



COUN 2023: Human Development
Midwestern State University
Gordon T. & Ellen West College of Education
Fall 2025 X11

Contact Information

Instructor: Leann Curry, Ph.D.

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Office hours: Mon 8:00am-11am, Wed. 8:00-10:00am; Thursday 10:00am-11:00am; or by appointment*

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Instructor Response Policy

The best way to contact me is via email. I will check my email between 8:00am and 5:00pm, Mon-Fri. I will attempt to contact you within 24 hours (or sooner); however, this does not apply on weekends or holidays. Once you contact me via email, we can set up an in-person, virtual, or phone meeting, depending on your needs. * I am in my office most days and happy to meet with you outside of my office hours if I am available. It is always a good idea to call or email ahead of time.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Berk, L.E. (2022). *Infants, Children, and Adolescents* 9th ed. Sage Publications

Course Description

A study of human development and how empirical data using accepted reputable research methodology extends and supports our understanding of how development impacts society and what it is to be human through the stages of development, specifically in the areas of cognitive, social, moral, and emotional domains.

Course Objectives/Core Skills/Course Content

These objectives align with [NAEYC standards](#), [National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\) Principles of Human Development](#) and [Principles of Child Development and Learning and Implications that Inform Practice](#) available on their web site at: [NAEYC](#)

Objectives	Learning Activities
<p>Students understand and think critically about the major theories of children’s physical, cognitive, social, moral, and emotional development. Students will explain how developmental behavior impacts the individual and use empirical data to discuss the impacts that behavior has on the larger society.</p>	<p>discussion questions, lecture and/or guided reading, videos, portfolio, simulations, activities</p>
<p>Students understand and think critically about genetic, prenatal, hereditary, and environmental influences and how these influences and differences prevalent in various global regions impact human development and learning. Students will develop an understanding of the social and personal responsibility of being aware of the impact of these influences on human development across the globe.</p>	<p>discussion questions, lecture and/or guided reading, videos, portfolio, simulations, activities</p>
<p>Students recognize, understand, and think critically about the reciprocal influence of family on human development.</p>	<p>discussion questions, lecture and/or guided reading, videos, portfolio, simulations, activities</p>
<p>Students understand and think critically about the contribution of heredity and environment to development and learning.</p>	<p>discussion questions, lecture and/or, guided reading, videos, portfolio, simulations, activities</p>
<p>Students develop an in-depth understanding of human growth and development and the changes that occur from infancy to young adulthood to better understand what makes us human.</p>	<p>discussion questions, lecture and/or guided reading, videos, portfolio, simulations, activities</p>
<p>Students will practice reflective habits regarding human development and develop an understanding of one’s own development and how that process impacts one’s approach to children and adolescents.</p>	<p>discussion questions, lecture and/or guided reading, videos, portfolio, simulations, activities</p>

Students will develop an understanding of the development and maintenance of a healthy self-concept. Students will investigate developmental/ environmental-related issues such as stress, risky behavior, gang violence, bullying, poverty, substance abuse, prenatal care, etc., and discuss the impacts on individuals, groups, and institutions.	discussion questions, lecture and/or guided reading, videos, portfolio, simulations, activities
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Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct. "By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a 'limited right' in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The 'limited right' shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student's work product in order to verify originality, authenticity, and educational purposes." from [Student Handbook](#). All assignments submitted in BRIGHTSPACE will also be checked through Turn It In for originality. Assignments with more than 50% match will be given a 0.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

Grading/Assessment

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Points
Portfolio Part I	40
Portfolio Part II	42
Portfolio Part III	36
Portfolio Part IV	38
Activities (4 at 10 points each)	40
Online Discussion Questions (4 at 5 points)	20
Quizzes	100
Total Points	316

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	285 or Greater
B	253 to 284

Grade	Points
C	222 to 252
D	190 to 221
F	189 or less

Core Assessment (Portfolio Part I-IV)

The Core Assessment will be conducted in a four-part portfolio project that directly aligns to the core course objectives and demonstrates a student's understanding of human development and its impact on the individual, society and family. This assessment also requires students to apply empirical methods to think critically about how human development, behavior, and learning impact and are impacted by individual differences to further their understanding of what makes us human. The portfolio includes the following four components: (1.) A research-based brochure students create that will require them to think critically about factors impacting the pre-natal environment and how those are influenced by environments in a global context. A component of this brochure also includes a call to action to highlight social responsibility for a resolution to the issue. (2.) A project and presentation that requires students to be engaged in the research process, which will allow them to analyze and think critically about human development, specifically infancy and toddlerhood, to develop a presentation for the class. (3.) An observation to collect data that allows students to analyze adolescent behavior and link that to developmental characteristics and discuss how differences impact development. Additionally, students will analyze interactions of adolescents among groups and discuss subsequent impacts. (4.) A final reflective piece that requires students to critically reflect on each component of the portfolio in order to synthesize and demonstrate an understanding of the social and personal responsibility to the issues in human development from individual perspectives and communities in the US and across the globe. The separate portfolio components will be used as formative assessments during the course and will be assessed using elements of the AACU Critical Thinking, Global Learning, Written Communication, Quantitative Literacy, and Oral Communication rubrics. All written portfolio components must adhere to APA 7th edition guidelines. *Additional instructions, guidelines, protocol sheet, supplemental articles, videos, and requirements are available on D2L/Brightspace.* The following explains each part of the portfolio.

