

**PSYCHOLOGY 2110.03B**  
**Developmental Psychology**

**Course Director: Stuart Shanker, D.Phil**  
TAs: Jeremy Burman, MA; Ben Zabinski, BA

Fall 2011

Thursdays from 11:30am until 2:30pm in Curtis Lecture Hall D

**Course description**

This course will encourage students to construct, discuss, and develop their own ideas on themes related to three basic questions:

1. How do you build a baby?
2. How do you build a brain?
3. How do you make a mind?

In doing so, it will review trends in contemporary research on physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development from birth through adolescence and the impact of the interaction of these various aspects of development upon the individual as a whole. Major issues examined in this course include the relation of nature to nurture, of genes to environment, of the developing individual to the changing social context, and of mental health to school performance.

**Learning objectives**

- To introduce the developmental material found on the GRE subject test for psychology, as well as new ideas that will likely be incorporated into the test in the future
- To replace “nature vs. nurture” with the notion of co-construction: “nature *and* nurture”
- To identify connections between theory and research, as well as theory and practice
- To introduce collaborative Wikis, the technology of knowledge mobilization
- To encourage future parents and policymakers to think more deeply about how to improve the lives of children everywhere

**Readings**

*Available from the campus bookstore*

Berk, L. E. & Roberts, W. (2009). *Child Development: Third Canadian Edition*. Toronto: Pearson Education Canada.

Shenk, D. (2010). *The Genius in All of Us*. New York: Doubleday/Random House.

*Articles available through the Moodle site*

Johnston, T. D. (2008). Genes, experience, and behavior. In A. Fogel, B. J. King, and S. G. Shanker (eds.), *Human Development in the Twenty-First Century* (pp. 18-24). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Lickliter, R. (2008). Developmental dynamics: The new view from the life sciences. In A. Fogel, B. J. King, and S. G. Shanker (eds.), *Human Development in the Twenty-First Century* (pp. 11-17). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Shanker, S. G. (2004). Autism and the dynamic developmental model of emotions. *Philosophy, Psychiatry, & Psychology*, 11(3), 219-233. doi:10.1353/ppp.2004.0068

Shanker, S. (2010). Self-regulation: Calm, alert, and learning. *Education Canada*, 50(3), 4-7.

Witherington, D. C. (2011). Taking emergence seriously: The centrality of circular causality for dynamic systems approaches to development. *Human Development*, 54(2), 66-92.

## **Course requirements**

In order to take this course, you must have received a minimum grade of C—or better—on one of the prerequisites: AK/AS/HH/SC/PSYC 1010 6.00 or AK/HH/PSYC 2410 6.00.

The course itself has two primary goals: (1) learning and mastering the material, and (2) having good ideas about that material. The readings and lectures split along these lines, although there is obviously some overlap. There are also, in turn, two primary forms of evaluation:

### *Ideas, developed through written interaction:*

- 15% Collaborative work on Wikis (online, 2\*7.5 points each)
- 10% Substantial debate or critique on Wiki discussion pages (online, 10\*1 point, pass-fail)
- 5% Self-reflective report on collaboration, lessons learned, insights, epiphanies (online)

### *Mastery, demonstrated through testing:*

- 3% Online tutorials (3\*1 point each, pass-fail, at 100%)
- 12% Quizzes (online, 6\*2 points each, multiple-choice)
- 15% Test #1 (in class, multiple-choice)
- 20% Test #2 (in class, multiple-choice)
- 20% Test #3 (during exam period, multiple-choice)

Varieties of “leet,” or any shorthand better suited to Texting or Twitter, are not acceptable on written assignments. For all written work, correct spelling and grammar (US or UK) is assumed. If you cannot achieve this standard consistently, make an appointment with the Writing Centre: [www.yorku.ca/laps/writ/writing\\_centre.html](http://www.yorku.ca/laps/writ/writing_centre.html)

The Wiki assignments will be discussed in detail in a separate handout.

## **Due dates**

- October 6. Test #1.
- October 20. Wiki 1 due.
- November 10. Test #2.
- November 17. Wiki 2 due.
- December 6. Self-reflective report due.

