Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour
PSYCH 2AA3
Child Development
Spring/Summer 2025

Instructor Information

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Course Information

Emails: Please include the course code (PSYCH 2AA3) in the subject of all emails.

E-mail: pnb@mcmaster.ca (for admin issues like MSAFs) and immediateaccess@mcmaster.ca (for e-textbook issues)

Tutorials: N/a **Labs:** N/a

Course Dates: 06/23/2025 - 08/08/2025
Units: 3.00
Course Delivery Mode: In Person

Course Description: A general survey of theories and mechanisms of child development, illustrated through examples from neural, perceptual, cognitive, social and emotional development. Students in an Honours or Combined Honours Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour program are referred to PSYCH 3GG3 for which this course is an antirequisite. Three lectures; one term Prerequisite(s): ISCI 1A24 A/B or one of PSYCH 1F03, 1N03, 1X03, and registration in Level II or above; or registration in Level II or above of an Arts & Science or B.H.Sc. (Honours) program Antirequisite(s): PSYCH 3GG3

Important Links

- Mosaic
- Avenue to Learn
- Student Accessibility Services - Accommodations
- McMaster University Library
- eReserves

Course Learning Outcomes

- Explain key theories and research findings in perceptual, cognitive, social, emotional, and moral development by drawing on examples from lectures, textbook readings, and in-class discussion.
- Apply developmental milestones and theoretical frameworks to case studies and media examples.
- Collaborate effectively in small groups by coordinating journal club sessions and providing peer feedback, demonstrating professional communication and teamwork skills.

- Compose reflective essays by connecting personal observations (e.g., family, volunteer work, media) to course concepts and identifying areas for further inquiry.

Course Learning Goals

- Appreciate foundational theories and major research findings in perceptual, cognitive, social, emotional, and moral development from infancy through adolescence.

- Value reflective practice by connecting personal observations or media examples to core concepts in developmental psychology.

Required Materials and Texts

Please sign in with your MacID here to view your booklist

E-Textbook: Santrock, J. W., Deater-Deckard, K., Lansford, J. E., Piercy, J., & Rosati, A. (2022). Child Development, 2nd Canadian Edition. Provided through McGraw-Hill eConnect.

Note for Returning Students:

If you are repeating the course and previously purchased the textbook through Immediate Access, you may be eligible to have your access extended. Please contact immediateaccess@mcmaster.ca to inquire, and they will coordinate with the publisher on your behalf.

Course Fees

You are automatically enrolled to receive textbook access through A2L and the cost will be charged to your Mosaic account. If you wish to opt for a hardcopy or need to opt out due to dropping the course, please refer to the detailed instructions in A2L.

Class Format

In Person

Course Evaluation

Assessment Overview and Weighting

Assessment Method	**Weight**
Weekly Quizzes (5 x 2%)	10%
Reading Assignments	5%
Journal Club Presentation and Peer-Evaluation	15%
Mid-Term Exam	25%
Reflection Paper	10%
Final Exam	35%
Total	**100%**

Course Evaluation Details

Weekly Quizzes

Quizzes are designed to be 15-minute quizzes, but you will receive 30 minutes to complete each quiz in-class. The quizzes are designed to encourage you to keep up with textbook readings. **Remote access to the quizzes is not allowed.**

Reading Assignments

You'll be assigned specific chapter reading assignments to complete using your e-textbook. These assignments introduce and explain key concepts covered in the text and are essential preparation for weekly quizzes, the mid-term and the final exam. They're designed to support your understanding of child development and help you actively apply what you've learned.

Journal Club-Style Presentations

I will form groups of 4-5 students to prepare and deliver a journal club-style presentation using a slide deck (i.e., PowerPoint, Canva, Prezi etc.). Each group will choose a peer-reviewed empirical article related to child development (pending instructor approval). Your task is to analyze and present the article's key components—such as the introduction, methods, results, discussion, and limitations—while engaging the class in thoughtful discussion. Think of yourselves as leading an academic conversation, not just summarizing a paper.

A **1–2 page summary document about the article must be submitted to Avenue to Learn (A2L) by the Monday before your presentation**. This summary will be shared with your classmates to help them follow along and prepare questions in advance. Presentations will be co-graded by myself and the TA, and audience participation is required—students are expected to ask questions and contribute to the discussion.

At the end of the presentation period, group members will complete a peer evaluation reflecting how much each person contributed to the preparation and delivery of the presentation. This peer input will count for 5% of your overall 15% presentation grade, with the presentation itself making up the remaining 10%.

This assignment is designed to help you build collaboration skills, improve your ability to read and critique research articles, and gain experience communicating academic content —skills that are highly relevant in both academic and professional settings.

