural psychology? Why is it important?*

Reading:

Shiraev, Eric B., and David A. Levy. *Cross-cultural psychology: Critical thinking and contemporary applications*. Routledge, 2020. (Chapter 1, pp. 3-15; 12 pages). **STOP** at “*Empirical Examination of Culture*”.

Assignment:

Weekly Moodle Quiz

WEEK 3
(SEPTEMBER 23 - 27, 2024)

Child Development: Attachment as a Cross-Cultural Study

Meeting 1: Child attachment theory

Reading:

Siegler, Robert S., Jenny Saffran, Elizabeth T. Gershoff, Nancy Eisenberg, and Campbell Leaper. 2019. *How Children Develop*. Worth Publishers. (Chapter 11. Read Chapter 11 until the section entitled "The Self").

Meeting 2: Examining child attachment through the lens of culture

Readings:

Keller, Heidi. "Universality claim of attachment theory: Children's socioemotional development across cultures." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 115, no. 45 (2018): 11414-11419.

Seon, Youngwoon. "Self-esteem as a mediator of parental attachment security and social anxiety." *Psychology in the Schools* 58, no. 8 (2021): 1545-1556.

Optional reading:

Morelli, Gilda A., Nandita Chaudhary, Alma Gottlieb, Heidi Keller, Marjorie Murray, Naomi Quinn, Mariano Rosabal-Coto, Gabriel Scheidecker, Akira Takada, and Marga Vicedo. "A pluralistic approach to attachment." In *The cultural nature of attachment: Contextualizing relationships and development*, vol. 22, p. 139. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2017.

Assignment:

Weekly Moodle Quiz

WEEK 4
(SEPTEMBER 30 - OCTOBER 4, 2024)

Child Behavior and Understanding of the "Self": Nature, Nurture or Both?

Meeting 1: Child behavior and understanding of the "Self"

Reading:

Siegler, Robert S., Jenny Saffran, Elizabeth T. Gershoff, Nancy Eisenberg, and Campbell Leaper. 2019. *How Children Develop*. Worth Publishers (Chapter 11, read from section "The Self" until the end of the chapter).

Meeting 2: Human Development: Nature, nurture or both?

Readings:

Singh, Iaina. "Human development, nature and nurture: Working beyond the divide." *BioSocieties* 7 (2012): 308-321. **STOP** reading at p. 315.

Assignments:

Weekly Moodle Quiz

Hand in your Course Journal in person (preferred format) or on Moodle. This will be your first course journal entry grade.

WEEK 5
(OCTOBER 7 - 11, 2024)

Emotional Development in Children: Does Culture Play a Role?

Meeting 1: *Emotional development*

Reading:

Siegler, Robert S., Jenny Saffran, Elizabeth T. Gershoff, Nancy Eisenberg, and Campbell Leaper. 2019. *How Children Develop*. Worth Publishers. (Chapter 10, pp. 352-368; 16 pages).

Meeting 2: *Does culture affect emotional development?*

Service Learning Project: In-class visit to Montessori Primary School (TBC)

Readings:

Aka, Başak Türküler. "Cultural dimensions of emotion regulation." *Psikiyatride Güncel Yaklaşımlar* 15, no. 3 (2023): 441-450.

Yang, Yang, and Qi Wang. "Culture in emotional development." *Handbook of Emotional Development* (2019): 569-593.

Assignment:

Weekly Moodle Quiz

WEEK 6
(OCTOBER 14 - 18, 2024)

Language Development and Cognition: Monolingual, Bilingual or Plurilingual?

Meeting 1: *Language development and cognition*

Readings:

Ali, Amal Mahmoud. "The Effect of Bilingualism on Cognitive Development in Children Review Article." *Alustath Journal for Human and Social Sciences* 62, no. 4 (2023): 387-404.

Bialystok, Ellen. "Coordination of executive functions in monolingual and bilingual children." *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology* 110, no. 3 (2011): 461-468.

Bialystok, Ellen. "Bilingual education for young children: Review of the effects and consequences." *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 21, no. 6 (2018): 666-679.

Bialystok, Ellen. "Bilingualism: Pathway to cognitive reserve." *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 25, no. 5 (2021): 355-364.

Meeting 2: *In-class midterm*

Assignment:

Weekly Moodle Quiz

**MID-SEMESTER BREAK
(OCTOBER 21-25, 2024)**

**WEEK 7
(OCTOBER 28 - NOVEMBER 1, 2024)**

Socio-Cultural Theories on Language, Culture and Human Development

We will spend the beginning of class going over the midterm exams.

