

Psychology of Childhood

PSYC 102

Fall 2026 Section 50 Fully Online 3 Unit(s) 10/16/2026 to 12/10/2026 Modified 08/18/2026

Course Information

The purpose of this course is to provide a survey of the field of developmental psychology human development from the prenatal period to middle childhood. The lectures will mix of descriptions with a general topical approach: Sometimes we will focus on the issues and a group, and other times we will examine a topic by considering its relevance for different age groups. The required text and lectures will be the main source of information. The readings and lectures coincide, but there will also be unique information from each source for which you are responsible. We will emphasize the typical course of development but will also include some information on atypical developmental processes.

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found in the [Learning Management System course login website](http://sjsu.instructure.com) at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>. You are encouraged to regularly check Canvas to learn any updates.

Course Description and Requisites

Psychological development of children from conception to middle childhood emphasizing (typical) development in the context of cognitive, socioemotional, biological, and cultural processes.

Prerequisite: PSYC 001.

Letter Graded

* Classroom Protocols

Class Environment

In the effort to create an environment conducive to sharing one's thoughts, I require the following when engaging in online discussions:

- Be polite and respectful to the other people in the class.
- Do not use profanity in posts.

Respect for the rights and opinions of others is required. The free and open exchange of ideas is a cornerstone of higher education, but we must always remain respectful of others, even if we strongly disagree with them. Disagreement is acceptable, but discourteousness is not. Behavior that creates a threatening or harassing environment will not be tolerated. Severe and pervasive disruptive activities are a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and will be reported to the Office of Student and Ethical Development.

If we all show each other courtesy and respect, we can maintain a pleasant classroom climate.

Program Information

Program learning outcomes (PLOs) are skills and knowledge that students will have achieved upon completion of the Psychology BA degree. Each course in our curriculum contributes to one or more PLOs. The PLOs for the Psychology BA degree are:

1. Knowledge Base of Psychology. Students will be able to demonstrate familiarity with psychological concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.
2. Research Methods in Psychology. Students will be able to design, implement, and conduct research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretation.
3. Critical Thinking Skills. Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, skepticism, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes.
4. Applications of Psychology. Students will be able to apply psychological principles to interpersonal, group, and societal issues.

Values in Psychology. Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- **CLO 1:** Recognize normative (i.e., “average” or “typical”) and individual aspects of development.
- **CLO 2:** Identify and describe psychological theories and concepts of cognitive, social, and emotional development.
- **CLO 3:** Discuss the variety of factors that may influence the process of development, and the potential impact of such factors as genetics, ethnicity, culture, gender, and socioeconomic status.

Course Materials

- **Textbook**
 - Santrock, J. W., Lansford, J. E., & Deater-Deckard, K. (2022). Children (15th edition). Education. You are welcomed to choose the format (print vs. eBook) you prefer. It will be the same as long as you get the correct edition of the book.
 - ISBN [print]: 978-1-260-72679-4
 - If you would like to utilize Connect, the publisher’s supplemental learning resource, you can access our Course on Connect’s website, at <https://connect.mheducation.com/class/duh-psyc102-santrock-15> (<https://connect.mheducation.com/class/duh-psyc102-santrock-15>). However, I will NOT require anything from Connect, nor will I interact with you through Connect.
- **Other Readings**
 - During the course you will be required to make use of readings you locate in the library or the library’s website.
 - For assistance with using the library resources, you can reach the library liaison for students, Christa Bailey, via email at christa.bailey@sjsu.edu
 - You will also utilize public sources on the Internet.

This is a **technology-intensive** course. You will access all course materials and submit all assignments through our Canvas site, whether you are doing so on your own time or in our class meetings. Canvas messaging will be the primary mode of communication with your instructor and your classmates.

To ensure your success, you will need the following throughout the course.

- an electronic device (laptop, desktop, or tablet) equipped with working speakers to listen to videos as well as a working microphone for audio-recording your final presentation.
 - *Note: SJSU has a free equipment loan program available for students.*
- reliable Internet connection that will sustain video streaming—contact me as soon as you anticipate any issues.
 - *See Learn Anywhere website for current Wi-Fi options on campus.*

Any student that needs accommodations or assistive technology due to a disability should contact the Accessible Education Center (AEC), and the instructor.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Course Hours

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week for preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, lab work, and practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described below.

***Important Note:** For shorter course terms, the weekly time commitment is much higher. For our 3-unit summer course that is 5 weeks long (7/6~8/7), you can expect to spend 27 hours per week on all aspects of learning related to this course. This is calculated as: 45 hours per unit, multiplied by 3 units and divided by 5 weeks. It is critical that you budget time wisely.

