

Course Syllabus

PSY XXXX-001

INTRODUCTION TO INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH I



Fall 20XX

The University of Utah - Department of Psychology

3 Credit Hours

Course Website Canvas: enter via CIS or <http://learn-uu.uen.org>

Class Meets T/Th: 10:45AM – 12:05PM

This syllabus is not a binding legal contract. With reasonable notice to students, the instructor may modify the syllabus and course schedule at any time, to accommodate the needs of the class. Should you have any questions or concerns, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor for clarification.

Instructor: XXXX, PhD

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Office hours By appointment (please put PSY XXXX in the Subject line if you email me)

Required Materials

- Zeanah, C. H. (2019). *Handbook of Infant Mental Health* (4th Edition). Guilford.
- *Additional readings* (posted on Canvas)

Optional Materials

-Lieberman, A. F. (1995). *The Emotional Life of the Toddler*. Free Press.

-Recommended websites:

- Center for the Developing Child: centerforthedevelopingchild.org
- Zero to Three: zerotothree.org
- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network: nctsn.org
- National Association for the Education of Young Children: www.naeyc.org

Course Format

Students learn best from active engagement with the materials. At the same time, each student has a unique style of learning. Therefore, various teaching methods will be used, including lecture, video, group discussions, online discussions, and classroom activities.

Course Description

PSY XXXX Introduction to Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health I is the first course in a two-course series that provides an in-depth examination of typical and atypical infant and early childhood development through a culturally-relevant, relationship-focused lens. This course will allow students to uncover developmentally-relevant risk factors, and learn more about how early life stress and trauma can impact biopsychosocial development in infancy and early childhood. Specifically, we will review impacts of parental psychopathology, early life stress effects on the infant brain, and physiological, emotional, and cognitive development. Students will be able to articulate how early life stress and exposure to parental psychopathology “get under the skin” to affect behavioral and mental health outcomes.

Course Objectives

This is the first course in a two-course series that you will take to obtain the infant and early childhood mental health certificate. This syllabus was developed so that successful completion of this course fulfills part of the Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health (see <https://www.allianceaimh.org/endorsement-requirements-guidelines>) for an Infant Family Associate, the guidelines developed to ensure a competent early childhood workforce. The focus of this semester is to provide you with a strong foundation in the field of infant and early childhood mental health. In other words, you will be able to describe what infant and early childhood mental health is, the importance of relationships and cultural context for the field, and you will have a strong knowledge base of the research highlighting the importance of early relationships for young children’s development. This knowledge will allow you to study education, prevention, and intervention in early childhood next semester.

The objectives for this course are based on the Department of Psychology’s Learning Outcomes (see here: <http://www.psych.utah.edu/undergraduate/>). In general, I would like you to come away with the theoretical foundations of infant and early childhood mental health, how young children develop in a cultural and relationship-based context, and how risk during prenatal and early childhood can stress the infant-caregiver relationship. You will also develop skills to communicate reliable information about infant and early childhood mental health in several ways (oral, written, visual).

Specifically, by the end of this semester, you will be able to:

1. **Describe key concepts, principles, and themes** in the field of infant and early childhood mental health with respect to risk in prenatal development and early childhood (until about 3 years of age) and **develop a working knowledge** of this area. Explain how relationships in early childhood develop within physical, social and cultural environments. Describe typical child development, behavior, and healthy, secure relationships in early childhood. Understand the conditions that support optimal infant brain development. Identify some of the neurobiological mechanisms by which early life stress becomes biologically embedded to shape social and emotional development in early childhood. [1-Knowledge base in psychology]
2. **Demonstrate information literacy** regarding infant and early childhood mental health, such as knowing where to find reliable clinical information and case studies that are research based, distinguishing reliable from unreliable information, and knowing how to use information in (oral,

written, and visual) communication. This also includes the ability to describe ways that research and clinical work is done with infants, young children, and their caregivers. **[2-Scientific Inquiry and Critical Thinking]**

3. **Apply ethical standards to evaluate psychological research with infants and families.** We will be talking about specific research studies with infants and their parents used to inform the field of infant and early childhood mental health. We will also touch on ways to assess young children, which raises ethical questions about diagnoses in young children. **[3-Ethical and Social Responsibility in a Diverse World]**
4. **Demonstrate effective communication skills** necessary for a position in fields related to infant and early childhood mental health, including academic and business writing, writing for parents, and visual and/or oral presentation of topics relevant to the field of infant and early childhood mental health. **[4-Communication]**
5. Apply what you learned in class in several ways, including your weekly and end-of-semester assignments. **[5-Professional Development]**

Evaluation Methods (Assignments)

