

FYC3201: Foundations of Youth Development

Spring 2026
In-Person, 12139

Instructor: Kate H. Fletcher, PhD., “Dr. Kate”

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Student Hours in-person Tuesdays 1:00 PM - 1:45 PM & Wednesdays 12:50 - 1:40pm MCCB G085

Undergraduate TAs:

Samuel Bullen | samuelbullen@ufl.edu | student hours available via Zoom upon request

Karina Claros | karinaclaros@ufl.edu | student hours available via Zoom upon request

Course Description

Introduces youth development principles utilizing an ecological framework, including major theories relevant to domains of development. Then, major physical, cognitive, social and emotional changes experienced by youth in middle childhood through adolescence are explored. Application of youth development principles in context of family, school and community are also emphasized.

Prereq or Coreq: FYC 3001.

Course Learning Objectives

This course is an introduction to youth development. To gain a greater understanding of the different domains of development, including social/emotional, cognitive, and physical are identified and explored.

After completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Describe the major milestones and changes in physical, cognitive, social and emotional development that occur in middle childhood, adolescents and adulthood.
2. Apply major theories and research that help us understand and explain development throughout this period.
3. Assess common issues associated throughout this period of development with attention to the issues that hinder or foster healthy development; apply principles of development in an ecological context when addressing these issues.
4. Think critically about issues affecting youth development as they impact your life now and in your future roles as a family member, a citizen, and as a professional.
5. Facilitate learning through class discussion, collaboration, and teamwork.

Course Overview and Purpose

This course is designed to provide students with the foundational knowledge, skills and tools needed to expand their knowledge, awareness, and understanding of youth development. The following assignments, trainings, and quizzes will be conducted over the course of the semester to help enhance and reinforce the concepts and theories we cover during this course.

Per [8.003](#): Instructional materials for this course consist of only those materials specifically reviewed, selected, and assigned by the instructor. The instructor is only responsible for these instructional materials.

Course Prerequisites

Prereq or Coreq: FYC 3001.

Textbooks, Learning Materials, And Supply Fees

Tamis-LeMonda, C. (2021). *Child development: Context, culture, and cascades*. Oxford University Press.

Supplemental Readings

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American psychological association* (7th ed.). American Psychological Association.

Instructor Interaction Plan

This is an interactive class with an exceptionally high level of student engagement. To make the most out of this class, attendance is strongly encouraged. Although your attendance is not recorded daily, your attendance and participation are critical factors in your success in our class. It is strongly recommended and encouraged that you read the assigned text before coming to class each day (see the course calendar for pages to read prior to coming to class). This course will be useful for your future academic, personal, and career success.

This course includes discussion-based lectures, videos, **research-based team project**, **teamwork**, guest speakers, in-class exercises, homework, written assignments, web-based assignments, cohort engagement, service-learning, and **content** quizzes.

Required Technology & How To Obtain The Technology

To successfully participate in this course, students must have access to a reliable laptop and a stable internet connection. If you do not currently have these resources, the University of Florida offers several options to assist you:

- **Laptop Access:** Students may check out laptops through the UF Libraries or explore discounted purchase programs available through UF's Technology Hub.
- **Internet Access:** Free Wi-Fi is available on campus, and UF provides guidance for connecting to Eduroam for secure access. For off-campus needs, students can request assistance through UF's Student Affairs or explore local internet provider programs for students.

Technical Support

UF Computing Help Desk & Ticket Number: All technical issues require a UF Helpdesk Ticket Number. The UF Helpdesk is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/> | 352-392-4357

Weekly Course Schedule

The course calendar may change due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g., hurricanes, natural disasters). Refer to the “Date Revised” in the document header for updates. The instructor may modify any part of the syllabus as needed. All changes, including to the calendar, will be communicated promptly via Canvas Announcements and in class.