## **Make up assignment**

There is no make-up test. The make-up assignment will instead be to summarize and explain one aspect of David Shenk’s (2010) book, *The Genius in All of Us*, from the perspective of developmental systems (see the recommended readings). Students who miss the exam, or both tests, will be required to petition for an extension and write a substantial make-up essay on a topic covering the major themes of the course. The make-up assignment is due on December 6.

## **Other important administrative dates**

- September 8. First day of class.
- September 20. Last day to enrol without written permission from the instructor.
- October 4. Last day to enrol with written permission from the instructor.
- October 8 – 14. Reading Week.
- November 11. Last day to drop without getting a grade.
- December 6. Last day to submit coursework.
- December 8 – 22. Final Exam. (Date and location TBA.)

## Readings expectations

It is expected that students will come to class having read the required materials. In other words, readings are assumed to have been completed *before* the lecture. Recommended materials are optional, but tie the textbook material more closely to the lecture content. Caveat: connections that will seem obvious once this material has been reviewed may not be so without preparation.

## Communication policy

Office hours are by appointment only. In addition, all course communications are to go through the TAs. If they decide to do so, they will contact the professor on your behalf. *You are not to contact the professor directly, except in class.* If you have a question about the course material, post a detailed enquiry in one of the online discussion forums or ask in class. Both TAs will be available for Q&A at the end of most lectures. If you are directed to email one or both of the TAs, send a short note to the relevant person.

For questions related to Wikis, email Ben: bzabinsk@yorku.ca  
For everything else, email Jeremy: JTB@yorku.ca

When sending email, always include a subject. In the subject header, start with “PSYC2110B:” and then—*after that prefix*—provide a few words describing the issue (e.g., “PSYC2110B: Missed test, have doctor’s note”). If these instructions are followed, the TA will reply within the week (often sooner). If they are not followed, your message may not survive the spam filters.

## Guidelines for missed tests and examinations

According to University Policy, if you miss a test or examination....

- You must contact the TA by email (JTB@yorku.ca) within 48 hours of the missed item.
- You must provide the following:
  - ✓ Your name.
  - ✓ Your student number.
  - ✓ The course and section (PSYC 2110B).
  - ✓ The reason for your absence.
- If you are unable to contact the TA within 48 hours, you must *also* provide documentation explaining the delay.
- Appropriate documentation must be provided before the missed test or exam can be made-up. Failure to provide this will result in a grade of ‘F’ for the missed item.

Additional details can be found at [www.yorku.ca/health/psyc/advising\\_missedtests.html](http://www.yorku.ca/health/psyc/advising_missedtests.html)

## A note about the quizzes

The quizzes are intended as study aids and have been formatted to encourage mastery. As a result, each provides a substantial review of the relevant material. They are online and can be written at your convenience. They are “open book.” They can be repeated as many times as you like. And the questions are, for the most part, presented in the same order as they appear in the textbook.

The multiple-choice quizzes can be thought of like practice tests. Their questions are illustrative of the types of questions in the tests and on the exam. Also: some of the questions on the test will overlap with questions you have already seen on the quizzes. It is therefore in your interests to keep retrying each quiz until you can consistently get 100%. For this reason, for the quizzes, “pass” (1 point) has been defined as “perfect.” No points will be awarded for “less than perfect.”

### **Before each test**

Remember that each test draws on material covered in the quizzes. After reviewing the textbook, revisit your quiz answers. Then find the material in the textbook that has not yet been examined, especially if aspects of that material have been discussed explicitly in class. Although there will be some overlap with the quizzes, much of the test will be composed from material you haven't yet seen.

Here are some general test-taking strategies that you may want to consider before each test:

- Schedule regular study time as if it were your job: you're never late, you never skip.
- Maintain a regular sleep schedule. Sleep will make your studying more effective.
- Never drink coffee before a test or exam if you have performance anxiety.
- At the test itself, don't write anything until you're told to do so. Then always start by putting your name and student number on the answer sheet you have received.
- Before starting to answer questions, read the test directions carefully. Then quickly read through the entire test, ensuring that all pages are included and making notes as thoughts occur to you. These notes will help you later, both as hints and by reducing anxiety.
- When doing multiple-choice, always choose the best answer from the available options.
- All questions are of equal value; unless you have extra time, do not dither over questions you find extremely difficult or unfamiliar. Make a note, skip ahead, and then return later.
- If you decide to change an answer, make sure you completely erase it from your answer sheet and then fill in the oval corresponding to your desired answer.
- Record all answers on your answer sheet. (Your test booklet will not be graded.)
- Do not wait until the last minutes of the testing period to start filling out your answers.
- Don't worry about it after it's done; move on to the next thing. Grades will be posted.