There will be no exams in this course. Instead, there will be assignments throughout the semester aimed at integrating what you've learned from the readings and classes. Here is how they are related to the learning objectives (LO) for the semester:

1. **Weekly quizzes** (11 x 15 points, out of 12 possible quizzes): Every week **before class**, you will be asked to complete an online quiz on Canvas about the readings for that week. The quiz will consist mostly of multiple choice and true/false answers. To do well on the quizzes, it is essential that you keep up with the textbook readings. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped. You have 45 minutes to complete each quiz. **[LO 1]**
2. **Think Like an Infant-Family Associate In-class Activities** (24 x 10 points, out of 29 possible). We will be reading several case studies that will challenge your critical thinking skills and require you to think like an Infant and Family Associate, the credential you will be prepared to receive after completing your certificate. These activities include small-group discussions and activities (e.g., interactive exercises, clinically-oriented discussions). As long as you participate and are engaged (and submit a short report) you will receive the full points. If you arrive late or leave early, or are in class without participating, points will be deducted unless you have notified me of a valid reason. **[LO 1 and 3]**
3. **Reflective Practice Journal** (10 x 10 points, out of 29 possible). In 1990 individuals from the organization Zero to Three wrote, *"The development of competence to work with infants, young children, and their families involves the emotions as well as the intellect. Awareness of powerful attitudes and feelings is as essential as the acquisition of scientific knowledge and therapeutic skill"* (pg. 18). Thus, reflective practice is an essential skill you must acquire to be a competent infant and early childhood mental health professional.

Ten times during the semester you will be asked to journal about your thoughts and feelings related to the cases we review during the semester. You will be asked to reflect on what the caregiver is experiencing as well as the child. More information will be provided on Canvas **[LO 2, 3, 4, and 5]**

Apply what you learn:

The more actively involved you can be in finding, processing, and presenting relevant and appropriate information, the better you will remember it. In this class, we will use various forms of applied learning, including watching videos of caregivers and infants and writing about the attachment cues you see. In addition to these interactive, in-class exercises you will complete the following:

4. **Cross-cultural perspectives on attachment and child-rearing paper** (140 points). In this activity you will reflect on how different aspects of attachment can be observed across cultures. First, you will read the following article:

Mesman, J., van IJzendoorn, M. H., & Sagi-Schwartz, A. (2016). Cross-culture patterns of attachment: Universal and contextual dimensions. *Handbook of Attachment: Theory, Research, and Clinical Applications*, 790–815.

Then, you will watch *Babies* and pick at least two babies to: (1) describe how their attachment relationship develops across the first year of life, making sure to observe behaviors from both child and parent; and (2) discuss similarities and differences you observe between these two cultures, and whether your observations are consistent with the universal and contextual elements described in the Mesman article. Detailed instructions will be posted on Canvas. **[LO 2, 4, and 5]**

5. **Class presentation on a unique aspect of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (100 points, 10 for topic selection, 90 for presentation)**: You will pick a “controversial” topic related to infant and early childhood development (e.g., myths and misconceptions about babies, breast feeding, sleep training, etc). You will prepare a 15-minute presentation providing background information about what is known and not known about the topic, the questions caregivers might have about the topic, and the “take-home” message you would provide to caregivers who want more information about the topic. Detailed instructions will be posted on Canvas. **[LO 2, 3, 4, and 5]**

6. **Conceptualize a case (140 points)** In this activity you will practice conceptualizing a case relevant to the field of infant and early childhood mental health. At the end of the semester you will have developed a strong foundation in early life stress, risk, infant development, and caregiver-infant relationships so that you can develop a case conceptualization after reading a fictitious “report” about a young child. You will then reflect on what thoughts and feelings you experience reading this case. What could both the caregiver and child be thinking and feeling? This exercise will be followed by a group discussion about the case, as well as a discussion around how to use evidence when developing your case conceptualization. The paper will be 4-6 pages long. Details will be posted on Canvas. **[LO 2, 3, 4, and 5]**

Grading

Evaluation Method	Points	Weight
Weekly quizzes	11 x 15 = 165 points	18%
In-class assignments	24 x 10 = 240 points	24%
Reflective practice journal	10 x 10 = 100 points	10%

Cross-cultural perspectives paper	140	22%
Class presentation	100	10%
Case conceptualization	140	16%

Lower limits for grades: A (93%), A- (90%), B+ (87%), B (83%), B- (80%), C+ (77%), C (73%), C- (70%), D+ (67%), D (63%), D- (60%), E (<60%)

Extra Credit

Extra credit (max. 3% of the final grade, or 30 points) can be obtained in the following ways:

