

Psychology 4000A – Children with Disabilities

**Department of Psychology
The University of Lethbridge
Spring 2010**

Location:

M W; 4:00 – 5:15 pm; D633

Instructor Information:

Instructor: Dr. Margaret Forgie

Office Hours: By appointment at our mutual convenience.

Office: D-850

Phone: 329-2437

E-mail: forgie@uleth.ca (preferred contact)

Course Description:

This course will address issues related to understanding atypical development (or disabilities) in humans. In the course of our discussions, we will cover a broad range of topics from congenital disorders of genetic origin (e.g., chromosomal abnormalities and Fragile-X disorder), to the impact of early environmental conditions (e.g., nutritional deficits during pregnancy), and individual traumatic events (e.g., closed head injury). In our discussions we will take a multifactorial and interactionist perspective. Topics will include many different components of any given disability; for example, the biological underpinnings of atypical development, issues surrounding diagnosis, the sociocultural environment of the child, and current therapeutic interventions.

I will provide some of the lectures/presentations, and we will have at least one full class related to writing, lecturing, preparing handouts and so forth. Beyond that, students will be responsible for presenting information and leading the class discussions that will be based on weekly readings from the required text. Presentations and discussions will include materials not covered in the text, and thus you will be responsible for all the material covered in class and the readings. It is your responsibility to make sure that your notes are complete.

NB: Neither I, nor your colleagues, will distribute lecture notes or powerpoint slides to the class listserv or to Blackboard.

Required Texts:

Batshaw, M.L., Pellegrino, L., and Roizen, N.J. (2007). *Children with Disabilities: Sixth Edition*. Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.: New York, NY.

Northey, M., and Timney, B. (2007). *Making Sense in Psychology and the Life Sciences: A student's guide to research and writing. Fourth Edition*. Oxford University Press: Don Mills, ON.

Course Requirements:Attendance and General Participation (15%)

As this is a senior seminar class in which I hope to engage in open and frank, yet somewhat spontaneous discussion of the issues, you will be expected to attend, and **actively** participate in all classes. All absences will require personal contact with me to register the issue.

Presentation (25%)

Each student will be responsible for presenting a 50-minute lecture on an assigned topic/chapter of the required text, and you will then lead the class in the discussion session to be held afterward. You will be expected to expand beyond the text in both forums.

Presentation Handout (5%)

As a companion to your lecture material, each student will be responsible for preparing a "take-away" handout to accompany your presentation. It is expected that this handout will NOT be just a printout of your media slides.

Bibliography Assignment (15%)

As a companion to your lecture material, each student will submit a written assignment that is adapted from several standard bibliography formats and will consist of writing a critical abstract of six primary research articles. This assignment is due on the day that you give your presentation.

Journal Article Assignment (25%)

Each student will be responsible for submitting an essay explaining a single, original research article concerning any topic in the area of atypical human development. Approaches from all levels of psychological analysis are encouraged (e.g., the molecular processes of brain development or clinical epidemiology). The only caveat is that your target article **MUST** be a primary research paper that has been published in a peer-reviewed/refereed journal within the last five years (i.e., published in 2004 or later).

Final Exam (15%)

A conceptual, take-home cumulative exam will be distributed in the last scheduled class of the semester (April 17). Material to be covered on this exam will be discussed in class prior to its distribution. Questions will be of essay format.

NB.

Late submissions of the Journal Assignment or the Annotated Bibliography will result in a 25% penalty per day. Failure to deliver your in-class presentation will result in marks of zero for both the Presentation and the Handout portions of your grade. All assignments will be graded under the assumption that you have read and understood the contents of the second required text (Northey and Timney, 2007). In particular, plagiarism is a serious academic offense and such cases will be dealt with severely, including the imposition of the maximum penalties allowable. To be explicit then, assignments, handouts and presentations must be written in your own words. Paraphrasing someone else's words or structure, even if you reference appropriately, is plagiarism. Information about these issues is also available from the library.

Students with Special Needs:

If you have a documented condition that prevents you from fully participating in this course, including evaluation procedures, it is your responsibility to contact me if special arrangements are necessary to accommodate your individual situation. Please note that you must contact the Disabilities Resource Centre to acquire an official letter concerning your situation. No accommodations will be given without official notification from that office. For obvious reasons I would appreciate if you would contact me within the first week of classes if you anticipate this situation.

Grading:

Letter grades will be assigned to percentage values according to the following scale:

A+ (90+)	B+ (77-79)	C+ (67-69)	D+ (56-59)
A (85-89)	B (73-76)	C (63-66)	D (50-55)
A- (80-84)	B- (70-72)	C- (60-62)	F (< 50)