

Foundations of Youth Development

Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences

FYC 3201 | Section **12783** | Fall 2025

Tuesday 4th Period | (10:40 AM - 11:30 AM)

Thursday 4th - 5th periods | (10:40 AM - 12:35 PM)

Location: **TBD**

Welcome to the *Helping-People Major*

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Student Hours: TBD

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*Please be mindful: Email responses are replied to within a 24-hour period,
M-F from 8am to 4pm.*

Undergraduate TA's:

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THE BASICS: COURSE INFORMATION

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.

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COURSE FORMAT

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

COURSE 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 EXPECTATIONS

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.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO BUY?

COURSE TEXTBOOKS

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

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American psychological association* (7th ed.). American Psychological Association. ISBN: 9781433832178

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

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

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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 Materials	Possible Points
Living Stories (C.O. #5)	100
Service-Learning (C.O. #2, #3, & #4)	100
Team Project (C.O. #1, #2, #3, #4, & #5)	100
Trainings (C.O. #4)	30
Content Quizzes (C.O. #1, #2, #3, & #4)	100
Course Participation and Engagement (C.O. #1, #2, #3, #4, & #5)	70
TOTAL POINTS	500

Remember, **your grade is a direct result of the effort that you put into this course.**

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. 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; for three-weeks students will “borrow” a “living book” to connect, communicate, and build community. “Living books” will be selected at random. If you would like to be paired with a student, a google form link will be provided in our Canvas Hub. Please use this form to request the “living book” you’d like to be matched with. 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 sharing their learned experiences. Detailed instructions for Living Stories are included in our Canvas hub.

Your “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. Detailed instructions are included in our Canvas hub.

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Library Cards (15 points each)

- Students will complete five (5) separate 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. 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 10 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.

Step 1: Planning & Initial Research (20 points)

1. **Form Your Team & Choose a Topic:**
 - Work with your assigned team.

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- As an individual, select one youth development topic to focus on. Some topics include (but are not limited to):
 - **Mental Health and Well-being** (e.g., anxiety, depression, self-esteem, coping skills)
 - **Peer Relationships and Social Dynamics** (e.g., bullying, friendship, peer pressure, social media)
 - **Educational and Academic Development** (e.g., school environments, extracurriculars, learning styles, resource access)
 - **Community Engagement** (e.g., community programs, volunteerism, mentorship)
 - **Adolescence and Identity Formation** (e.g., self-discovery, values, cultural identity, independence)
 - **Access to Resources and Opportunities** (e.g., disparities in technology, safe spaces, enrichment)
 - **Resilience and Coping Strategies** (e.g., navigating adversity, grit, support networks)
- Based on your response, you will be placed into a team with a similar or same topic.

2. Develop Interview Questions & Plan Literature Review

- Identify **two** adults (e.g., caregiver, teacher, youth mentor, youth pastor) and **one** youth (ages 6–18) your team can interview about your chosen topic.
- **Important: Ethical Considerations:**
 - You will need to obtain informed consent. Explain to adult participants and the caregivers of youth participants that the interviews are for a course project.
 - Interviews are **not confidential** in the strictest sense (as they are for a class project and will be shared within your team and with me), but they **must be anonymous**. Do **not** collect or report names or any other information that could identify your interviewees in your paper.
- As a team, create a set of interview questions for each of your three interviewees. These questions should be designed to gather insights related to your topic and should take about 20 minutes per interview. Think about how course concepts (theories, development, cultural context) can guide your questions.
- Begin your literature review by finding relevant academic articles and using course materials related to your chosen topic.

3. Submission for Feedback:

- Submit your draft interview questions for each interviewee type.
- Submit a brief outline or list of key themes you plan to explore in your literature review.

Step 2: Data Collection & Drafting (20 points)

1. Obtain Consent & Conduct Interviews:

- Before interviewing, ensure you have explained the purpose and anonymity to adult participants and to the caregivers of youth participants, and obtain their permission (consent).

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- Conduct your interviews (approx. 20 minutes each). Take good notes. Remember, no identifying information should be recorded in a way that links it to the individual.
2. **Complete Literature Review:**
- Finalize your literature review, summarizing key research and theories relevant to your topic.
3. **Prepare Your Draft Report:** Your team will write a draft of the paper, including the following sections:
- **Introduction:** Clearly introduce your chosen topic and explain why it's important for understanding youth development.
 - **Literature Review:** Summarize what current research and course materials say about your topic.
 - **Project Description:** Briefly explain what your team did (your investigative process) and describe your interviewees generally (e.g., "a middle school teacher," "a parent of a teenager," "a 10-year-old youth"). *Do not use names or specific identifying details.*
 - **Research Questions:** State the main questions that guided your team's investigation and interviews.
 - **Interview Summary:** Present the key insights, common themes, or contrasting viewpoints that emerged from your interviews.
 - **Conclusion:** Discuss the broader implications of your findings. What do your findings mean for understanding or supporting youth development?
 - **APA Formatting:** Use APA 7th edition style for citations, references, and overall paper formatting.

Step 3: Final Report & Submission (30 points)

1. **Revise Your Report:**
- Based on feedback received revise and polish your paper.
 - Ensure all sections are well-developed and clearly written.
 - Double-check APA formatting throughout the paper.
2. **Prepare Appendices:**
- Create three separate appendices (Appendix A, Appendix B, Appendix C).
 - In each appendix, include the transcript or detailed summary of one interview. Crucially, ensure no identifying information is present in the appendices. Label them clearly (e.g., Appendix A: Interview with Adult 1; Appendix B: Interview with Adult 2; Appendix C: Interview with Youth).
3. **Submit Your Final Team Investigative Paper:**
- Submit one final paper per team. The paper should be ~5–7 pages (double-spaced), *not including* the title page, abstract (if you choose to include one, though not explicitly required here), references page, or appendices.