- If you come to more classes: 25 of 28 classes are graded in this course at a total of 10 points (10 for the class activity). If you do more than 24 of these, the extra points will automatically count.
 - For example, if you come to all 28 classes, you will get 3 x 10 extra points. I would then count all 30 of those points as extra credit.
- Other options will be provided during the semester.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, detailed in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee. For Student Rights and Responsibilities, see <http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html>

Department of Psychology Undergraduate Academic Misconduct Policy

The Department of Psychology has a zero tolerance policy for academic misconduct. Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarizing, research misconduct, misrepresenting one's work, and inappropriately collaborating. This applies to any work students turn in for evaluation or course credit. Definitions can be found in the Student Code at <http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html>

If you are suspected of academic misconduct, the process proceeds according to the rules found in the Student Code, University Policy 6-400(V). **If you are found responsible for misconduct, consequences range from failure on the assignment to dismissal from the program**, consistent with both University and Psychology Department Policy.

Minor offenses (plagiarism in written work) include failure to use citations correctly, because of lack of understanding of proper procedures for crediting ideas, rather than intention to cheat (with no evidence of lifted/stolen text. Major Offenses include:

1. Cheating on a test, quiz, problem set, or other independent work
2. Plagiarism in written work: Copying any quantity of text from another source or another student without quoting and citing the copied text.
3. Plagiarism in written work: Flagrant misuse of citations, such that a student clearly attempted to represent ideas that were not his/hers as if they were, even if the ideas were presented in the student's own words.

Both minor and major offenses will have consequences, as outlined in the full Psychology Department Policy (which you can find [here](#) in PDF format). Assignments turned in on Canvas will be screened using Turnitin, and the above policy will be followed when misconduct is found.

Course Agreements

As your instructor, I expect

- That you will participate in class, without distracting yourself and others
- That you keep your computer and online access up to date, so you are able to receive and read messages, be aware of due dates, upload assignments on Canvas, etc.

You can expect from me:

- That I will hold class every week (unless there is a break, an announced absence, or an emergency)
- In case of emergencies (bad weather, illness): that I will inform you as soon as possible (via Canvas and the email list that I have on CIS).
- That I will do my best to teach you in the best way I can.
- That I will answer your questions and will address your concerns.
- That I will grade your assignments fairly and supervise my teaching assistant adequately.

Other class agreements can be formed upon request & after discussion.

University Attendance Requirements

The University expects regular attendance at all class meetings. Please review the attendance requirements in this syllabus. Students are responsible for acquainting themselves with and satisfying the entire range of academic objectives and requirements as defined by the instructor. Students absent from class to participate in officially sanctioned University activities (e.g., band, debate, student government, intercollegiate athletics) or religious obligations, or with instructor's approval, are permitted to make up both assignments, but do arrange this with the instructor ahead of time.

Unexpected University facility closures due to weather, emergency or disaster may occur and you may be required to complete coursework missed due to these or other class cancellations.

Student Support & Accommodations

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All information in this course can be

made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services. More information can be found in the CDS Student Handbook: <http://disability.utah.edu/documents/CDS-Student-Handbook.pdf>.

Scheduling Accommodations.

Consistent with Section Q of the University's Policy for Instruction and Evaluation, to be found at <http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.php>, I am willing to accommodate university activities as well as values-based obligations (including religious or other values-based activities) that conflict with course activities. No later than the end of the second week of the semester, please send me an e-mail with the nature and date of your anticipated absence (earlier if your conflict occurs before that deadline). That will give us time to work out a way for you to make up any missed work.

Content Accommodations.

There will be no content accommodations in this class. Please review the syllabus and topics carefully and be sure that you are able to engage all of the topics we will be covering this semester.

Wellness Statement

Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student's ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness - www.wellness.utah.edu (801-581-7776). The Counseling Center is another excellent resource, offering services that include counseling and a mindfulness clinic (see <http://counselingcenter.utah.edu>).

Veterans Center

If you are a **student veteran**, I want you to know that the U of Utah has a Veterans Support Center on campus. They are located in Room 161 in the Olpin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. Please visit their website for more information about what support they offer, a list of ongoing events and links to outside resources: <http://veteranscenter.utah.edu>. Please also let me know if you need any additional support in this class for any reason.

LGBT Resource Center

If you are a member of the **LGBTQ community**, I want you to know that my classroom is a safe zone*. Additionally, please know that the U of Utah has an LGBT Resource Center on campus. They are located in Room 409 in the Oplin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. You can visit their website to find more information about the support they can offer, a list of events through the center and links to additional resources: <http://lgbt.utah.edu/>. Please also let me know if there is any additional support you need in this class.