Course Format

This is a fully online, asynchronous course. We do not have any meetings as a class, and you will progress through the course via the course modules in Canvas. Students need to have a reliable internet connection and a computer to access the course material, which will include video-streaming.

There will be 5 course modules to coincide with the 5 exam timepoints that divide the course, spanning across the 5 weeks of this course. In each module, you will find the links to every assignment, completing the corresponding assignments, including materials such as topical lecture handouts, additional resources, tests, and other assignments. The curated content is designed to support you in the course, to help you think deeply and critically about the developmental process, and to build a community among us.

Because this course is self-paced, it will require you to manage your time carefully and schedule your time appropriately. Scheduling time each week (with specific time windows across multiple days) for your course assignments will help support your success in the course!

Although this course is self-directed, please know that I am here to support your learning via messaging and individual meetings. You can meet with me during Zoom office hours and

Assignments

The description and grade distribution of course assignments are as followed.

(1) Exams = 100 points

This course consists of 10 topics (see course schedule for the breakdown of topics), and includes assigned readings, lectures, and information from other sources (e.g., videos) throughout the lectures. You will complete a total of 5 exams. Each exam is worth 20 points and covers

The exams are timed and completed on the designated days. You can have your book and notes during the test, but you are not allowed to work with others. If there is evidence for test cheating or forms of dishonesty (e.g., by response patterns and/or IP addresses), you will receive zero points and be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. Furthermore, although the exams are open-book and open-notes, the questions will focus on conceptual understanding and application of concepts. Searching for definitions and keywords during the test will not be very helpful. The exams are cumulative, but key concepts often build on one another and together contribute to your learning.

Connection to CLOs: You will be expected to demonstrate that you can identify normative issues across different ages across the bio-psycho-social domains (CLO 1); the theoretical and empirical support or disprove common beliefs (CLO 2); and the various biological and sociocultural factors that contribute to developmental diversity (CLO 3). A conceptual understanding and the ability to apply knowledge will be critical; there will be relatively few questions that you can answer correctly through memorization.

(2) "Parenting Fact-Checking" Project = 30 points

We live in a time when information is disseminated quickly and widely, but some of the popular media commentaries may be contestable or even fallacious. How can we evaluate the worthiness of this information? Imagine being a parent, in the role of shaping a child's life, how do we know which advice to follow?

At the end of the course, you will give a short presentation evaluating two popular opinion pieces on child development. Specifically, this project will offer you the opportunity to critically assess the mass-media commentaries on parenting. You will complete multiple assignments designed for the final presentation: two opinion summaries (5 points each), their scientific value, a written script to orally summarize your project (1 point), and the final presentation video (recorded; 15 points).

Connection to CLOs: You will choose a parenting topic, select two mass-media commentaries (new = within 2 years), and evaluate the commentaries based on each of the following: theoretical relevance (CLO 2), empirical support (CLO 1), and practical value (CLO 3).

(3) Homework Assignments = 30 points

To help deepen your learning and prepare you for the exams, you will complete 6 homework assignments (5 points each). The first homework will be based on your study of the course syllabus so that you are ready to tackle the various course requirements. For the remaining homework assignments, questions focused on conceptual understanding and application (similar to those you will see on exams).

All homework assignments are graded by the number of correct answers, but they are not timed. Words, they remain open until you submit them. Thus, you can start the assignment anytime it is available and take as much time as you want—just make sure you submit it on Canvas prior to the deadline to avoid late penalties. You are encouraged to consult with all course materials as well as your instructor while you work on the homework assignments.

Although the homework assignments are due on the same day as the related exams, I encourage you to complete the homework assignments one day (or more) before you take the related exam to allow yourself some time to review materials and/or ask questions before taking the exam.

Connection to CLOs: These assignments will help you practice applying key concepts (CLO 1) and be better prepared for the tests.

(4) Discussion Activities = 20 points

To promote interaction and learning, you are required to complete 4 discussion activities (40 points total). Each discussion activity consists of two parts: You will be POSTING your responses to the prompts and also REPLYING to another student's post. The post and reply can be on different days, but both are due by the designated deadlines. The post and reply need to be at least 150 words each, worth 5 points combined (2.5 each for post and reply). Posts will be graded on depth (meeting the minimum requirement) and whether you've expressed substantive thoughts that are tied back to our course materials.

Connection to CLOs: The associated CLOs vary by activity.

✓ Grading Information

Evaluation

The exams and homework assignments are scored by the number of accurate responses submitted. For other assignments, including the “Parenting Fact-Checking” project and discussion activities, the assignment-specific rubrics are posted on Canvas; mainly, your grade reflects how carefully you address specific requirements of the assignment.