### **Regarding cheating and plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the presentation of another's work as one's own. In PSYC2110B, the presentation of someone else's work without attribution at any time—including in the Wikis—will be prosecuted under the terms outlined in the *Senate Policy on Academic Honesty* and the *Student Code of Conduct*. See the Academic Integrity website for details on the senate policy and how to avoid plagiarism ([www.yorku.ca/academicintegrity/students/index.htm](http://www.yorku.ca/academicintegrity/students/index.htm)). If you are found guilty of plagiarism, the penalties include an F on the assignment, an F in the course, and having the infraction noted on your official transcript. If the infraction is serious enough, however, it can also mean expulsion, the withholding of your degree, and even the laying of criminal charges.

Two particular forms of plagiarism are of special concern in Psychology. The first is copying someone else's words without using quotation marks and proper parenthetical referencing ("verbatim plagiarism"). The second is taking several others' writings and translating them into your own words without acknowledging the sources ("mosaic plagiarism").

That said, of course, the skill itself – paraphrasing – is an important tool to learn how to use. But the original author must always be cited according to the standards outlined in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). If you do not already own a copy of this important style guide, multiple copies are available on reserve for 2-hour loans and as non-circulating references at both Scott Library and Steacie Library.

There will be zero tolerance for plagiarism or other forms of cheating. For the exact wording of the relevant policies, see the *Undergraduate Psychology Supplemental Calendar*, the *Senate Policy on Academic Honesty*, and the *Student Code of Conduct*.

### **About the professor**

Stuart Shanker is Distinguished Research Professor of Philosophy and Psychology at York University. He was educated at Oxford, where he obtained a First in PPE (Philosophy, Politics, and Economics) and won the Marian Buck Fellowship at Christ Church, where he obtained a First in a B.Phil in Philosophy and a D.Phil with Distinction in Philosophy. Among his awards are a Canada Council Doctoral Fellowship and Postdoctoral Fellowship; a Calgary Institute for the Humanities Fellowship; a University of Alberta Mactaggart Fellowship; an Iszaak Walton Killam Fellowship; and the Walter L. Gordon Fellowship. He has received many grants, among them a \$5,000,000 grant from the Harris Steel Foundation to establish the Milton and Ethel Harris Research Initiative (MEHRI), a state-of-the-art cognitive and social neuroscience institute at York University. (Visit the website at [www.mehri.ca](http://www.mehri.ca).)

Among Dr. Shanker's recent monographs are *Apes, language and the human mind* (with Sue Savage-Rumbaugh and Talbot Taylor, 1998); *Wittgenstein's remarks on the foundations of AI* (1998); *Toward a Psychology of Global Interdependency* (with Stanley Greenspan, 2002); *The First Idea* (with Stanley Greenspan, 2004); *Early Years Study II* (with J. Fraser Mustard and Margaret McCain, 2006); and *El rizoma de la racionalidad* (with Pedro Reygadas, 2007). He is also the editor of several collections, among them *The Routledge History of Philosophy* (with G.H.R. Parkinson, 1994-2000); *Language, Culture, Self* (with David Bakhurst, 2001); *Ludwig Wittgenstein: Critical Assessments* (with David Kilfoyle, 2002); *Psychodynamic Diagnostic Manual* (as a member of the PDM Steering Committee, 2006); and *Human Development in the Twenty-First Century* (with Alan Fogel and Barbara King, 2008).

In addition to serving as Director of MEHRI, Dr. Shanker is currently Director of the Council for Human Development and Past President of the Council of Early Child Development. He is also Director of the Cuba-Mexico-Canada Research Initiative, an international, multi-disciplinary investigation into preventative mental health (funded by IDRC of Canada). Most recently, he served as an advisor to the Government of Ontario on early childhood education (Pascal Report).

