



Course Syllabus: Human Development

College of Education
COUN 2023 X10 Online
Fall 2026 August 24, 2026- December 12, 2026

Contact Information

Instructor: Christina Janise Wickard
Office: BH 308H
Office hours: Tues & Thurs 11:30AM-1:30PM; Wednesday 9:00AM-10:00AM
Office phone: (940) 397-4528
E-mail: <mailto:janise.wickard@msutexas.edu>

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.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Lumen Waymaker Courseware

Note: Ideas and opinions expressed in course materials are those of the respective authors and do not imply endorsement by the professor or university.

Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance

For a 3-credit-hour college course, students should expect to spend approximately 6–9 hours per week outside of class reading, studying, completing assignments, and preparing for assessments. This time commitment is in addition to scheduled class meetings and is essential for success in the course. If you need additional help please visit the MSU TASP center located in the library. Visit the [Tutoring and Academic Support Programs \(TASP\) website](#) for more information about the tutoring services they provide and for scheduling a session.

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Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given).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. [Office of Student Conduct](#)

Moffett Library

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support student's studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information. Get started on this [Moffett Library webpage](#) to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library.

Grading

Course Grade – Course grades are based on the percentage of total points earned. The following assignments contribute to the final course grade.

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Points
Introduce Yourself	5
Quizzes (17 at 20 pts each)	340
Activities (4 @ 15 pts each)	60
Portfolio Parts (4 @ 25 pts each)	100
Study Plans (11 @ 10 pts each)	110
Total Points	615

Table 2: Percentage of total points will determine final grade.

Grade	Percentage of Total Points
A	90%-100%
B	80%-89%
C	70%-79%
D	60%-69%
F	Below 60%

Coursework

Study Plans

Instead of a traditional textbook, you will use an interactive **Study Plan** for each module. Active Learning: Each Study Plan contains your digital textbook readings, instructional videos, and practice activities. Personalized Progress: You will begin modules with a "Show What You Know" pretest to gauge your starting knowledge. As you work through the material, the system dynamically updates to highlight topics that need your attention.

* Participation for each study plan is calculated by how many self checks you have completed out of the total available in that study plan. Students will see what self checks they have completed as indicated at the bottom of each tile in the study plan.

Quizzes

Each module concludes with a graded, summative quiz to assess your mastery of the learning outcomes.

Attempts & Grading: You are allowed two attempts for each quiz. Your highest score will be recorded in the gradebook.

Format: Questions are pulled randomly from a pool aligned with the module's specific learning objectives. No two quiz attempts will be identical.

Core Assessment: Portfolio Parts 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

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 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

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

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

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.

Classroom Activities

The class will feature four formal learning activities 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 must be uploaded to D2L on the given due date.

Extra Credit

This course does not offer extra credit assignments.

Late Work

Late assignments will be considered on a case-by-case basis and only if the student contacts the instructor to request consideration. If approved, late work may earn a maximum of 70% of the available points.

Important Dates

- Last day for term schedule changes: August 27, 2026 Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).
- Deadline to file for graduation: October 5, 2026. Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).
- Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" November 23, 2026 Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).
- Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

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.

Attendance

Although this is an online class, students are expected to login frequently (multiple times a week) in order to stay abreast of News Items, grades, feedback and keep up with course assignments.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class or a course that utilizes D2L extensively 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 classes can be accessed from any computer in the world which 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](#).

Recording Classes

****Recording classes is generally prohibited without the professor's explicit permission.*** Such recordings, when permitted, are for personal use only and may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published without the professor's prior consent. Some faculty may not permit recordings of their classes. When it is feasible and appropriate, students may record classes to accommodate disabilities under the Americans With Disabilities Act, with prior approval of Disability Support Services. Such recordings may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published.

Instructor Class Policies

Instructor Response Policy

For office hours, appointments are recommended to avoid conflicts with other student appointments. Zoom appointments also available for other times outside of office hours. The best way to contact me is via email. I will check my email between the hours of 8:00AM and 5:00 PM Mon-Fri. I will attempt to contact you within 24 hours; however, this does not apply on weekends or holidays. Once you contact me via email, we can then set up a virtual, phone, or in-person meeting, depending on your needs.

Classroom Conduct

Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment which is conducive to learning. Inappropriate behavior in the D2L online classroom or face-to face class shall result, minimally, in a request to drop the class. Failure to demonstrate appropriate classroom behaviors and 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 for 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.

