

# Lifespan Development in the Human Environment

HDF 211-05

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Course e-mail: [hdf211@hotmail.com](mailto:hdf211@hotmail.com)

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## Course Description/Goals

HDF 211 covers every aspect of human development, from conception to death. You will not be expected to learn about every aspect, however, but rather to learn what a developmental approach entails. Over the course of an individual's life huge changes take place in that individual's physical appearance, thinking, and relationships with others. Nonetheless, that individual also experiences continuity—in some important senses she is still the same person at 50 as she was at age 10. Continuity and change are key factors in human development.

Among the sort of questions that we shall address are the following:

- Why is it that some children are born into families that seem so disorganized and chaotic, or who early in life have health problems or who seem to have learning difficulties while other children show no such problems? What are the consequences over time of these different experiences?
- Why is it that two children, apparently so similar, can go to the same school, and one be perfectly happy while the other one has a difficult time? What are the likely consequences for these two children? Are they destined for quite different futures, or can other events and other relationships turn things around?
- As some people grow up, they are faced by major societal problems (such as a major war, or the Great Depression) or by broad social changes (the Civil Rights movement, or the women's movement), whereas others grow up during periods of relative calm. What are the consequences for the people themselves, and for their children?
- What are the effects of stresses of a more individual or family-oriented nature? For example, what are the short- and long-term results of being a "difficult" child and adolescent, and how do these results differ because of the type of environment in which people are situated?
- What is the impact of divorce—on the divorcing couple themselves, and on their children? Are these effects different for younger children than for adolescents, and do they have long-term consequences?
- What happens to family relationships as people age, and how do individual, interpersonal, and socio-cultural aspects of life enhance or detract from the aging process?

These are the types of issues that we shall be dealing with in this class, and you should leave the class with a good understanding of factors that influence stability and change, continuity and disruption, trajectories and pathways of development—how they get started and how they change.

As well as understanding what a developmental perspective looks like, this course will provide a solid introduction to the work of some theorists, focusing on those whose theories are clearly developmental and relevant across the lifespan. Above all, we shall stress the fact that development cannot be understood without examining the interrelations between **individual** (biology, temperament, etc.), **interpersonal** (family, friends, etc.), and **cultural-historical** factors (when and where the person is developing).

## Blackboard

- The url is: <https://blackboard.uncg.edu> To get onto Blackboard, you should use Internet Explorer as your browser. (If you get onto the net from AOL or some other ISP, minimize its browser and open Explorer. Blackboard and other web-based teaching tools are sometimes unstable on other browsers.)

## Texts/Readings

- Werner, E. E., & Smith, R. S. (2001). *Journeys from childhood to midlife: Risk, resilience, and recovery*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Electronic reserve readings, listed in the calendar.

The text is available at the bookstore and the papers are available on Blackboard (just click on e-reserves and you'll find the complete listing of papers).

The class will also make some use of film, including documentaries (for example "35 Up" and "[42 Up](#)", videos that chronicles people's lives as they develop from age 7 to 42). These videos will be shown during class times, and some test and exam questions will be taken from them. A copy will, if possible, be available for you to watch in the University Teaching and Learning Center (McNutt).

## Requirements

- This class is primarily a web-assisted class. All lectures will be available for you to read in Blackboard, as well as the types of overheads (slides) that you would typically get in class. The purpose of the overheads and lectures is:
  - To introduce you to topics and issues that are not covered in any of the readings;
  - To help you understand the readings, by pointing out the main concepts that you need pay particular attention to;
  - To help organize the material that you need to understand in this class.
- You are required to read the relevant materials (chapters from the book or readings on reserve, lecture, and overheads) **prior to the class period**. The reason is that time in class will be devoted to going over concepts, issues, and ideas that are not clear to you.
- Class time will therefore NOT be devoted to a traditional lecture, but rather to helping you understand the material better by answering your questions about those issues or concepts that you find confusing. So you need to have read the material before coming to class. ***Please note that you must bring to class with you the relevant reading(s) as well as the lecture itself.*** This is to ensure that everyone can refer easily to the same material.
- Each week you will have the opportunity to post a question about the readings for that week via the class email ([hdf211@hotmail.com](mailto:hdf211@hotmail.com)), and will receive 1 or 2 points for each question you post (maximum of one question per week, and a maximum of 20 points over the semester). The deadline for posting questions for points is 12 noon on Monday. These questions should be about concepts or issues raised in a chapter, reading, or lecture notes, rather than about class organization or about the tests or exams. You may ask questions to clarify confusing points, but you may also challenge the authors' stance on an issue or present a point of view not considered in the materials. If you present what you think is a different or new point of view, you should explain why this view is relevant to the materials. You may also gain 1 or 2 points by responding appropriately to other people's questions.
- Most weeks we will also encourage you to discuss some of the key ideas and concepts, by asking you to reflect on questions that we raise. We may ask you to form into small groups, to allow as many as possible of you to engage in this discussion, and then will follow up with a whole-class discussion, to ensure that you have all understood the concepts appropriately. Obviously this type of discussion will only be helpful if you have read the material for the week prior to coming to class.

## Communication

- Office hours. Our office hours are listed above. If you have any problems, questions or concerns, **please** come to see one or other of us, or send us an e-mail to schedule a different time if these office hours do not work for you.
- Questions about class organization. Using Blackboard, you will also be able to post questions about class organization or about the tests or exams, and we will answer you on Blackboard.
- Announcements. ALL important communications from us to you (for example, reminders about a forthcoming test or exam, a message that a test or paper has been graded and that the grades have been posted on Blackboard) will appear in the "Announcements" section of Blackboard. It is **essential** that you read all announcements.