Mid-Term Exam

The midterm exam will consist of 45 multiple-choice questions and covers content from lectures, group presentations and Chapters 1- 7 of the textbook. You will have 90 minutes to complete the exam. The test will be written in person. **Remote access to the exam is not allowed.** Students who prefer a printed exam on paper must email Dr. Owusu by 11:59pm on Wednesday, July 9 (students registered with SAS must email the SAS Test Centre directly to request a paper copy by July 9). I have opted for A2L testing to eliminate manual grading errors, deliver prompt feedback to students, and cut down on paper waste. To uphold academic integrity, however, **every student must still be physically present to take the exam.**

Reflection Paper

This reflection paper invites you to consider how a documentary or film portrays the impact of screen use and digital media on children, families, and society. You will explore how the film connects to course topics such as cognitive and emotional development, attention, family dynamics, and environmental influences. Using specific scenes or perspectives presented in the film, reflect on how these issues align with—or complicate—what we've discussed in class. Consider how the film deepens your understanding of developmental risk and resilience, parent-child interactions, or broader social trends. Your response should demonstrate thoughtful connections between course content and real-world challenges facing children and families today.

Final Exam

The final exam will consist of 90 multiple-choice questions and covers content from the entire course. You will have 3 hours to complete the exam. The final exam will be written in person but on your personal computer/tablet, just like the midterm. **Remote access to the exam is not allowed.** Students requesting to write the test on paper must email Dr. Owusu by 11:59pm on Wednesday, July 30.

Undergraduate Grading Scale

The grades breakdown for McMaster's 12-Point Grading Scale

Grade	Equivalent Grade Point	Equivalent Percentages
A+	12	90-100
A	11	85-89
A-	10	80-84
B+	9	77-79
B	8	73-76
B-	7	70-72
C+	6	67-69
C	5	63-66
C-	4	60-62

Grade	Equivalent Grade Point	Equivalent Percentages
D+	3	57-59
D	2	53-56
D-	1	50-52
F	0	0-49

Course Schedule

The general schedule for this course content is given below. Any changes to this structure will be announced on Avenue. It is your responsibility to keep up to date with any schedule changes.

Week-by-Week Guide: Readings, Notes & Due Dates

Week of	Chapter Reading	Notes	Assessment Due Dates
June 23	Chapter 1 & Chapter 2		
June 30	Chapter 3,4 & Chapter 5	Quiz 1 Group Presentations	July 2
July 7	Chapter 6 & Chapter 7	Quiz 2 Group Presentations	July 9

Week of	Chapter Reading	Notes	Assessment Due Dates
July 14	Chapter 8 & Chapter 9	Quiz 3 Mid-Term Group Presentations	July 14 July 16 July 16
July 21	Chapter 10,11 & Chapter 12	Quiz 4 Group Presentations	July 23
July 28	Chapter 13 & Chapter 14	Quiz 5 Reflection Paper Group Presentations	July 30
Aug 4		**Final Exam**	**Aug 6 - 9:30am -12:30 pm**

Late Assignments

A **10% deduction** will be applied for **each day** an assignment is late, beginning immediately after 11:59 PM on the due date.

Learning to meet deadlines is an important life skill. In many real-world settings, missing a deadline can result in serious consequences such as lost opportunities, contracts, income, or even employment.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF):

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work".

You do not need to submit an MSAF for a missed group presentation. Instead, coordinate with your group to find alternative ways to contribute or make up the work. Consistent communication with your group is essential to ensure your self-evaluations fairly represent your contributions.

Students who miss the midterm must submit MSAF-B to their faculty.

Turnitin.com

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Generative AI: Use Prohibited

Students are not permitted to use generative AI in this course. In alignment with McMaster academic integrity policy, it "shall be an offence knowingly to … submit academic work for assessment that was purchased or acquired from another source". This includes work created by generative AI tools. Also state in the policy is the following, "Contract Cheating is the act of "outsourcing of student work to third parties" (Lancaster & Clarke, 2016, p. 639) with or without payment." Using Generative AI tools is a form of contract cheating. Charges of academic dishonesty will be brought forward to the Office of Academic Integrity.

APPROVED ADVISORY STATEMENTS

Academic Integrity

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-proceduresguidelines/

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Authenticity / Plagiarism

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. Avenue to Learn, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Courses with an On-line Element

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn, LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online.**

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities policy.

Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous, or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office ***normally within 10 working days*** of the

beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, Avenue to Learn and/or McMaster email.

Academic Support for Students in the Faculty of Science

Students in the Faculty of Science can seek academic support and advice from the Office of the Associate Dean of Science (Academic). Our team is committed to your success! When you need support, have a question, or need direction – please contact the Office of the Associate Dean (Academic). The knowledgeable, friendly team is here to support your academic success during your undergraduate studies with the Faculty of Science.

Our office is located in Burke Science Building (BSB) Room 136. We can be reached online at https://science.mcmaster.ca/associatedean/current-students/academic-advising.html. Students are also encouraged to familiarize themselves with policies related to Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities and Academic Accommodations for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances.