

B.A. in Liberal Studies: Sample Child Studies Courses

PSY 320A Abnormal Child Psychology

3 Units

The course provides an overview of the psychological disorders that can affect children and adolescents. Etiology, assessment, and treatment of the major psychological disorders of childhood and adolescence are discussed. The course draws on a framework that considers social contexts (family, community, culture), cultural and historical relativism in defining and classifying abnormality, the advantages and limitations of diagnosis, principles of multiple causality, and the relationship between mind and body. Other topics to be covered include research methods, diagnosis and classification, child maltreatment, cultural diversity, and prevention.

PSY 343 Infant to Child Development

3 Units

Knowledge of infant and child development is essential in developing an understanding of the needs and motivations of human beings. This course provides a basic working knowledge of the field of child development, focusing on emotional, cognitive, and social development from infancy to childhood. Various stages of development are explored, as well as psychological theories that emphasize the importance of the child-caretaker bond. Using empirical infant/child studies, students choose a topic and present their findings to the class. Students are required to participate in an "infant observation" based on the "Resources for Infant Educators" (RIE) philosophy, at a time other than when the class is scheduled.

PSY 346 Cross-Cultural Child Development

3 Units

This class explores the socio-cultural matrix of infant development. Cultural universals and cultural variability are considered in terms of societal/parental expectations and interactive behavior with topics such as feeding, sleeping arrangements, attachment, separations, autonomy, sense of self, crying, playing, and risk. The physical development of the infant, emotional and cognitive theories of development, and student's own experience are investigated.

PSY 384/SOC 375 Social Cognition: The Social Psychological World of the Child

3 Units

A central problem of developmental psychology is the systematic understanding of the individual's journey from helpless infant to competent social adult. This seminar investigates four significant areas of children's thinking: 1) the child's ability to think of others as different from her/himself; 2) the child's ability to attribute to others, inner feelings, personality traits and intentions; 3) the developmental path through which these inferences resemble the strengths and biases of adult inferences; and 4) the child's understanding of the social context, with its rules and cultural norms.

PSY 390R Special Topics in Psychology: Children and War

1 Unit

This interactive, one-day workshop explores the ways that war impacts on the psychosocial well-being of children, their families, and communities. The topic covers children who currently reside in war, as well as children who are refugees. Workshop participants develop practical plans of action in prevention, emergency intervention, and rehabilitation for war-affected children. This workshop affords students in psychology the opportunity to expand their focus of psychological intervention. Students gain insight into a crucial contemporary concern related to the world's children.

PSY 401A Child to Adolescent Development

3 Units

This course provides a comprehensive survey of the science of human development from early childhood through the adolescent years. Development is covered from the physiological, cognitive, social, and behavioral perspectives of psychology. Topics include parent-child interaction; the attention, memory, perception, and problem-solving abilities of children and adolescents; moral development; aggression; the effects of schooling, operant conditioning, classical conditioning, observational learning, and punishment; and the psychological effects of puberty, adolescent social interactions, and gender differences and similarities.

PSY 454/SOC 454 School and Community-Based Interventions with Children

4 Units

The goal of this course is to introduce participants to the range of school and community-based interventions available for school-aged children. Through readings, lecture, video presentations and discussions students are expected to develop an understanding of: 1) approaches to intervention with young children in school settings; 2) approaches to intervention with young children in community settings; and 3) how school and community approaches to interventions with children can be integrated for maximum efficacy.

SOC 381 Children in Social Policy

3 Units

This class focuses on major social policies in the United States that impact children and their families. The historical, economic and political factors critical in the creation and sustaining of these policies are examined, using a critical thinking approach. While a wide range of interdisciplinary material are presented by the instructor, students are responsible for examining current social policies and beginning to analyze their effects on children, especially children from ethnic minority groups, lower income families and other oppressed groups. The class focuses specifically on the inequalities and inequities in the distribution of economic and social resources through historical and contemporary social policies.

SOC 381 Children in Social Policy

3 Units

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SOC 385/PSY 357 Child Abuse: Social Policy and Clinical Interventions

3 Units

This course focuses on child abuse, including physical and sexual abuse and neglect. Causes of child abuse as well as treatment and programs designed to help families at-risk for abuse are considered. The role of the social work profession in working with abused children and their families is addressed.