Portfolio Part I: Protecting the Prenatal Environment Brochure

To demonstrate your understanding of influences on the prenatal environment and our personal and social responsibility for awareness and action, you will create a brochure highlighting an issue and provide strategies or solutions. Download and complete the chart entitled "Protecting the Prenatal Environment" in the Week 3 folder. Using your answers from the sheet, consider the following questions: "What did you find most difficult to give up (or avoid)? Why? What was most surprising? Why?" Next, choose one that you found difficult to give up (or avoid) and find a research article from a reputable source exploring this issue in another country. Additionally, you must locate empirical, numerical evidence on the impacts (local, national, or global) of this issue. Create a visually appealing brochure that highlights the challenges of protecting the prenatal environment in this particular area of the world and how that might compare and contrast with the prenatal environment in the US. Be sure to include the supporting research data and numerical data of the impacts, and provide research-based strategies/recommendations/solutions to address this challenge. **Detailed explanations and rubrics are located in D2L.**

Portfolio Part II: Infancy and Toddlerhood Research Project & Presentation

To deepen your understanding of human behavior and development, the influence that development has on institutions, other age groups, families or our society as a whole, you will conduct research and create a presentation describing physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development in infancy and toddlerhood. Include information from the text, videos, simulations, and any supplied readings provided in D2L. You will submit an APA-formatted paper, citing all sources, that is no more than 1,000 words, as well as a video presentation that you will upload to YouTube for your classmates to view. You will copy the link on a Word document and turn it into the Dropbox. Be sure that you include the following information in your paper. Each of the bullets below can be used as a paragraph topic with the addition of an introduction and conclusion for a complete essay.

- Physical Development: Discuss gross and fine motor skills during this stage of development. How might familial influences impact the development of motor skills? How might delayed motor development impact socialization?
- Cognitive Development: Use Piaget's theory to describe the cognitive differences between infants and toddlers. What specific behaviors support your supposition? How might familial influences impact cognitive development and behavior? How might cognitive development impact further learning? How does cognitive development impact pedagogical and curricular decisions in schools?
- Emotional Development: Describe fear reactions and discuss when and why they appear in growth. How might familial influences impact emotional development? How might individuals at this age communicate emotions? How might low or high EI impact an individual's interactions with others?

- **Social Development:** Discuss self-discovery in infancy and toddlerhood. How might familial influences impact social development? How might individuals at this age interact and communicate with other individuals?
- In addition to your choice of one of the above developmental areas, also address the following: How has research furthering our understanding of child development impacted education, entertainment, retail, and or local, state or national government agencies? Consider Legislative and media impacts as well. Make sure to include statistical data to support the impacts you focus on. For example, you might use a consumer report citing the dollar amount retail allots to market to the parents of this age group to discuss impacts.
- For the second part of the assignment, choose one of the four areas above and create a 3-5-minute video presentation going into detail about that area of development during the infancy and toddler period. In the presentation, discuss the most well-known theories about the area you chose from the text. Create a presentation for the video, such as Google Slides or PowerPoint, with important points and quotes in bulleted form. Include graphics or graphs to support your information. When you record, you may use Moviemaker, Screencast-o-Matic, VOKI, or any similar program, but upload it to YouTube and provide the link when you turn in the assignment. The images or voices of all group members must be present on the video. *Detailed explanations and rubrics are located in D2L.*

Portfolio Part III: Adolescent Observation and Analysis

To gain an understanding of the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development of the adolescent period and their impacts on other groups, you will be observing adolescents in a public place to collect data. You will then analyze aspects of their behavior that are indicative of the unique characteristics of this stage of human development. You will complete an observation protocol sheet and then compose a synthesis paragraph further exploring a behavior you observed and how that is connected with changes associated with this stage and its influences on the adolescent age group itself, institutions such as schools, and the larger society.

Additional instructions, guidelines, protocol sheet, supplemental articles, videos, and requirements are available on D2L/Brightspace.

Portfolio Part IV: Reflection

The reflective piece requires you to critically reflect on Parts I-III of the portfolio. You will synthesize the information you have gathered to demonstrate an understanding of human development and how it impacts individuals, society, and families. You should address connections among the research-based developmental theories, experiences, and environments across the globe in order to demonstrate an understanding of our social and personal responsibility to grasp the differences in global environments. The following are possible areas for reflection:

- How has the knowledge of a particular stage(s) of development and behavior impacted your understanding of what it is that makes us human?
- How has an understanding of behaviors associated with developmental stages allowed you to be more understanding, tolerant, or to take a particular action?
- How has the knowledge of the impacts of global influences on development impacted your behavior (think about the actions suggested in your brochure)?
- How has the research you have conducted supported and furthered the knowledge you have about human behavior and development?
- Why might you feel that it is essential to people to understand human development and the associated behaviors?
- How has the research you have conducted supported and furthered the knowledge you have about issues pertaining to human behavior and development, and why society needs to be aware of these issues?
- Considering the empirical data including quantitative information as well as qualitative data you use to support your opinions, how might this data be interpreted a different way or how might other factors influence this data?