Late Policy

Given the compressed timeline of this course, you are strongly encouraged to plan ahead for the submission of all assignments. A late submission will receive a 20% deduction if submitted after the deadline but before the end of day (11:59pm). Thereafter, an additional 20% daily deduction will be applied. No assignments will be accepted after the course’s end date (8/7/2026).

Make-Up Policy

A make-up or extension on any course requirement will be given under *extraordinary and documented* circumstances. Where such circumstances exist, it is your responsibility to notify me as soon as possible and *no later* than two (2) days after the scheduled due date. Appropriate documentation (e.g., a physician’s note) is required for a make-up to receive the full consideration. If you have such documentation and you have a serious and extenuating circumstance that has prevented you from fulfilling a requirement as scheduled, notify me as soon as possible. Depending on the circumstances, you may be allowed a make-up. However, a make-up without appropriate documentation will not receive credit (i.e., points will be deducted). If you have questions about this policy, please see me.

Calculating Your Letter Grade

Your final letter grade will be based on a percentage obtained by dividing the points you have earned by the total possible points for this course. I will use the following letter grade rubric to assign your final grade. Work hard to obtain as many points as possible so that you do not find yourself at a low letter grade at the end of the course.

Total possible points = Exams (100 pts) + Parenting Fact-Checking Project (30 pts) + Homework Assignments (30 pts) + Discussion Activities (20 pts) = 180 pts

A plus = 99.00+%	A = 98.99- 93.00%	A minus = 92.99-90.00%
B plus = 89.99- 87.00%	B = 86.99- 83.00%	B minus = 82.99-80.00%
C plus = 79.99- 77.00%	C = 76.99- 73.00%	C minus = 72.99-70.00%
D plus = 69.99- 67.00%	D = 66.99- 63.00%	D minus = 62.99-60.00%
F = 59.99-0%		

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policies concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit and review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Course Schedule

The schedule is subject to change with fair notice; changes will be announced via Canvas. It is your responsibility to stay informed of the course schedule and announcements.

You should aim to complete the assigned readings before you begin the recorded lectures. You are expected to read the assigned pages in the textbook as indicated in the course schedule of reference, the page assignments can also be found on the Canvas Modules page, first slide in the topical lecture handouts. The review sections throughout the book are not assigned reading, but you may want to utilize them for your own learning.

All assignments are due Sunday 11:59pm, unless otherwise noted on this syllabus and on

Dates	Class Topics and Reading	Assignments due 11:59pm
Exam 1 7/6 ~ 7/12	Topic 1: Theories and methods for development Read: Ch 1 (pp. 9-35) Topic 2: Prenatal and birth Read: Ch 3 (pp. 72-77, pp. 85-94), Ch 4 (pp. 100-110)	Due 7/12: HW1~Syllabus study HW2~Theories and methods PROJ1~First opinion summary DISC1~Theory IRL Exam 1~Theories and methods + Prenatal and birth (30 min)

Exam 2 7/13 ~ 7/19	Topic 3: Infant physical Read: Ch 5 (all pages) Topic 4: Infant cognitive Read: Ch 6 (pp. 157-171)	Due 7/19: HW3~Infant physical PROJ2~Second opinion summary DISC2~Infancy research Exam 2~Infant physical + Infant cognitive (30 min)
Exam 3 7/20 ~ 7/26	Topic 5: Infant socioemotional Read: Ch 7 (pp. 188-196, pp. 201-206) Topic 6: Language Read: Ch 6 (pp. 172-181), Ch 9 (pp. 262-263)	Due 7/26: HW4~Infant socioemotional PROJ3~Scientific values DISC3~Opinion check Exam 3~Infant socioemotional + Language (30 min)

Exam 4 7/27 ~ 8/2	Topic 7: EC cognitive Read: Ch 9 (pp. 245-260) Topic 8: EC socioemotional Read: Ch 10 (pp. 277-287, pp. 303-309)	Due 8/2: HW5~EC socioemotional DISC4~Preschooler caricature Exam 4~EC cognitive + EC socioemotional (30 min)
Exam 5 8/3 ~ 8/7 (FRI)	Topic 9: MC cognitive Read: Ch 12 (pp. 343-352, pp. 358-364) Topic 10: MC socioemotional Read: Ch 13 (pp. 381-385, pp. 393-406), Ch 10 (pp. 288-291, pp. 296-299)	Due 8/7 (FRIDAY): HW6~MC socioemotional PROJ4~Oral summary PROJ5~Final presentation Exam 5~MC cognitive + MC socioemotional (30 min)