

**Cognitive Development (15:295:503:90)**  
**Cross Listed w/ 16:185:604:90**

Spring, 2023

**Instructor:**

Nick Fargione

nick.fargione@gse.rutgers.edu

(732) 939-2776 (email is preferred)

**Mode of Instruction:**

Online, Asynchronous

**Online Office Hours:**

**Overall Learning Goals:** on request via Zoom. Please email to schedule.

By the end of the class, successful students will understand the emergence of cognitive skills from infancy through late adolescence as illustrated in responses to the following questions:

1. How is cognitive development currently defined by contemporary scholars in educational and developmental psychology?
2. What is the place of classical theory in developmental psychology (e.g., the theories of Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky) in contemporary research and scholarship on children's cognition? How do recent findings from cognitive neuroscience and sociocultural psychology extend earlier ideas?
3. What are the cognitive processes supporting conceptual development and causal reasoning in the physical, biological and psychological domains?
4. What is the developmental trajectory for the processes of meta-cognition, reasoning, executive function, social cognition and memory?
5. How can the findings from contemporary research in cognitive development be used to enhance learning and instruction in school?

**Course Description:**

In this course, we will consider the development of cognitive processes from infancy through early adulthood assuming the lens of the developmental and learning sciences. Meta-theoretical frameworks for developmental inquiry drawing upon neurobiological, neoPiagetian, information processing, theory – theory, and sociocultural approaches will be considered. Various methodological strategies will be considered as we discuss representational and conceptual development, memory development, problem solving, attentional development, social cognition and language development. Current trends and issues in selected areas of particular relevance to schooling will also be explored.

**Course Format:**

This class will be held in an asynchronous format online with assignments and due dates scheduled weekly. Students must complete individual assignments by the posted due dates.

Weekly modules will be opened on Canvas on Mondays at 12:01AM, and will be due by the following Sunday at 11:59PM.

Weekly assignments completed after the Sunday deadline will be considered late, and points will be deducted accordingly. Students are encouraged to plan for themselves how to organize their learning activities (reading, writing, posting discussion comments) within each weekly module in order to meet personal needs and responsibilities. Any extensions or requests for accommodations need to be requested and approved in writing.

**Course Expectations:**

While it is expected that all students will complete assignments by the deadlines provided, it is understood that issues may arise in our personal and professional lives. If you are in need of an extension or discussion, please do not hesitate to contact me. Any request for an extension must be made in writing, via email **prior to the due date** of said assignment. Extension requests made **on** the due date for the assignment would need to be in light of extreme or extenuating circumstances to be considered.

Any request will be considered, but not all requests will be granted. A request for an extension is considered “granted” with a written response, from me.

If a request is not made, or if a request is denied, it is expected that the assignment will be completed in accordance with the deadline(s) below.

**Course Website:**

The class website is on Canvas, 15:295:503:90. Cognitive Development.  
<https://onlinelearning.rutgers.edu/canvas-login>

**Required Book:**

Goswami, U. (2019). *Cognitive development and cognitive neuroscience: The learning brain*. (2nd edition) NY: Psychology Press.

This book is available at the Barnes & Noble, Rutgers University Bookstore in New Brunswick. It is also available on Amazon.com.

Additional readings are required for most weeks. Information about these will be available within the Week’s Module.

**Grading Policy:**

- All assignments are due on the date posted in the syllabus unless special arrangements have been made ahead of time. Late assignments are subject to a grade reduction.
- Assignments should be written in APA 7 Style and submitted electronically on the class website.
- Feedback and grades will be provided by the 11:59 PM on the Tuesday following the Sunday deadline unless submitted late.

- You are welcomed to submit work via Google Doc link if you feel more comfortable; comments will be provided on the Google Doc as long as permission is granted.
- Please ensure that Discussion posts made on the appropriate forums are saved and posted; you are welcomed to take screenshots of your posts in the event one does not load. I will follow up via email if there are any issues viewing discussion posts.
- It is not acceptable to submit a paper that you wrote for another class. This would be self-plagiarism and would be considered an incident of plagiarism.

### **Assignments:**

All assignments will be given a due date. You are expected to complete the assignment by midnight of the due date. Late papers are subject to a reduction in the assignment score. Papers should be turned in on the corresponding Assignment Page and submission box unless otherwise posted.

