

# Cognitive Development - SYLLABUS

The University of Texas at Dallas  
PSY6331 Spring 2023  
Thursdays 1:00 to 3:45 PM

Location: GR 4.208

## Contact Information

Instructor	Email	Office Phone	Virtual Office Hour Times
Candice Mills, Ph.D.	candice.mills@utdallas.edu	972-883-4475; messages only, I receive a voice-to-text email	By appointment

## Course Modality and Expectations

<b>Instructional Mode</b>	<b>Traditional.</b> This class will focus on in-person discussions, with some activities completed asynchronously (e.g., watching topic-relevant lecture videos, reading articles, posting in eLearning).
<b>Course Platform</b>	<b>eLearning and Microsoft Teams.</b> eLearning will be used for access to course materials and to post on the discussion board for the readings each week. Microsoft Teams will be used for in-class discussions of the readings.
<b>Expectations for Learning</b>	To prepare for class discussions, I expect students to view any topic introduction materials (e.g., brief video lectures) and carefully read all of the assigned articles every week. During class sessions (either live or virtual), active engagement is expected.
<b>Attendance Expectations</b>	Although attendance is expected in general, please attend virtually if you are sick.
<b>University Guidelines &amp; Resources</b>	The information contained in the following link lists the University's resources for students and instructors of record. Please see <a href="http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies">http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies</a> .

## General Information

### Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

Departmental consent required. Students are recommended to have completed at least one core course in development, cognition, or social and personality at the graduate level.

### Description

This course surveys major theories and research findings relating to cognitive development from birth to adulthood. Class time will be spent fostering the understanding of various perspectives, and evaluating the strengths, weaknesses and implications of empirical research related to covered topics. Because discussion is critical to the success of the course, you will need to come to class having completed all assigned readings and prepared to participate actively.

## Required Textbooks and Materials

1. No textbook is required for this class.

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  2. **Mandatory** readings and media will be assigned and posted in eLearning. In some cases, particularly at the beginning of the semester, you will be required to watch a pre-recorded background lecture before you begin your reading assignments. You may also be asked to review video recordings of research studies. Please pay attention to eLearning for the materials for each week.

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  3. If you are attending class virtually due to illness or illness exposure, you will use Microsoft Teams. Students are expected to be able to participate both verbally and through the chat window. If you do not have access to technology to allow you to participate in class when attending virtually, please reach out to me.

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  4. New assignments, revisions to the syllabus, announcements, and your grades will be posted on eLearning. You can access eLearning through a link on UTD's main page. You are then responsible for checking this site frequently (at least twice weekly) in order to remain aware of new activities, announcements, etc. Make sure that you have a UTD email address on this account. Any email to students enrolled in this class will be sent through UTD email.
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## Learning Objectives, Assessments, and Your Grade

### Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- understand and apply major theoretical viewpoints and themes in cognitive development.
- understand, critique, and apply methodologies used in cognitive development research.
- critically evaluate published research in cognitive development and consider how to translate these research findings for the common good.
- demonstrate effective writing skills through the development of a final writing project and effective oral communication skills through class presentations.

### Assessment Description

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<b>Reading Responses (25% of grade)</b>	<p>Each week, students will be required to read the materials and complete a writing assignment before class. For the first portion of the semester (and continued onward unless informed otherwise), you will write at least 2 discussion questions from the week's materials. Your questions must be for separate readings unless there is only one article or chapter for class that week. These questions must be posted on eLearning by 11:59 PM on the <b>Tuesday</b> before each class.</p> <p>A "discussion question" for my class is usually a paragraph or two long and can take many different formats. For example, you can challenge or question methods, ponder the implications of the research presented, suggest a connection to other research, or mention a specific question that you felt the readings raised but did not address. At times, I may ask students to address a specific question in their discussion posts for that week. You <b>MUST</b> justify your responses. Your questions should not duplicate questions asked by others. The purpose of these questions is to show that you have read and reflected on the readings as well as to help structure our discussion about each week's topic. Your response for each week will be graded out of 3 points. You will be able to drop your lowest response grade.</p>
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**Class Participation (10% of grade)** Students are expected to attend classes regularly, complete the assigned readings before each class, and participate in class discussions. Each class will consist of student-led presentations of a reading and discussion. Active participation in the discussion is crucial to the success of this course and will be expected. To actively participate, make sure to read the discussion questions posted on eLearning before each class. You should also make sure to remember the questions that you posted. I recommend bringing a copy of your questions and notes from the readings to each class. During each class period, I will record attendance and participation out of 3 points. At the end of the semester, I will average these scores together to calculate your class participation score. You will be able to drop your lowest participation grade.