Meeting 1: *Lev Vygotsky: Language and culture*

Reading:

Siegler, Robert S., Jenny Saffran, Elizabeth T. Gershoff, Nancy Eisenberg, and Campbell Leaper. 2019. *How Children Develop*. Worth Publishers. (Chapter 4: Core Knowledge Theories and Sociocultural Theories, pp. 140-148).

Meeting 2: *Socio-cultural approaches to human development*

Reading:

Hausfather, Samuel J. "Vygotsky and schooling: Creating a social context for learning." *Action in Teacher Education* 18, no. 2 (1996): 1-10.

Assignment:

Weekly Moodle Quiz

**WEEK 8
(NOVEMBER 4 - 8, 2024)**

Maria Montessori and Pedagogy

Meeting 1: *Maria Montessori: Background and principles*

Service Learning Project - Pilot activity at Montessori Primary School (TBC)

Readings:

Moretti. E. (2021). *The Best Weapon for Peace: Maria Montessori, Education, and Children's Rights*. University of Wisconsin Press. (Introduction, 14 pages).

Moretti. E. (2021). *The Best Weapon for Peace: Maria Montessori, Education, and Children's Rights*. University of Wisconsin Press. (Chapter 1, 51 pages).

Meeting 2: *Montessori schools and her legacy*

Readings:

Moretti. E. (2021). *The Best Weapon for Peace: Maria Montessori, Education, and Children's Rights*. University of Wisconsin Press. (Conclusions, 14 pages).

O'Donnell, M. (2007). *Maria Montessori*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing. (Chapter 4, 50 pages).

Assignments:

Weekly Moodle Quiz

Hand in your Course Journal in person or on Moodle. This will be your second course journal entry grade.

WEEK 9 **(NOVEMBER 11 - 15, 2024)**

Cognitive (Intellectual) Development Theory

Meeting 1: *Howard Gardner: Theory of Multiple Intelligences*

Readings:

Gardner, H. (1998). A multiplicity of intelligences. *Scientific American*, 9(4), 19-23.

Davis, Katie, Joanna Christodoulou, Scott Seider, and Howard Earl Gardner. "The theory of multiple intelligences." *Davis, K., Christodoulou, J., Seider, S., & Gardner, H. (2011). The theory of multiple intelligences. In RJ Sternberg & SB Kaufman (Eds.), Cambridge Handbook of Intelligence (2011): 485-503 (18 pages).*

Meeting 2: *Howard Gardner: Theory of Five Minds*

Reading:

Gardner, H. (2008). The five minds for the future. *Schools*, 5(1/2), 17-24. (Read pp. 9-21 on PDF)

Assignment:

Weekly Moodle Quiz

WEEK 10 **(NOVEMBER 18 - 22, 2024)**

Intelligence and Academic Achievement

Meeting 1: *What is intelligence: Genes or environment?*

Service Learning Project: *Preparation for Friday's activity*

Reading:

Siegler, Robert S., Jenny Saffran, Elizabeth T. Gershoff, Nancy Eisenberg, and Campbell Leaper. 2019. *How Children Develop*. Worth Publishers. (Chapter 8. **STOP** reading at the section entitled "Acquisition of Academic Skills: Reading, Writing and Mathematics").

Meeting 2: *Cross-cultural experiences and perspectives about academic achievement*

Readings:

Chen, Wei-Wen, and Yi-Lee Wong. "Chinese mindset: Theories of intelligence, goal orientation and academic achievement in Hong Kong students." *Educational Psychology* 35, no. 6 (2015): 714-725.

Pepi, Annamaria, Luisa Faria, and Marianna Alesi. "Personal conceptions of intelligence, self-esteem, and school achievement in Italian and Portuguese students." *Adolescence* 41, no. 164 (2006): 615-631.

Assignment:

Weekly Moodle Quiz

Service Learning Project: Activity at Montessori Primary School.

Class will be divided in small groups. Each group will be assigned to a class at the primary school. Group division and timing will be announced early that week.

WEEK 11
(NOVEMBER 25 - 29, 2024)

Human Development and Family: Cross Cultural Perspectives of the United States and Italy

Meeting 1: *The transition to adulthood in the United States and in Italy*

Readings: Please read **ONE** article of your choice for the United States and **ONE** for Italy.

United States:

Arnett, Jeffrey Jensen. "Learning to stand alone: The contemporary American transition to adulthood in cultural and historical context." *Human Development* 41, no. 5-6 (1998): 295-315.