Learners of English as an Additional/Second Language

If you are an English language learner, please be aware of several resources on campus that will support you with your language development and writing. These resources include: the Department of Linguistics ESL Program (<http://linguistics.utah.edu/esl-program/>); the Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.utah.edu/>); the Writing Program (<http://writing-program.utah.edu/>); the English Language Institute (<http://continue.utah.edu/eli/>). Please let me know if there is any additional support you would like to discuss for this class.

Class Schedule

Class	Date	Topic	Reading	Due
1	Tues, Aug.	Introduction: What is Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health? What are the endorsement levels I can achieve through this certificate program?	---	
2	Thur, Aug.	Introduction: Attachment theory	Zeanah, Ch. 1	
3	Tues, Aug.	Pregnancy and Infant Mental Health	Zeanah, Ch. 2	Quiz 1: Aug. X 11:59pm
4	Thur, Aug.	Pregnancy and Infant Mental Health	Zeanah, Ch. 2	
5	Tues, Sep.	Biological foundations: The neurobiology of stress and adversity in infancy	Zeanah, Ch. 5	Quiz 2: Sep. X 11:59pm
6	Thurs, Sep.	Biological foundations: Genetic and Epigenetic processes in Infant mental health	Zeanah, Ch. 4	
7	Tues, Sep.	Infant Social and Emotional Development in the Context of early relationships	Zeanah, Ch. 6	Quiz 3: Sep. X 11:59pm
8	Thur, Sep.	Infant Social and Emotional Development in the Context of early relationships	Zeanah, Ch. 6	
9	Tues, Sep.	Historical traumas and how they impact the infant-caregiver relationship	Zeanah, Ch. 8	Quiz 4: Sep. X 11:59pm
10	Thur, Sep.	Historical traumas and how they impact the infant-caregiver relationship	Zeanah, Ch. 8	
11	Tues, Oct.	Risk factors: Poverty	Zeanah, Ch. 9	Quiz 5: October X 11:59pm
12	Thur, Oct.	Risk factors: Caregiver mental health	Zeanah, Ch. 10 <i>Ghosts in the Nursery</i> (on Canvas)	

13	Tues, Oct.	No class – Fall Break		
14	Thur, Oct.	No class – Fall Break		
15	Tues, Oct.	Risk factors: Parental substance use and prenatal substance exposure	Zeanah, Ch. 11	Quiz 6: Oct. X 11:59pm
16	Thur, Oct.	Risk factors: Abuse and Neglect	Zeanah, Chapters 13-14	
17	Tues, Oct.	Wrap-up: Risk factors		Quiz 7: Oct. X, 11:59pm
18	Thur, Oct.	Infants born premature	Zeanah, Ch. 12	Class presentation topic selection due by start of class
19	Tues, Oct.	When caregivers are concerned: Hyperactivity and inattention	Zeanah, Ch. 17	
20	Thurs, Oct.	When caregivers are concerned: Communication	Zeanah, Ch. 20	Quiz 8: October X, 11:59pm
21	Tues, Nov	When caregivers are concerned: Autism	Zeanah, Ch. 18	
22	Thurs, Nov	When caregivers are concerned: Autism	Zeanah, Ch. 18	Quiz 9: Nov. X 11:59pm
23	Tues, Nov	When caregivers are concerned: Sleep	Zeanah, Ch. 22	Cross-cultural perspectives paper due by start of class
24	Thur, Nov	When caregivers are concerned: Feeding	Zeanah, Ch. 23	
25	Tues, Nov	When caregivers are concerned: Disruptive behavior	Zeanah, Ch. 24	Quiz 10: Nov X, 11:59pm
26	Thur, Nov.	When caregivers are concerned: Disruptive behavior	Zeanah, Ch. 24	

27	Tues, Nov.	When caregivers are concerned: Attachment disorders	Zeanah, Ch. 27	Quiz 11: Nov X, 11:59pm
28	Thur, Nov.	No class – Thanksgiving	---	
29	Tues, Dec.	Class presentations	---	Quiz 12: Nov. X, 11:59pm
30	Thur, Dec.	Class presentations and wrap-up	---	Case conceptualization paper due by start of class

*** This class schedule is subject to change with advance notice**

Academic Calendar

<http://www.sa.utah.edu/regist/calendar/datesDeadlines/deadlines.htm>

The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu.

As the only institution in the state classified in the highest research category (R1), at the University of Utah you will have access to state-of-the-art research facilities and be able to be part of the knowledge creation process. You will have the opportunity to do research of your own with faculty who are leading experts in their field, engaging in [programs](#) that match your research interests. Further, you will interact with and often take classes with graduate students that provide an advanced understanding of the knowledge in your field.