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**Class Leader (10% of grade)** During the course of the semester, you will be in charge of leading discussion for class at least once. You will sign up for a day in which you will be in charge of facilitating discussion for an article and being familiar with the topic more broadly. Your job will be to briefly summarize the main points of the reading you signed up to present, and to organize the discussion posts from your classmates into several main themes for discussion. You will then use this information to guide the discussion of the readings. See handout for more information. You will not be required to make any discussion posts the week you are leading a discussion.

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**Short Writing Assignment (15% of grade)** There will be a short writing assignment designed to help students develop their idea for their final writing project. Guidelines will be provided later in the semester. The writing assignment is due by **5 PM on Monday, February 19th.**

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**Final Writing Project (35% of grade)** Your primary project for the course will be a research-influenced writing project. It can relate to your own personal research interests but may NOT consist of work that you have already completed outside of this course. Guidelines will be provided later in the semester. The final writing project is due by **5 PM on Monday, May 6th.**

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**Project Presentation (5% of grade)** You will give a brief presentation about your project at the end of the semester.

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## Tentative Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic
1	Jan. 18	Introduction to cognitive development
2	Jan. 25	Theories of cognitive development and legacy
3	Feb. 1	Infant cognition
4	Feb. 8	Theory of mind
5	Feb. 15	Language ( <i>Short Writing Assignment due 5 PM on Monday, Feb. 19</i> )
6	Feb. 22	Memory
7	Feb. 29	<b>**Discussion**</b>
8	Mar. 7	Executive function
9	Mar. 14	<b>NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK</b>
10	Mar. 21	<b>NO CLASS – Cognitive Development Society Conference</b>
11	Mar. 28	Academic skills
12	Apr. 4	Achievement gaps
13	Apr. 11	Technology and learning
14	Apr. 18	Candy bag
15	Apr. 26	<b>**Final project presentations/discussions**</b>
16	May 2	<b>**Final project presentations/discussions**</b> ( <i>Final Writing Assignment due 5 PM on Monday, May 6</i> )

**Important Note:** These descriptions, timelines, and readings are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor. It is your responsibility to keep track of changes in the schedule through eLearning and by attending class.

### **SPECIFIC READINGS WILL BE SHARED LATER**

## Additional Information and Resources

### Graduation Help Desk

You may face many obstacles in completing your education, and you do not have to face them alone. A number of resources are available to assist you if anything arises that may interfere with your progress toward graduation. The Graduation Help Desk, <https://oue.utdallas.edu/specialprograms/graduation-help-desk>, connects you to the resources that will meet your specific needs. These resources can help you with study skills, organization, time management, counseling referrals, or general support with personal or academic issues. To reach a person who can help, write to [graduationhelpdesk@utdallas.edu](mailto:graduationhelpdesk@utdallas.edu).

If you face challenges securing food or housing and you believe this may affect your progress toward graduation, reach out to the Graduation Help Desk or the Dean of Students (972- 883-6391 or

dos@utdallas.edu) for support. Please also feel free to contact me so that I can help support you in obtaining the assistance you need.