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Step 4: Key Takeaways

1. Prepare and include your Key Takeaways Presentation:

- Each presentation should be no more than 4 minutes.
- Focus on sharing "what you (as a team) learned," also known as "Key Takeaways" from this project.

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 total)

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 total)

Content Quizzes (25 points each)

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).

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Content Quiz 4: Chapters 13 & 16 – Emotional and Social Development in Middle Childhood and Adolescence (25 points).

COURSE PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT (70 points total)

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.**

COURSE POLICIES

LATE POLICY/GRACE PERIODS

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**, no questions asked, 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*).

There is a 24-hour grace period for the completion of each content quiz. After this grace period has elapsed, no make-up opportunities will be provided.

To see the UF Policy on absences see:

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

MAKE-UP POLICY

As I offer a flexible timeline for assignment submission, the chance to “miss” up-to 25 points of course engagement and participation, extended quiz timeframe, and extra credit opportunities, **there are no make-ups** (unless you had extenuating circumstances beyond your control, see UF Policy on absences).

- Please make your best effort to attend each class session, if you are not able to attend, you must **be proactive by emailing me via canvas mail** to inform me of your absence. Please be mindful: **I reserve the right to decrease your overall grade if there are more than 4 unexcused absences.**
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Grading**COURSE GRADING**

You will earn these points as you successfully complete all required assignments, quizzes, course participation and engagement activities, service-learning requirements, the team project, and other assignments outlined in this syllabus.

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

A = 93-100%; 465 – 500 pts.	C = 73-76%; 365-384 pts.
A- = 90-92%; 450 – 464 pts.	C- = 70-72%; 350-364 pts.
B+ = 87-89%; 435 – 449 pts.	D+ = 67-69%; 335-334 pts.
B = 83-86%; 415 – 434 pts.	D = 63-66%; 315-334 pts.
B- = 80-82%; 400 – 414 pts.	D- = 60 – 62%; 300-314 pts.
C+ = 77-79%; 385 – 399 pts.	E = 59%; 0-299 pts.

COURSE CALENDAR

Our Course Calendar is subject to change based on circumstances that are beyond our control. If there are any changes, please expect to receive an **Announcement via Canvas** with any changes, updates, information, or other. **Please ensure your Canvas settings are set to receive announcements via your UFL email.**

WEEK	DATE	CLASS TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES
1	8/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions, Syllabus & Expectations • CH 1 - Goals & Theories of Youth Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop/Add Begins 8/21 • Learning Style Inventory
2	8/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CH 1 - Goals & Theories of Youth Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop/Add Ends tomorrow 8/27 at 11:59pm
	8/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CH 1 - Goals & Theories of Youth Development • Living Stories Debrief • Team Project Debrief & Sorting Day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRB Consent QR Code • Team Project “Sorting Day”
3	9/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CH 2 - Heredity, Environment & The Brain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your “Living Book” Description Due at 11:59pm • SLJ1: Preflection Due at 11:59pm
	9/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CH 2 - Heredity, Environment & The Brain • CH 7 - Emotions, Temperament & Attachment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLS Form Due at 11:59pm • Kognito & YPT Trainings Due at 11:59pm • Temperament Style

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4	9/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living Stories #1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library Card #1 Due at 11:59pm
	9/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CH 7- Emotions, Temperament & Attachment Team Project Day - Step 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team Project: Step 1 Due at 11:59pm Attachment Style Quiz Mary Ainsworth - Attachment & the Growth of Love (OOC) Content Quiz 1 Opens
5	9/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CH 11 - Physical Development & Health in Middle Childhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content Quiz 1 Closes 11:59pm
	9/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living Stories #2 CH 11 - Physical Development & Health in Middle Childhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Games with Rules SLS Form Due at 11:59pm
6	9/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CH 11 - Physical Development & Health in Middle Childhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library Card #2 Due at 11:59pm Rough & Tumble Play & Dominance Hierarchies
	9/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CH 14 - Physical Development & Health in Adolescence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pubertal Impact Mapping
7	9/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CH 14 - Physical Development & Health in Adolescence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Development in Adolescence
	10/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CH 14 - Physical Development & Health in Adolescence Team Project Workday 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content Quiz 2 Opens
8	10/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team Project Day - Step 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team Project: Step 2 Due at 11:59pm Content Quiz 2 Closes at 11:59pm
	10/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CH 12 - Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood
9	10/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CH 12 - Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences Quiz
	10/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CH 15 - Cognitive Development in Adolescence Living Stories #3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grit Quiz (Learned Helplessness) Library Card #3 Due at 11:59pm
10	10/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team Project Day - Step 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team Project: Step 3 Due at 11:59pm
	10/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CH 15 - Cognitive Development in Adolescence Living Stories #4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library Card #4 Due at 11:59pm Content Quiz 3 Opens
11	10/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CH 13 - Emotional and Social Development in Middle Childhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content Quiz 3 Closes at 11:59pm
	10/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living Stories #5 CH 13 - Emotional and Social Development in Middle Childhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library Card #5, Due at 11:59pm

UF POLICIES AND SERVICES

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

**The instructor reserves the right to change any aspect of this syllabus and to make appropriate updates. Changes to the syllabus, including the course calendar, will be communicated via *Date Revised in the header section of this syllabus.*