Dr. Shanker has taught developmental psychology for many years.

### **About the TAs**

Jeremy Burman is a senior PhD student in the History and Theory of Psychology. He was educated at Trinity College in the University of Toronto, where he received a Bachelor of Science in Psychology (with honours) in 2004; and at York, where he received his Master's degree in 2009. He has served as Dr Shanker's TA for many years. He also teaches a section of this course in the Winter (PSYC2010o).

Burman has first-authored essays published in several peer-reviewed journals: *History of Psychology* (2011 & in press), the *Journal of Consciousness Studies* (2006), *Perspectives on Science* (2008 & in press), and *Theory & Psychology* (2007 & 2011). He was awarded the Pufall Award from the Jean Piaget Society in 2009 and the International Emerging Scholars Award from the Jacobs Foundation in 2010. In 2010, he also received a certificate of teaching excellence from the Council of Canadian Departments of Psychology. His research is funded by the Government of Ontario.

Ben Zabinsky is an MA student in the History and Theory of Psychology. He graduated *magna cum laude* from Clark University in 2005. He also received the Mary J. Wright Award for best student paper from the Canadian Psychological Association in 2011.

### Common grading scheme for undergraduate faculties

The following is a copy of the York University grading scheme. Under this scheme, a ‘C’ grade means doing the minimum of what was asked for, a ‘B’ grade means doing a good job on what was asked for, and an ‘A’ grade means doing an excellent job and showing originality.

Originality, in this case, means doing things that were not explicitly asked-for but are insightful additions or extensions of the work—thinking above and beyond expectations.

| Common grades in PSYC2110B  | Uncommon grades in PSYC2110B   |
|---|--|
| <p><b>“Excellent.”</b> A 80-89<br/>Shows thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a high degree of skill and/or some elements of originality in satisfying the requirements of a piece of work or course.</p>                 | <p><b>“Exceptional.”</b> A+ 90-100<br/>Shows thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill or great originality in the use of those concepts and techniques in satisfying the requirements of a piece of work or course. <b>(Rarely given.)</b></p> |
| <p><b>“Very Good.”</b> B+ 75-79<br/>Shows thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a fairly high degree of skill in the use of those concepts and techniques in satisfying the requirements of a piece of work or course.</p> |  |
| <p><b>“Good.”</b> B 70-74<br/>Shows a solid level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a considerable skill in using them in satisfying the requirements of a piece of work or course.</p>                                      |  |
| <p><b>“Competent.”</b> C+ 65-69<br/>Shows an acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of a piece of work or course.</p>                               | <p><b>“Fairly Competent.”</b> C 60-64<br/>Shows an acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with some skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of a piece of work or course.</p>  |
|   | <p><b>“Passing.”</b> D+ 55-59<br/>Shows a slightly better than minimal knowledge of required concepts and/or techniques together with some ability to use them in satisfying the requirements of a piece of work or course.</p>  |
|   | <p><b>“Barely Passing.”</b> D 50-54<br/>Shows the minimum knowledge of concepts and/or techniques needed to satisfy the requirements of a piece of work or course.</p>   |

To get an ‘A’ on this course, you need to *both* demonstrate your mastery of the course material (on tests and the exam) *and* show originality (in your Wiki contributions). Thus, read the assigned texts. And test yourself with the quizzes. But also try to think beyond the readings; use the lectures and media materials as *things to think with*. Then develop your ideas in the Wikis. Finally, present your thoughts about them in your self-reflective report due on December 6.

To get an ‘A+’, you will need to distinguish yourself. As a rule of thumb, that means you must be in the top 5%. In a class of 160, this means we can expect fewer than 8 students will get one.