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT/ASSESSMENT DUE DATES
1	1/12	Introduction, Syllabus & Expectations	Drop/Add Begins 1/12
	1/14	CH 1 - Goals & Theories of Youth Development pp. 2 - 25 Theory Matrix	Theory Matrix
	1/16	CH 1 - Goals & Theories of Youth Development pp. 26 - 50 Theory Matrix	<i>Drop/Add Ends 01/16 at 11:59pm</i>
2	1/19	HOLIDAY - MLK JR Day UF Closed National Day of Service	
	1/21	Living Stories Debrief	Living Stories Debrief
	1/23	Team Project Debrief & Sorting Day	Team Project Debrief & Sorting Day
3	1/26	CH 7 - Emotions, Temperament & Attachment pp. 250 - 270	SLJ1: Preflection Due at 11:59pm Kognito & YPT Trainings Due at 11:59pm
	1/28	CH 7 - Emotions, Temperament & Attachment pp. 271 - 291	SLS Form Due at 11:59pm
	1/30	Team Project Day - Step 1	Team Project: Step 1 Due at 11:59pm Content Quiz 1 (CH 1, 2 & 3) Opens
4	2/2	Living Stories #1	Library Card #1 Due at 11:59pm
	2/4	CH 11 - Physical Development & Health in Middle Childhood pp. 422 - 431	Content Quiz 1 Closes 11:59pm
	2/6	CH 11 - Physical Development & Health in Middle Childhood pp. 432 - 441	

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT/ASSESSMENT DUE DATES
5	2/9	Living Stories #2	Library Card #2 Due at 11:59pm
	2/11	CH 11 - Physical Development & Health in Middle Childhood pp. 442 - 451	SLS Form Due at 11:59pm
	2/13	CH 11 - Physical Development & Health in Middle Childhood pp. 452 - 455 CH 14 - Physical Development & Health in Adolescence pp. 547 - 556	
6	2/16	CH 14 - Physical Development & Health in Adolescence pp. 557 - 566	
	2/18	CH 14 - Physical Development & Health in Adolescence pp. 567 - 576	
	2/20	CH 14 - Physical Development & Health in Adolescence pp. 577 - 586	Content Quiz 2 (CH 11 & 14) Opens
7	2/23	Team Project Day - Step 2	Content Quiz 2 Closes at 11:59pm Team Project: Step 2 Due at 11:59pm
	2/25	CH 12 - Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood pp. 456 - 465	
	2/27	CH 12 - Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood pp. 466 - 477	
8	3/2	CH 12 - Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood pp. 478 - 492	Mid-Semester Feedback
	3/4	CH 12 - Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood pp. 493 - 502 CH 15 - Cognitive Development in Adolescence pp. 587 - 596	
	3/6	CH 15 - Cognitive Development in Adolescence pp. 597 - 612	

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT/ASSESSMENT DUE DATES
9	3/9	Living Stories #3	Library Card #3 Due at 11:59pm
	3/11	Team Project Day - Step 3	Team Project: Step 3 Due at 11:59pm
	3/13	Catch-Up day	
10	3/16 - 3/20	UF SPRING BREAK	
11	3/23	Living Stories #4	Library Card #4 Due at 11:59pm
	3/25	CH 15 - Cognitive Development in Adolescence pp. 613 - 622	Content Quiz 3 (CH 12 & 15) Opens
	3/27	CH 13 - Emotional and Social Development in Middle Childhood pp. 503 - 517	Content Quiz 3 Closes at 11:59pm
12	3/30	CH 13 - Emotional and Social Development in Middle Childhood pp. 518 - 531	
	4/1	CH 13 - Emotional and Social Development in Middle Childhood pp. 532 - 546	
	4/3	Living Stories #5	Library Card #5, Due at 11:59pm
13	4/6	CH 16 - Emotional and Social Development in Adolescence pp. 623 - 644	
	4/8	CH 16 - Emotional and Social Development in Adolescence pp. 644 - 667	Content Quiz 4 (CH 13 & 16) Opens
	4/10	Sign-up for presentation timeslots Team Project Day (Final Day)	Content Quiz 4 Closes at 11:59pm Team Project: Step 4 Due at 11:59pm

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT/ASSESSMENT DUE DATES
14	4/13	Community Stories	Community Card Due at 11:59pm
	4/15	Team Project Key Takeaways Presentation Day 1	Impact Summary Due at 11:59pm SLJ2: Reflection Due at 11:59pm
	4/17	Team Project Key Takeaways Presentation Day 2	<i>Last Day To Drop Without A Failing Grade</i>
15	4/20	End of Class Celebration	Last Day of Class Celebrations!
	4/22	UF Reading Day - End of Spring 2026, You Made It!	

Grading Policy

Course grading is consistent with [UF grading policies](#).