## Additional Information

- **Attendance is required. This means every class and for the entire class. Missing one class costs 5 points, and a second class 10 more points. Missing three classes means failing the class. You may miss one class without penalty, if you either clear it with one of us prior to class or bring a doctor's note (or similar) the following week.**
- **At the end of each test and exam you will be asked four additional questions, about:**
  - **how much you like the way in which this class is being taught;**
  - **your interest in the materials (the text and the readings);**
  - **the extent to which you are reading the materials; and**
  - **approximately how many hours you spend studying for the class.**
- **Your responses to these questions are purely for our information, and have no bearing on your grade.**

## Academic Integrity

It is your responsibility to read the [Academic Integrity Policy](http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/policy/academicintegrity/) (found in the *UNCG Student Calendar/Handbook*, and at the following link: <http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/policy/academicintegrity/>), and to abide by its requirements on all exams and on each paper. These issues are taken seriously in this class as in all HDFS classes. You are required to read, on each exam, and sign underneath: "I have abided by the academic integrity policy on this assignment." With each paper you submit you need to include this statement, with your name and the date typed underneath.

## Appropriate Classroom Climate

**Arrival and departure.** Class starts promptly at 6 pm, and you need to be on time. If you have, for whatever reason, to leave class early, please talk to us at the start of class.

**Cell phones** need to be switched off before entering the classroom, and kept off during class time.

**Be respectful to others.** Attendance and arrival also fits under this heading, but during class it is also important to be polite and respectful to others, including those whose views we do not agree with. We encourage all students to participate in discussion; be careful that your own participation in the discussion does not make it more difficult for others to participate. It is also not respectful to talk or whisper either while others are addressing the group, and it also qualifies as a lack of respect to read the newspaper, prepare for other classes, play computer games, sleep during class, etc., etc., etc.

**Teachers Academy Conceptual Framework Mission Statement:** *The mission of professional education at UNCG is to prepare and support the professional development of caring, collaborative, and competent educators who work in diverse settings. This mission is carried out in an environment that nurtures the active engagement of all participants, values individual as well as cultural diversity and recognizes the importance of reflection and integration of theory and practice. UNCG's professional education programs are guided by shared commitments to: (a) equity and excellence in teaching, research, and service; (b) professional integrity and ethical deliberation in dealing with students and colleagues (university-based, school-based, and community-based); (c) the construction of a professional knowledge base through collaboration and collegiality; and (d) the dissemination of professional knowledge, skills and dispositions through the preparation and continuing professional development of teachers, principals and other school personnel.*

## **Grading/Evaluation:**UNCG Undergraduate Grading System

There are three major activities on which you will be graded. See the course calendar for due dates.

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>Exams</b>	<p>There will be two exams plus a final, each of which will have 50 multiple-choice questions and be worth 50 points. The second exam will concentrate on the material covered since the first exam, but will not be restricted to that material. One thing that I am stressing in this class is that experiences early in the life-course have impact on later experiences. Those aspects of life that we discuss in the first part of the class necessarily have impact on those we discuss later. The same is true of the theoretical perspectives that we talk about. The final exam will be cumulative, but is not required. If you have a C or better on the first two exams, you need not take the final. If you choose to take the final, I will drop the score of your lowest exam. Taking the final cannot hurt you--if you score worse on the final than on either of the two previous exams, I will simply not count the final score in your cumulative total.</p> <p><b>Please note:</b> There will be <b>NO</b> make-up exams. If you miss one exam, or get lower than a C on either exam, you <b>must</b> take the final.</p>	<b>100</b>
<b>Tests</b>	<p>Four times over the course of the semester there will be a test (see calendar for the dates), based on the material covered since the last test. A correct answer will be worth one point, and a total of 10 questions will be asked on each test. The questions will be taken both from the material presented in lecture and from the most recent required readings. The purpose of these tests is to help you make sure that you understand the important concepts that you have read about, and to help you understand the types of questions that will appear on the exams. <b>Your lowest test score will be dropped (i.e., only your top three scores will count).</b></p>	<b>30</b>
<b>Discussion Papers</b>	<p>Three times over the course of the semester there will be a question raised relating to the readings. You will be expected to write a brief response (half a page to a page will probably be enough) in which you relate the issue to your own life or the life of other people you know. Each paper is worth 6 points, 4 of which are for content, and 2 of which are for grammar, lack of typographical errors, etc. If you are worried about your writing, please go to the Writing Center, 100 McIver, where someone will help you. <b>These papers MUST be done online.</b></p>	<b>18</b>
<b>Questions</b>	<p>Each week you will have the opportunity to raise a question about the readings for the week (send to <a href="mailto:hdf211@hotmail.com">hdf211@hotmail.com</a>). One point will be gained if you simply ask a question that could have been answered by reading a little further in the material. Two points are available for a more thoughtful question, one that indicates that you have read the material and thought about it, or for a thoughtful comment about the material (again showing that you have read the material). Over the course of the semester you can gain a maximum of 20 points for these questions.</p>	<b>20</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>168</b>

Out of a possible 168 points, the scores needed for the various grades are as follows:

A- 140-142	A 143 and above		
B- 125-127	B 128-136	B+ 137-139	
C- 110-112	C 113-121	C+ 122-124	
D- 95-97	D 98-106	D+ 107-109	

On each exam, the following scores are equivalent to the following grades (but your final grade will depend on the scores you get on the tests, papers, weekly questions, and attendance): A: 43; B: 38; C: 33; D: 28.