*We want you to succeed in this class and at UTD.*

### Academic Honesty

This class is designed to support the development of a community of learners who are actively engaged in the process of learning facts about child development and the science behind that. The community model is built on trust, and I trust you to do the right thing. No form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated. This includes plagiarizing scholarly works, taking photos of exams or other course materials, re-using work you have written in another course, and copying text from internet sources without proper documentation of the author. Importantly, to be clear, even though this course is online, it is considered academic dishonesty to collaborate IN ANY WAY with other people or outside resources (like Google) during an exam. This includes texting, calling, participating in a GroupMe, or taking the exam with other students. The consequences of academic dishonesty can be severe, ranging from failing an assignment to failing the class to being on academic probation. Follow UTD standards for all written work in this class. If you are unclear about the line between paraphrasing other's work and plagiarism, see the official policy and examples of plagiarism at: <http://www.utdallas.edu/student/sliffe/scholastic.html>.

Remember the Comet Creed, voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by. It is expected that you uphold the Comet Creed during all tasks associated with the course.

**Comet Creed: "As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do."**

### Late/Makeup Policy

It is very important that students keep up with course materials. All reading assignments, learning activities and exams must be completed and submitted by the due date. To meet this objective, plan to complete each assignment well in advance of the day it is due. Planning to complete assignments in advance provides an opportunity to adapt to unexpected circumstances. If there is a dire emergency (for example, a sudden diagnosis of prolonged illness), reach to the instructor *prior* to any due date to collaborate about any potential options there may be for your specific situation. Take advantage of the flexibility already built into the course grading policies and plan ahead!

### Submissions to eLearning

Verify that every assignment or discussion post you submit can be viewed in eLearning. If you can't see it, I can't see it. If I can't see it, I cannot evaluate your hard work. Notify eLearning tech support by email at [assist@utdallas.edu](mailto:assist@utdallas.edu) or call the UT Dallas Computer Help Desk at 972-883-2911 if you have technical problems.

If ever there are technology-related issues when a submission is due, email your work to both your professor and graduate teaching assistants prior to the due date as a ".doc" or ".pdf" file. Other forms of evidence (e.g., a timestamp from a google doc, verbal corroboration from a friend or family member) are not adequate for us to be able to accept a late submission.

### Recordings

The instructor may record meetings of this course. Any recordings will be available to all students registered for this class as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. Students are expected to follow appropriate University policies and maintain the security of passwords used to access recorded lectures. Unless the Office of Student AccessAbility has approved the student to record the instruction, students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course. Recordings may not be published, reproduced, or shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

## Contacting the Instructor

The best way to reach me is by email to the address listed on the syllabus, not by phone or eLearning discussion board message. Please put the course name in the subject line and include your first and last name in the message. You should use a UTD email address for all email correspondence. Anticipate that it may take up to 24 hours to respond to emails, with more time outside of regular working hours. While I respond to email as promptly as I can, if you have not heard from me by email within 48 hours during the regular work week, feel free to send another email.

## UTD Online Course Policies

### Academic Support Resources

The information contained in the following link lists the University's academic support resources for all students. Please go to the [Academic Support Resources](#) webpage for these policies.

### Technical Requirements

In addition to a confident level of computer and Internet literacy, certain minimum technical requirements must be met to enable a successful learning experience. Please review the important technical requirements on the [Getting Started with eLearning](#) webpage.

### Course Access and Navigation

This course can be accessed using your UT Dallas NetID account on the [eLearning](#) website.

Please see the course access and navigation section of the [Getting Started with eLearning](#) webpage for more information.

To become familiar with the eLearning tool, please see the [Student eLearning Tutorials](#) webpage.

You are responsible for frequently checking our course website on eLearning for information about new assignments, revisions to the syllabus, announcements and your grades.

UT Dallas provides eLearning technical support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The [eLearning Support Center](#) includes a toll-free telephone number for immediate assistance (1-866-588-3192), email request service, and an online chat service.

### Server Unavailability or Other Technical Difficulties

The University is committed to providing a reliable learning management system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and also contact the online [eLearning Help Desk](#). The instructor and the eLearning Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

## UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please go to [UT Dallas Syllabus Policies](#) webpage for these policies.

*The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.*