Course Grading Structure

Assignment Type	Point Value	Percent of Final Grade
Living Stories (Course Objective #5)	100	18.18%
Service-Learning (Course Objectives #2, #3, & #4)	100	18.18%
Team Project (C.O. #1, #2, #3, #4, & #5)	100	18.18%
Trainings (C.O. #4)	30	5.45%
Content Quizzes (C.O. #1, #2, #3, & #4)	100	18.18%
Course Participation and Engagement (C.O. #1, #2, #3, #4, & #5)	70	12.73%
Theory Matrix (C.O. #2)	50	9.09%
TOTAL POINTS/PERCENTAGE	550	100%

Grading Scale

Grade	Points	Percentage
A	511– 550	93-100%
A-	495– 510	90-92%
B+	478– 494	87-89%
B	456 – 477	83-86%
B-	440 – 455	80-82%
C+	423 – 439	77-79%
C	401 – 422	73-76%

Grade	Points	Percentage
C-	385 – 400	70-72%
D+	368 – 384	67-69%
D	346 – 367	63-66%
D-	330 – 345	60 – 62%
E	0 – 328	59%

A minimum grade of “C” is required for General Education credit.

Academic Policies and Resources

Academic policies for this course are consistent with university policies. See

<https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>

Late Policy

I believe in allowing students the opportunity to submit assignments on a flexible timeline; thus, each student may submit assignments up to 48 hours (2 days) after the posted due date which is referred to as a “grace period”, with no questions asked and no Points deducted. However, if you miss submitting any assignment past this grace period, you will automatically receive a zero for that assignment (unless you have spoken with me prior via Canvas only for an extension or have an extenuating circumstance).

To see the UF Policy on absences, review:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx#absences>

Make-Up Policy

Students are expected to make every effort to attend all class sessions. If you are unable to attend, you must proactively notify me by sending a message through Canvas prior to the class. Please note: I reserve the right to reduce your overall course grade if you accumulate more than four (4) unexcused absences.

Campus Health And Wellness Resources

Visit <https://one.ufl.edu/whole-gator/topics> for resources that are designed to help you thrive physically, mentally, and emotionally at UF.

Please contact **UMatterWeCare** for additional and immediate support.

Software Use

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Course Assignments

Living Stories (100 Points)

Living Stories are said to be a collection of “living books” allowing “living beings” to explore experiences, people, places, communities, and cultures that shape our lives during class time. This semester, our classroom will become a Living Story to enhance the built community within FYCS. Each student offers their own unique collection of stories; students will “borrow” 5 living books to connect, communicate, and build community during class time. Living books will be selected at random by the instructor. If you would like to be paired with a student, please email your instructor in Canvas to indicate who you’d like to be paired with and for which Living Story. Students will be provided with a description of a living book via Google Slides and a set of icebreakers. At the end of each library session, students will complete a Living Story card aka Library Card Assignment in Canvas, sharing their learned experiences. All assignment details in Canvas.

“Living Book” Description (15 Points)

Think of this as the information on the back of the book. Students will answer a set of questions that will be shared to provide potential “borrowers” (fellow classmates) with a brief synopsis of who they are.

Living Stories aka Library Card (15 Points)

Students will complete five (5) individual library cards that share their learned experiences with each living book. Each library card submission is worth 15 points.

Community Stories Library (10 points)

As a class “community”, we will complete our final library stories sharing day together as an entire class. This library card submission is worth 10 points.

SERVICE-LEARNING (100 points)

Service-learning will be integrated into our course by actively engaging students with a local agency in our community. Students are responsible for securing their service-learning site within the first three weeks of class, completing a minimum of 20 hours of service, and reflecting on their experiences in connection with course concepts. Your service-learning must adhere to working with children or youth between the ages of 6 and 18 years of age; no exceptions. This hands-on engagement allows students to apply theories and research related to families, youth, and communities in real-world settings, fostering deeper learning and personal growth. Details for each assignment will be found in our Canvas Hub.

Service-Learning Site (SLS) Form (25 points)

You must locate a community-based agency through the Gators for Good Platform to complete your 20 hours of service-learning this semester. Then ensure the *Service-Learning Site* (SLS) Form is submitted by your site supervisor to the Gators for Good platform (you may not submit your own SLS).