**PSYCHOLOGY 2110.03B  
Developmental Psychology**

**Quick reference: Fall 2011**

| <b>Date</b>   | <b>Reading</b>  | <b>Online (mandatory)</b>   | <b>Media (optional)</b>  |
|---|---|---|--|
| September 8:<br>Introduction                            | Required:<br>Berk (Ch. 1, 2)<br><br>Recommended:<br>Shenk (Ch. 7, intro)                | Review syllabus,<br>ask questions   | After birth<br><br>Interview with David<br>Shenk   |
| <b>Part 1: "How do you build a baby?"</b>               |   |   |  |
| September 15:<br>Evolutionary<br>Foundations            | Recommended:<br>Lickliter (2008)<br>Johnston (2008)                                     | Online tutorials:<br>1) Academic honesty<br>2) Web research<br>3) Pre-writing | What Darwin never<br>knew (9 parts)<br><br>The ghost in your<br>genes                        |
| September 22:<br>Nature vs. Nurture                     | Required:<br>Berk (Ch. 3, 13)<br><br>Recommended:<br>Shenk (Ch. 1, 6, 10)               | Quiz 1<br>(Berk: Ch. 1, 2, 3)   | Nature? Nurture?<br>What makes us<br>Human?<br><br>Great Brain Debate:<br>Nature or Nurture? |
| September 29:<br>Self-Regulation                        | Required:<br>Berk (Ch. 4, 15)<br><br>Recommended:<br>Shenk (Ch. 3, 4)<br>Shanker (2010) | Quiz 2<br>(Berk: Ch. 4, 13, 15)   | Stressed out!<br><br>The Brains of Babes<br>(Episode 2)                                      |
| <b>October 6:<br/>TEST</b>                              | <b>Berk: 1-4, 13, 15</b>  | <b>Quiz 1 &amp; Quiz 2<br/>closed</b>   |  |
| October 13:<br>NO CLASS                                 |   |   | The Brains of Babes<br>(Episodes 1 & 3)  |
| <b>Part 2: "How do you build a brain?"</b>              |   |   |  |
| October 20:<br>Brain Development<br>and Neuroplasticity | Required:<br>Berk (Ch. 5)   | Wiki 1  | Brain Development<br><br>The Brain that<br>Changes Itself<br>(4 parts)                       |

|   |   |                                       |  |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| October 27:<br>Bonding with Baby<br>(and Baby's Brain)                                      | Required:<br>Berk (Ch. 4, 14)<br><br>Recommended:<br>Shenk (Ch. 8)                | Quiz 3<br>(Berk: Ch. 4, 5, 14)        | The infant brain<br><br>The neuroscience of play<br><br>Love is a Battlefield:<br>Parenting an Autistic<br>Child |
| November 3:<br>How do babies<br>become intelligent?   | Required:<br>Berk (Ch. 8, 6)<br><br>Recommended:<br>Shenk (Ch. 2, 5)              | Quiz 4<br>(Berk: Ch. 6, 8)            | Anniversary of<br>the Intelligence Test<br><br>Imaginative Child   |
| <b>November 10:<br/>TEST</b>  | <b>Berk: 4-6, 8, 14</b>   | <b>Quiz 3 &amp; Quiz 4<br/>closed</b> |  |
| <b>Part 3: "How do you make a mind?"</b>  |   |                                       |  |
| November 17:<br>The Development of<br>Emotion   | Required:<br>Berk (Ch. 10, 12)<br><br>Recommended:<br>Shenk (Ch. 9)               | Wiki 2                                | Play<br><br>The First Idea   |
| November 24:<br>Language<br>Development   | Required:<br>Berk (Ch. 9, 11)   | Quiz 5<br>(Berk: Ch. 10, 12)          | Words<br><br>Is music the universal<br>language?   |
| December 1:<br>Conclusion   | Recommended:<br>Shanker (2004)<br>Witherington (2011)                             | Quiz 6<br>(Berk: Ch. 9, 11)           | Ape Genius<br><br>Bonobos<br><br>The Dark End of the<br>Spectrum<br>(Episode 1 only)                             |
| December 6: Last day to upload self-reflective report at your user page's "discussion page" |   |                                       |  |
| <b>TBA:<br/>EXAM</b>  | <b>Berk: 9-11, 12<br/>(with additional<br/>questions from early<br/>chapters)</b> | <b>Quiz 5 &amp; Quiz 6<br/>closed</b> |  |

N.B.: All materials are "recommended" and "optional" unless marked "required" or "mandatory." The links provided to media materials are to the original source pages; they will remain active after the course has ended. If you don't have time before class to listen to the podcasts, or watch the videos, you can return to them later. They reflect themes you will encounter throughout your studies.