<https://doi.org/10.1159/000022591>

Gutmann, Myron P., Sara M. Pullum-Piñón, and Thomas W. Pullum. "Three eras of young adult home leaving in twentieth-century America." *Journal of Social History* (2002): 533-576.

<https://doi-org.chapman.idm.oclc.org/10.1353/jsh.2002.0014>

Italy:

Aassve, Arnstein, Francesco C. Billari, Stefano Mazzucco, and Fausta Ongaro. "Leaving home: A comparative analysis of ECHP data." *Journal of European Social Policy* 12, no. 4 (2002): 259-275.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/a028430>

Mencarini, Letizia, Ariane Pailhé, Anne Solaz, and Maria Letizia Tanturri. "The time benefits of young adult home stayers in France and Italy: A new perspective on the transition to adulthood?" *Genus* 73 (2017): 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41118-017-0021-7>

Tosi, Marco. "Age norms, family relationships, and home-leaving in Italy." *Demographic Research* 36 (2017): 281-306. <https://doi.org/10.4054/DemRes.2017.36.9>

Meeting 2: Thanksgiving. No class.

Assignment:

Weekly Moodle Quiz

WEEK 12
(DECEMBER 2 - 6, 2024)

Community Engagement Presentation

Meeting 1: Service Learning Project – Debriefing

- Service Learning Project – Work on Community Engagement Final Presentation

Meeting 2:

- Service Learning Project - Practice Community Engagement Final Presentation

Assignment:

Hand in your Course Journal in person or on Moodle. This will be your third course journal entry grade.

WEEK 13
(DECEMBER 9 - 13, 2024)

Meeting 1: Wrap up and revision activity for the Final Exam.

Meeting 2 (Thursday, December 12): Final Exam (in class, 60 minutes)

EDUC/PSYCH/SOC 430: Human Development in Culture
Service Learning Project
Syllabus Appendix

What is service learning?

Service learning is a type of experiential education integrated into a course in which:

- students engage in an organized activity or project aimed to address a community need that is identified in collaboration with the community partner;
- students critically reflect on the link between the experience in the community, course content, and the learning goals; and
- there is reciprocal learning both by the students and by the community partners.

Students will need a certain degree of flexibility, creativity, and self-initiative in order to realize a service learning project. Organization and open communication in-class with the professor and student team members will be key to student success.

Service Learning Project Overview

Community Partner

Partner: Scuola Primaria (Primary school) Statale “Maria Montessori”

Project Description and Goals

Students will investigate the principles and psychological outcomes of the Italian and American education systems through theoretical and direct experience in the Italian classroom setting. Students will prepare and lead cultural-based English language activities in some classes at the elementary school “Maria Montessori”. This will allow students to collect data on students’ responses and interactions while teaching a language.

Organization, Expectations, and Roles

Students will choose their own team. An important amount of time will be dedicated to the service learning project's progress in class. Teams will be required to meet outside of class for four weeks for approximately 1-2 hours. Teams will be responsible for deciding how to divide the various tasks to ensure members contribute equally throughout the course of the project.

Construction of a Learning Object

Each team will collaborate to create a learning object (“a collection of content, practice, and assessments that are combined based on a single learning objective”), which will be shared with the elementary school teacher before the school visit for feedback.

The learning object should include:

- An introduction that answers the following questions:
 - Where did you get the idea?
 - What cultural aspects are you describing and why?
 - Who will this activity work with and how to adapt it?
- A lesson plan
- Materials used
- A demonstrating tutorial

Group Presentation

Each team will collaborate to create and present a final detailed presentation accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation. Each student will be expected to complete a Presentation Feedback Form and ask questions to the other teams presenting to promote a community of learning and support.

Guidelines:

- PowerPoint (spell-check).
- 10 minutes.

- Each team member contributes to the preparation and delivery of the presentation.
- Rehearse presentation as a group for content, length, and transitions.

Community Engagement Final Presentations

During Special Academic Events Week, the class will present a 15-minute summary of the project experience to the Umbra community during the Community Engagement Presentations on **Wednesday, December, 11**. Students will receive the guidelines and presentation order after the mid-semester break.

All the presentations will have the same structure:

1. Present the partner
2. Present the project
3. Takeaways & challenges
4. A meaningful activity in line with the course topics (**optional**, it doesn't have to take more than five minutes)

Participation in this event is mandatory and an integral part of the community engagement grade.

Grading Rubric

The Service Learning project is worth a total of 15% of the final course grade, which will be divided into two categories:

1. Construction and execution of the learning project (10%)
2. Community Engagement Final Presentations (5%)