Service-Learning Journals (SLJ) (25 points each)

Service-Learning (SLJs: Preflection & Reflection), found in the Assignments tab on Canvas, will require detailed reflections on your Journals service-learning experiences at two points during the semester. Each journal will be graded based on specificity, connection to class concepts and theories, and adherence to APA 7th edition formatting, including grammar, citations, and structure.

Impact Summary (25 points)

The Impact Summary will be accessed through the Gators for Good Platform and will be submitted as a PDF to the Impact Summary Assignment in Canvas. Please note that incomplete hours will result in a deduction of 1 point per hour not fulfilled.

The Team Project (100 points total)

Team Investigative Paper: Youth Development Overview

Your team will complete an investigative paper (5–7 pages, double-spaced) focused on youth development, exploring the challenges and opportunities youth (ages 6–18) experience in their daily lives and broader environments (e.g., schools, peer groups, communities). Apply foundational theories such as Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory to analyze factors influencing youth development. All details are found in Canvas under Team Project. Form Your Team & Choose a Topic. Based on your response, you will be placed into a team with a similar or same topic.

Step 1: Planning & Initial Research (20 points)

Step 2: Data Collection & Drafting (20 points)

Step 3: Final Report & Submission (40 points)

Step 4: Key Takeaways (20 points)

Firing a Team Member

Teams are not always functional, and some members may choose not to fully participate. In such cases, you have the option to fire a team member. Effective teamwork and professional communication are essential skills for your future roles. If a team member is consistently causing issues and hindering the team’s success, the team has the right to remove them from the project. For details on this process and valid reasons for firing, refer to the “Team Project” section on Canvas.

Trainings (30 Points)

Kognito (15 points)

Using modern principles behind neuroscience, social cognition, and game mechanics, Kognito creates simulated conversations with virtual humans where people practice and self-assess their ability to manage conversations that can lead to positive changes in social, emotional, and physical health – details regarding this training are found in our class Canvas Hub.

Youth Protection Training (15 points)

YCS800 is a required course for all staff and volunteers involved in University of Florida-affiliated programs/activities involving individuals under the age of 18, as the University of Florida places the utmost importance on creating a safe and secure environment for minors engaged in UF-affiliated youth programs or events, and for its employees. The training has been developed to equip individuals with the knowledge to employ strategies to provide a safe environment for youth/minors; recognize the different types and signs of child abuse; properly respond to incidents involving youth and/or report known or suspected child abuse – details regarding this training are found in our class Canvas Hub.

Content Quizzes (100 Points)

There will be 4 content quizzes over the course of the semester. Content quizzes may include multiple choice, matching, and short answer/fill in the blank questions. The quizzes will consist of ~10 - 15 questions.

Content Quiz 1:

Chapters 1, 2 & 7 – please see the course calendar for specific pages that we will cover (25 points).

Content Quiz 2:

Chapters 11 & 14 – Physical Development in Middle Childhood and Adolescence (25 points).

Content Quiz 3:

Chapters 12 & 15 – Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood and Adolescence (25 points).

Content Quiz 4:

Chapters 13 & 16 – Emotional and Social Development in Middle Childhood and Adolescence (25 points).

Course Participation and Engagement (70 Points)

Students are expected to demonstrate their preparation for class and their understanding of the course materials through active participation and engagement in class and virtual environments. Participation and engagement points will be awarded to students via in-class activities, teamwork in class, or other Canvas-based submissions. If you miss a class participation and engagement (CP&E) opportunity, you will receive a zero, **there are no make-ups**. HOWEVER, *there will be more opportunities for points than the maximum points possible*. There will be approximately 100 points worth of CP&E, you will only need to complete 70 points to receive full credit. **Dates of these opportunities may not always be posted. Therefore, attending class is imperative to your success, and many times the only way to complete**

these course participation and engagement opportunities. Please be mindful that there is no grace-period for any CP&E opportunities due to the nature and scope of these unique opportunities.

Theory Matrix (50 Points)

As part of our exploration of foundational and emerging theories in Youth Development, students will create and engage with a Theory Matrix—a dynamic tool designed to help synthesize, compare, and apply the various youth-development theoretical frameworks we cover throughout the semester and in FYCS.

Purpose

The Theory Matrix serves as a cumulative reference and reflection tool. It will help students:

1. Identify key components of each theory (e.g., assumptions, constructs, applications)
 2. Compare similarities and differences across theories
 3. Connect theory to practice in youth development settings
 4. Track personal insights and evolving understanding
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