PSYC W3620x  
Developmental Psychopathology  
Fall 2006  
Catherine Monk  
cem31@columbia.edu

I. Bulletin description

PSYC W3620. Developmental Psychopathology (seminar)  
4 points. C. Monk. Monday 10:10 - 12:00, 405 Schermerhorn Hall

Prerequisite: at least two of the following courses: (1001, 1010, 2280, 2620, 2680, 3280) and the instructor’s permission. 
Developmental psychopathology posits that it is development itself that has gone awry when there is psychopathology. As such, it seeks to understand the early and multiple factors contributing to psychopathology emerging in childhood and later in life. We will use several models (e.g., ones dominated by biological, genetic, and psychological foci) to understand the roots of mental illness.

II. A full description of the content of the course

Developmental psychopathology posits that it is aspects of development itself that have gone awry when there is psychopathology. As such, it seeks to understand the early and multiple factors contributing to psychopathology emerging in childhood and later in life, views development as an ongoing dynamic process, and is committed to the possibility of intervention to bring about better adaptation. This course will begin with an overview of the field and foundational concepts, and then move to various models for understanding maladaptive development (e.g., the role of genes, psychological influences). It then will examine key domains that serve as risk factors (e.g., temperament) and current research in specific diagnostic areas (e.g., Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). The course will conclude with a critical examination of the growing influence of the psychiatric perspective which threatens to replace the developmental approach to psychopathology with a diagnostic one emphasizing the labeling (and medicating) of (static) conditions. Throughout the course, students will be encouraged to relate empirical findings to the field’s theoretical models as well as to examine the prevailing scientific ideology guiding research programs.
Prior to each meeting, students will prepare a one–two page outline that critically analyzes and integrates course readings as well as lists three–five questions. These papers will be used to launch discussions, which will be supplemented by occasional faculty lectures on specific topics. Final papers will be literature reviews or experiment proposals written in the form of a journal article.

III. The rational for giving the course

In psychology the idea that development is the key to understanding psychopathology increasingly is taking hold. This course therefore may provide students with a timely introduction to the relevance of development for future functioning, both normal and abnormal. The course will aim to strengthen students’ conceptual and analytic thinking through critical evaluation of both the field’s theoretical models as well as many of its empirical reports.

PSYC W3620 is an advanced seminar, designed particularly for undergraduates who are majoring in Psychology or in Neuroscience and Behavior, and for students participating in the Postbac Psychology Program. It fulfills the following degree requirements:

• For the Psychology major or concentration in the College and In G. S., for the Psychology minor in Engineering, and for the Psychology Post-bac, W3620 meets the Group III (Social, Personality, and Abnormal) distribution requirement.

• For the Neuroscience and Behavior joint major, W3620 will fulfill the 5th Psychology requirement: “one advanced psychology seminar from a list approved by the Psychology Department advisor to the program.”

• W3620 will meet the social science requirement of GS, provided that students obtain the necessary permissions and have taken the prerequisite psychology course.

• For the Barnard Psychology major, PSYC W3620 will fulfill the senior seminar requirement.

IV. The readings and weekly syllabus (subject to revision)

(Please note: the reading list is still under development. Not all readings listed here will be selected; on average, 3 – 4 papers will be assigned each week.)

Session 1: Developmental perspectives on psychopathology


Session 2: Models of development — nature versus nurture


Session 3: Models of development — Experience and brain effects


**Session 4: Models of development — Psychological transmission**


4. Fonagy, Peter; Target, Mary. Attachment and reflective function: Their role in self-organization. *Development and Psychopathology.*


**Session 5: Early foundations:**


**Session 6: Fetal origins**


Session 7: Temperament & emotion regulation


Session 8: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder


Session 9: Depression


Session 10: Schizophrenia — a neurodevelopmental disorder?


Session 11: To diagnose (or not)


Session 12: Intervention


Session 13: Student Power Point presentations.

Session 14: Student Power Point presentations.

V. Course requirements
Each week students will attend a two–hour seminar. No later than 5 pm of the preceding evening, students will submit (via email) a one–two page outline paper to the course instructor. These outline papers will analyze and integrate hypotheses, conceptual premises, models, and findings of assigned articles. These outline papers will also include several questions, which, along with the outlines, will be used to launch discussion during each meeting. For the first course meeting, and for selected topics throughout the duration of the course, the instructor will use one–half to one hour of meeting time for lectures that will provide historical context, background, and conceptual explication. With the exception of the final two meetings, the rest of each meeting will be devoted to discussion.

During the final two course meetings students will make a 5–10 min Power Point presentation that outlines their literature review or proposed experiment paper. This will give students the opportunity to give and receive feedback. Final course papers will be written in the format of a journal article.

Grading will be allocated as follows:
Weekly outline papers: 35%
Participation in discussion: 20%
Class presentation: 15%
Final paper 30%