### **Assignments & Grading Breakdown:**

- **Weekly Annotations (20%)**
  - Each week, you will read provided articles and annotate them on *Perusall*, which is linked via Canvas.
    - To receive full credit for each weekly annotations, you will be expected to:
      - Post **three** original comments. Comments may include
        - A new piece of information/learning that you previously didn't know/were unaware of
        - A finding that challenges a previous notion or understanding that you had prior to reading the article
        - A connection from contents within the article to a real world situation or experience in your life
      - Post **two** thoughtful responses to other students' comments.
        - Thoughtful responses **do not** include "I agree!" or "Good point". The responses should engage or expound upon a point made by your classmates.
  - Additionally:
    - Please proofread your posts before submitting.
    - Your contributions to the discussions should collectively indicate that you have read all the readings, and they should show that you are using and applying the ideas you have learned about.
    - You should also contribute regularly throughout the week, not just at the beginning or the end of the week. I may pose follow-up questions in the latter half of the week that I would like us to reflect on.
    - Evaluation will be based on the number of contributions as well as the quality and timing (throughout the week) of your contributions. Good quality means that you are using important ideas from the texts in meaningful ways.
- **Weekly Reflections (20%):**

- Each week focus questions for a brief reaction to the reading assignment will be posted. The weekly reflection should be about 400-500 words. The weekly reflection is made available by midnight Monday, and is due by Sunday of that week. Each week's reaction paper will be scored from 1 to 10, and should answer the prompt questions in each assignment submission box.
- **Two Research Critiques (20%):**
  - This assignment will give you practice analyzing and evaluating a peer reviewed research paper from a recent journal in psychology or education. For each, you will choose a peer-reviewed journal article of your choosing.
  - The article for your critique should meet the following criteria:
    - Recency (2005-Present)
    - Relevance (Personal, Professional, or Academic - to your coursework)
    - Well-Known or Often-Referenced Journal
  - Your selected article must be submitted in the assignment box with your paper. If it is not, your paper will not be accepted and points will be deducted.
  - Guidance and scoring for these assignments can be found under the Paper Critiques: Guidance, Rubric and Submission module on Canvas
    - **Research Critique 1** is due February 26th @ 11:59PM
    - **Research Critique 2** is due March 26th @ 11:59PM
- **Research Paper (40%)**
  - Each student will identify a problem in child development or child psychology and make use of the research literature in educational psychology to examine the question. The Rutgers Libraries provide wonderful support to students for this and many other tasks. Explore the library soon, especially if you have not written a research paper before. Papers are expected to be about 15 pages in length.
    - The **Research Paper** is due May 7th @ 11:59PM.
      - Your paper topic will need to be approved prior to submitting your final research paper. Your **Research Topic Approval** is due April 9th @ 11:59PM.
      - While you are welcomed to submit your topic for approval prior to 4/9, **your research paper will not be accepted without topic approval.**
    - In addition to the research paper, students will be required to submit an abstract and a question related to their research paper for class discussion. This class discussion will be Week 15 in lieu of a reflection. Discussion Question & Abstract is due Sunday, 4/23 @ 11:59PM. **You may not submit your question and abstract without topic approval.**

### **Academic Integrity Policy for Everyone:**

Please refer to the Policy on Academic Integrity for Undergraduate and Graduate Students at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>. I will follow the policy strictly.

- The work you submit is assumed to be your work prepared for this class. Plagiarism is a serious breach of academic integrity and will be treated accordingly.

- Self plagiarism is plagiarism. Using a paper you wrote for another course is self plagiarism.
- Accidental plagiarism is *not* an excuse.

All outside sources should be referenced appropriately in APA 7 Style. (This includes readings we cover in class). Please use language that is professional and appropriate in all your discussions. Please do your own work and cite your sources. For more details, go to: [Academic Integrity Policy](#)

**Office of Disability Services:**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: [Registration Form](#)

**Summary of Course Schedule:**

In each weekly module, there will be a **Week \_\_\_ To-Do** that highlights all of the weekly items that need to be completed by the end (Sunday) of the week, in addition to **due dates and deadlines for benchmark assignments in red**. Below is a grid view snapshot of our coursework together. More detailed information can be found in each Week's To-Do tab.

