INDICATIVE SYLLABUS

BIRKBECK, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Module/Occurrence Code: SCPS113S4ACB

Subject Area: Psychology

Module Title: The Developing Child: A Psychological Perspective

Award Designation: Psychology (Certificate of Higher Education)
Applied Psychology (Certificate of Higher Education)

Level/credits: Level 4, 30 credits

Venue: Central London

First Meeting: Thursday 29th September 2016, 7-9pm

No of Meetings: 22 meetings

Class Dates: 29/09/16 - 08/12/16; 12/01/17 - 23/03/17

Please note that this syllabus is provisional and subject to change prior to the class start date. Enrolled students will be notified of any changes by e-mail.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS
No formal qualifications are required. However, all modules are taught at university level and students should be able to read, write and speak English fluently. Students new to psychology will benefit from undertaking some preparatory reading as detailed below.

AIM
To review the psychological changes which take place from birth through to the end of adolescence.

OBJECTIVES
• Introduce and explore major theories of child cognitive and social development.
• Introduce and explore key developmental milestones that occur during infancy, childhood and adolescence.
• Introduce and begin to critically evaluate the various research methodologies used in the study of developmental psychology.
• Identify the ethical issues when conducting research in this area (with particular consideration of harm).
• Support and develop students’ study skills, including note taking and essay writing;
• Support students to take part in the assessment process;
• Build students’ confidence in presenting their own ideas and in critical thinking.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the course you will be able to:

• Outline and evaluate major theories of psychological, social and cognitive development, focusing particularly on the typical development of the child as an individual.
• Demonstrate an understanding of the development of ideas within this field, and of contemporary approaches and issues.
• Describe, discuss and evaluate a range of research methodologies that might be appropriate to the study of this area of psychology (identifying strengths and
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weaknesses of core methodologies, including both qualitative as well as quantitative approaches).

- Identify the ethical issues when conducting research in this area (with particular consideration of harm).
- Illustrate the practical applications of research findings.
- Think critically about the subjects covered.
- Present your own ideas about issues addressed on the course.
- Discuss and implement a range of strategies to support your learning.
- Successfully plan and write essays or other assignments which have been set to support your learning on this course.

CONTENT

Concepts and methods
This module begins with a discussion of the history of the study of developmental psychology, a consideration of research methodologies (including a discussion of the particular ethical concerns when studying this particular group) and key concepts and theoretical perspectives. Major theories of child development will be described and discussed as well as an exploration of the role of heredity and environment. Concepts of childhood and adolescence across ages and cultures will be introduced.

Infancy
This part of the module will explore pre-natal development and influences and the birth process as well as aspects of early neuropsychological development. We shall then examine what infants can and cannot do, the process of attachment and bonding with caregivers and differences in temperament.

Social Development
In this part of the module we shall explore key issues in a child’s social development including how children develop an understanding of other people and develop attachments to them, the role of family, and the development of identity including gender and sex roles and moral development.

Language and cognitive development
In this part of the module we explore how children learn to speak, how they acquire reasoning and conceptual understanding and how they think at different stages of childhood and adolescence. We will also explore the relationship between language and thought, how children learn to read and how they acquire mathematical skills.

Adolescence
How do the physical and cognitive changes in adolescence affect feelings and behaviour? In the last part of this module we will discuss aspects of the nature of adolescence and adolescent problems.

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS
General lectures on the area being studied - students are encouraged to ask questions and discuss points throughout. There may also be small group exercises with feedback to the large group to provide an opportunity for discussion and clarification of ideas. Other methods may include: videos, experiments, student presentations, discussion of published articles, etc. Students will also be supported in developing appropriate study skills.

Credit points are used to summarise and describe the amount of learning taking place for a given module. For a 30 credit point module this equates to 300 hours, most of which is comprised of independent learning. Normally 44 hours would be delivered in the classroom but it may sometimes be necessary to cover a small part of the learning by other means such as directed independent learning.
As such students should also expect to build on their learning in class by undertaking guided independent study including appropriate reading and research. Further details can be found in the appropriate Course Handbook as detailed below.

**METHODS OF ASSESSMENT**

The assessment process gives students important opportunities to learn, to check their learning and to discuss their progress with the tutor. For this module, students will be expected to prepare four pieces of coursework for assessment, two of which will be written under timed conditions in the classroom. The other two may take a variety of forms such as essays, case studies, reports and possibly class presentations of 1,500 words in length (or the equivalent).

You are encouraged to discuss with your tutor the particular topics and the type of assignment you would like to focus on in your assessments. It may be possible to accommodate your personal interests within the syllabus. In order to successfully complete the module students must attain at least 40% overall for their coursework and in addition must also pass one of the timed essays.

1st Timed Essay:
w/b 14 November 2016

2nd Timed Essay:
w/b 27 Feb 2017

Regulations regarding assessment are detailed in the appropriate Course Handbook, which will be circulated electronically prior to the course start date. Students are strongly advised to read the Course Handbook prior to commencing their studies.

Upon successful completion of this module 30 credits at Level 4 will be awarded, which may be transferred to some degree courses.

**READING**

You are not expected to read all the books listed below. They are examples of books that you may find interesting or useful. Your tutor will give you further guidance once the course begins.

The course lecturer may also recommend other books for use during the course.

Please note: Psychology books are frequently revised and updated. Any recent edition would be suitable to use.

**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

The My Birkbeck website ([http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/)) is your gateway to accessing all student support services at Birkbeck.

You may find the following links particularly useful:

- Obtaining your library/ID card: [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/you/cards](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/you/cards)
- Accessing IT Services: [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/computing/username](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/computing/username)
- Study skills support: [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/support/study-skills](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/support/study-skills)

You can visit the My Birkbeck helpdesk on the ground floor of the main Birkbeck building on Malet Street (entry via Torrington Square). For details of opening hours visit: [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/helpdesk/](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/helpdesk/)

**LIBRARY AND STUDY SKILLS RESOURCES**

Once you have your ID card, you may use the Birkbeck library and associated resources. You may find the following web links helpful:

- For information on how best to access the resources available for psychology students through **Birkbeck College Library**, students may wish to work through the tutorial available at [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/life/](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/life/)
- For specific guidance for psychologists and psychology students on getting the best out the internet go to: http://www.vtstutorials.co.uk/ - and search for 'Psychology'
- For specific guidance on **how to avoid plagiarism** in your course work go to https://connect.le.ac.uk/p50066682/ and press the 'play' button.

**COURSE EVALUATION**
During the course students will be asked to complete an evaluation form which gives the opportunity to provide feedback on all aspects of their learning.

**WHAT CAN I DO NEXT**
It is important you are clear which award the module you are enrolled on counts towards. Our website provides an overview of each Certificate award so you can decide which best suits your needs: [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/study/2014/certificates/subject/psychology/](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/study/2014/certificates/subject/psychology/)

Information is available on core and option modules for each Certificate. Your choice of subsequent modules you take should be informed by this information. Modules can be taken in any order although it is recommended that certain core modules are taken first. Not all core modules have to be taken in the same year. If you need further advice you can contact the department by telephone on 0207 631 6669 or by e-mail: psychologycert@bbk.ac.uk

Revised July 2014