The reflection should be at least 500 words and must be submitted as a pdf and uploaded by the date due to D2L/Brightspace. *Additional instructions, guidelines, and requirements are available on D2L/Brightspace.*

Quizzes

There are 10 chapter quizzes throughout the course. These are accessed through your online textbook. They open at the beginning of the week they are assigned and close on the following Sunday.

Additional Class Learning Activities

The class will feature four formal learning activities worth ten points each that will strengthen your understanding of the main stages of child development. Specifics of each activity will be discussed further in class; however, the completed works will need to be uploaded to D2L/ Brightspace on the given due date.

Discussion Questions

We will have several online discussions throughout the class. The discussions will occur throughout the semester, in which you will explore and think critically about content from the readings and textbook. This will allow you to further explore topics more in depth, making connections among theories, supplemental readings, and comments from your peers. Discussion questions are posted on D2L/Brightspace in advance so that you can post your response at any time. See D2L course (communication tab) for discussion due dates. You must also post five replies in the discussion board by Sunday of the week due for 5 points each.

Late Work

Assignments are expected to be turned in by the due date. Ten percent of the total points will be deducted per day late, and any assignment submitted more than one week late will not be accepted. Arrangements must be made at least two days in advance for any exceptions to be given.

Written Work

All written work should be completed in a professional style. Using correct spelling and grammar is an essential writing skill. Therefore, all written assignments will have 10% -20% of the grade based on spelling and grammar. Expectations are for quality work.

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Student Honor Creed

As an MSU Student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else do so." As students at MSU, we recognize that any great society must be composed of empowered, responsible citizens. We also recognize universities play an important role in helping mold these responsible citizens. We believe students themselves play an important part in developing responsible citizenship by maintaining a community where integrity and honorable character are the norm, not the exception.

Thus, We, the Students of Midwestern State University, resolve to uphold the honor of the University by affirming our commitment to complete academic honesty. We resolve not only to be honest but also to hold our peers accountable for complete honesty in all university matters.

We consider it dishonest to ask for, give, or receive help in examinations or quizzes, to use any unauthorized material in examinations, or to present, as one's own, work or ideas which are not entirely one's own. We recognize that any instructor has the right to expect that all student work is honest, original work. We accept and acknowledge that responsibility for lying, cheating, stealing, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty fundamentally rests within each individual student.

We expect of ourselves academic integrity, personal professionalism, and ethical character. We appreciate steps taken by University officials to protect the honor of the University against any who would disgrace the MSU student body by violating the spirit of this creed. Written and adopted by the MSU Student Senate.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. ****Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.*** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. ****Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!*** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world that is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Instructor Class Policies

Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment which is conducive to learning. Inappropriate behavior in the D2L online classroom shall result, minimally, in a request to drop the class and a Professional Fitness Form will be filed for review with the college. If the instructor must file a Fitness Alert Form for any reason, including failure to demonstrate appropriate classroom behaviors, the student may receive an instructor drop with an "F" for the course.

An instructor may drop a student any time during the semester for failure to participate, for consistently failing to meet class assignments, for an indifferent attitude, or disruptive conduct. The instructor must give the student a verbal or written warning prior to dropping the student from the class. An instructor's drop of a student takes precedence over the student-initiated course drop of a later date. The instructor will assign a grade of either WF or F through the first 8 weeks of a long semester, the first 6 weeks of a 10-week summer term, or the 11th class day of a 4 or 5-week summer term consisting of 20 days. After these periods, the grade will be an F. The date the instructor drop form is received in the Office of the Registrar is the official drop date.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the [Schedule of Classes](#) each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester.

HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make an application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Wellness Center. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by MSU TEXAS. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [Safety / Emergency Procedures](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled "Run. Hide. Fight." which may be electronically accessed via the University police department's webpage: "[Run. Hide. Fight.](#)"

Obligation to Report Sex Discrimination under State and Federal Law

Midwestern State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. State and federal law require University employees to report sex discrimination and sexual misconduct to the University's Office of Title IX. As a faculty member, I am required to report to the Title IX Coordinator any allegations, personally observed behavior, or other direct or indirect knowledge of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination or sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking, involving a student or employee. After a report is made, the office of Title IX will reach out to the affected student or employee in an effort to connect such person(s) with resources and options in addressing the allegations made in the report. You are also encouraged to report any incidents to the office of Title IX. You may do so by contacting:

Laura Hetrick
Title IX Coordinator
Sunwatcher Village Clubhouse
940-397-4213
laura.hetrick@msutexas.edu

You may also file an online report 24/7 at [Online Reporting Form](#)

Should you wish to visit with someone about your experience in confidence, you may contact the MSU Counseling Center at 940-397-4618. For more information on the University's policy on Title IX or sexual misconduct, please visit [Title IX Website](#)

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule:

See D2L for the Course Schedule.