<b>Week 1 (1/17-1/22)</b>	<b>Week 2 (1/23-1/29)</b>	<b>Week 3 (1/30-2/5)</b>
Review Course Syllabus and post any questions or clarifications.  Acquire the course text (listed above)  Introduce yourself (video or text post) and respond to at least three classmates	<i>Focus: What is Cognitive Development?</i>  Read Goswami, Foreword  Read DeLoache, Miller, Rosengren (1997)  Read Piaget (1964)  Read Richland & Burchinal (2013)  <b>Week 2 Reflection</b> by 11:59 PM on Sunday, 1/29	<i>Focus: Theories of Development - What are some different ways of thinking about the development of the cognitive processes?</i>  Read Goswami, Ch. 11  Read Vygotsky (1986)  <b>Week 3 Reflection</b> by 11:59 PM on Sunday, 2/5
<b>Week 4 (2/6-2/12)</b>	<b>Week 5 (2/13-2/19)</b>	<b>Week 6 (2/20-2/26)</b>
<i>Focus: Two More Views - A</i>	<i>Focus: Infancy - Perceiving</i>	<i>Focus: Infancy - Perceiving</i>

<p>Sociocultural Perspective (The Brain &amp; Neurosciences)</p> <p>Read Gauvain &amp; Munroe (2012)</p> <p>Read Lewis &amp; Todd (2007)</p> <p><b>Week 4 Reflection</b> by 11:59 PM on Sunday, 2/12</p>	<p>and Knowing about the Physical World</p> <p>Read Goswami Chs. 1 &amp; 2</p> <p><b>Week 5 Reflection</b> by 11:59 PM on Sunday, 2/19</p>	<p>and Knowing about the Psychological World</p> <p>Read Goswami Ch. 3</p> <p><b>Week 6 Reflection</b> by 11:59 PM on Sunday, 2/26</p> <p><b>Critique Paper 1 Due 11:59 PM on 2/26</b></p>
<b>Week 7 (2/27-3/5)</b>	<b>Week 8 (3/6-3/12)</b>	<b>Week 9 (3/13-3/19)</b>
<p><i>Focus:</i> Concepts and the Biological World</p> <p>Read Goswami Ch. 4</p> <p><b>Week 7 Reflection</b> by 11:59 PM on Sunday, 3/5</p>	<p><i>Focus:</i> Language Development</p> <p>Read Goswami Ch. 5</p> <p><b>Week 8 Reflection</b> by 11:59 PM on Sunday, 3/12</p>	<p><b>NO ASSIGNMENTS THIS WEEK - SPRING BREAK</b></p>
<b>Week 10 (3/20-3/26)</b>	<b>Week 11 (3/27-4/2)</b>	<b>Week 12 (4/3-4/9)</b>
<p><i>Focus:</i> Causal Reasoning</p> <p>Read Goswami Ch. 6</p> <p><b>Week 10 Reflection</b> by 11:59 PM on Sunday, 3/26</p> <p><b>Critique Paper 2 Due 11:59 PM on 3/26</b></p>	<p><i>Focus:</i> Social Cognition - Theory of Mind and Executive Function</p> <p>Read Goswami Ch. 7</p> <p>Read Miller (2012)</p> <p><b>Week 11 Reflection</b> by 11:59 PM on Sunday, 4/2</p>	<p><i>Focus:</i> Memory Development</p> <p>Read Goswami Ch. 8</p> <p><b>Week 12 Reflection</b> by 11:59 PM on Sunday, 4/9</p> <p><b>Submit your topic for the Final Research Paper in the Approval for Final Paper Topic submission box in the module by 11:59 PM on Sunday, April 9th</b></p>
<b>Week 13 (4/10-4/16)</b>	<b>Week 14 (4/17-4/23)</b>	<b>Week 15 (4/24-4/30)</b>
<p><i>Focus:</i> Metacognition, Reasoning &amp; Theory of Mind</p> <p>Read Goswami Ch. 9</p> <p><b>Week 13 Reflection</b> by 11:59 PM on Sunday, 4/16</p>	<p><i>Focus:</i> Reading, Math &amp; Executive Function</p> <p>Read Goswami Ch. 10</p> <p><b>Week 14 Reflection</b> by 11:59 PM on Sunday, 4/23</p> <p><b>Discussion Question &amp; Paper Abstract Due by</b></p>	<p><i>Focus:</i> Discussion of Class Papers &amp; Abstracts</p> <p><b>There will not be a Reflection due this week. Instead, read your classmates' abstracts and comment on their discussion questions.</b></p>

	<b>11:59 PM on 4/23</b>	
--	-------------------------	--

<b>Weekly Assignments (in lieu of class) end 4/30</b>		
---	--	--

<b>Final Paper is due Sunday, May 7th @ 11:59 PM</b>		
--	--	--