Acceptable Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools can be valuable resources for learning when used appropriately. However, the writing, analysis, and critical thinking demonstrated in course assignments must reflect your own work. The primary purpose of these

assignments is to help you develop the knowledge and skills required for success in this course and in your future profession.

Students may use AI as a learning resource, but not as a substitute for their own thinking or writing. Acceptable uses of AI include generating examples to help you understand a concept or assignment, providing templates or organizational formats, clarifying difficult concepts or suggesting alternative wording that you then rewrite in your own words, assisting with research by identifying additional information or viewpoints, and brainstorming ideas for lesson activities or other course-related projects. Whenever AI is used in these ways, the AI tool must be properly cited according to the citation guidelines provided for the course.

Submitting work that is substantially generated by AI and presented as your own is a violation of academic integrity. Assignments for which the instructor determines that the majority of the content was generated by AI may receive a grade of zero. Students who receive a zero for this reason may revise and resubmit the assignment in their own original writing for a maximum of 50% of the available points.

Some assignments may include specific instructions regarding the appropriate use of AI. Students are expected to follow those assignment-specific guidelines.

Inclement Weather

In the event that the university is closed for a short time due to inclement weather, course work that is posted in the course calendar is still due unless a notification is posted in D2L on the News page stating otherwise. In most cases courses will not be offered digitally synchronously unless the closing extends beyond a brief period and is otherwise noted on the D2L News page. Students enrolled in courses with observations, internships, and field work, will be handled on a case by case basis.

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 application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Student Wellness Center, (940) 397-4140. 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](#).

Emergency Aid Resources for Basic Needs

Unexpected life circumstances can affect anyone. If you are experiencing challenges meeting basic needs—such as housing, utilities, food, transportation, healthcare, technology, textbooks or other life necessities, resources may be available to help. Visit the [Student Emergency Support and Resources webpage](#) to learn more, and explore emergency support opportunities through MSU and how to access them. For additional information, please contact the Office of Student Affairs: Clark Student Center #108, (940) 397-7500, student.affairs@mstuexas.edu.

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 WATC. 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 [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). 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.”](#)

Grade Appeal Process

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

Course Schedule:

***Notice:** Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and calendar/schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Topics	Due Date (11:59 PM for the day listed)
Week 1 8/24-8/28	Introduction and Introduction to Lifespan Development Study Plan Due Quiz	8/30
Week 2 8/31-9/4	Developmental Theories Prenatal Development Study Plan Due (2) Quiz (2)	9/6
Week 3 9/7-9/11	Portfolio Part I Due	9/13

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Topics	Due Date (11:59 PM for the day listed)
Week 4 9/14-9/18	Infancy and Toddlerhood Study Plan Due Quiz Activity 1 Due	9/20
Week 5 9/21-9/25	Portfolio Part II Due	9/27
Week 6 9/28-10/2	Early Childhood Physical Development Quiz Activity 2 Due	10/4
Week 7 10/5-10/9	Early Childhood Development Study Plan Due Quiz	10/11
Week 8 10/12-10/16	Middle Childhood Development Study Plan Due Quiz Activity 3 Due	10/18
Week 9 10/19-10/23	Middle Childhood Emotional & Social Development Quiz Activity 4 Due	10/25
Week 10 10/26-10/30	Adolescence Study Plan Due Quiz	11/1
Week 11 11/2-11/6	Adolescence: Identity Development, Social, Emotional, and Moral Development Study Plan Due Quiz Portfolio Part III Due	11/8
Week 12 11/9-11/13	Early Adulthood: Physical, Cognitive, Psychosocial Development Study Plan Due Quiz (2)	11/15
Week 13 11/16-11/20	Middle Adulthood Study Plan Due Quiz (2) Portfolio Part IV Due	11/22
Week 14 11/23-11/27	Late Adulthood Study Plan Due Quiz	11/25 This is a Wednesday

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Topics	Due Date (11:59 PM for the day listed)
Week 15 11/30-12/3	Late Adulthood: Psychosocial Development Quiz	12/6
Week 16 12/7-12/11	Death and Dying Study Plan Due Quiz	12/9 This is a Wednesday

Appendix A

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 [this link to report](#).

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 [this link to view policy online](#).