

**PSYCHOLOGY 2110.03o**  
**Developmental Psychology**

**Course Director: Jeremy Burman, MA**  
TAs: Ben Zabinski, BA; Dan Lahham, BA

Winter 2012  
Mondays from 11:30am until 2:30pm in Curtis Lecture Hall G

**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 encourage future parents and policymakers to think more deeply about how to improve the lives of children everywhere
- 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 introduce the style of testing used on the [GRE subject test for psychology](#)
- To begin developing the sorts of habits that lead to academic and professional success

**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. (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:

### *Mastery, demonstrated through testing:*

- 3% Online research tutorials (3\*1 point each, pass-fail, at 100%)
- 9% Quizzes (online, 6\*1.5 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)

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

- 7.5% Critique of a page at Wikipedia
- 12.5% Collaborative work on your own group Wiki page, answering a question
- 10% Peer reviews posted on Wiki discussion pages (online, 5\*2 points each)
- 3% Self-reflective report on collaboration, lessons learned, insights, epiphanies (online)

These written assignments will be discussed in detail in a separate handout. That said, however, varieties of “leet”—or any shorthand better suited to Texting or Twitter—are not acceptable. 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)

## Due dates

January 23-February 20. Various elements of Wiki Critique due, posted online.

February 6. Test #1.

February 27-March 26. Various elements of Wiki Collaboration due, posted online.

March 12. Test #2.

April 2. Self-reflective report due.

University-mandated final due date for all outstanding assignments.

## 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). This is due on April 2. 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.

## Other important administrative dates

January 9. First day of class.

January 16. Last day to enrol without written permission from the instructor.

January 30. Last day to enrol with written permission from the instructor.

February 18 – 24. Reading Week.

March 9. Last day to drop without getting a grade.

April 2. Last day to submit coursework.

April 4 – 20. 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 also 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 researching and writing Wikis, email Dan: [dlahham@yorku.ca](mailto:dlahham@yorku.ca)  
For everything else, including about Wiki grades, email Ben: [bzabinsk@yorku.ca](mailto:bzabinsk@yorku.ca)

When sending email, always include a subject. In the subject header, start with “PSYC2110o:” and then—*after that prefix*—provide a few words describing the issue (e.g., “PSYC2110o: 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 ([bzabinsk@yorku.ca](mailto:bzabinsk@yorku.ca)) within 48 hours.
- 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. For best results, use them both as a study guide and as a way to test yourself.

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%.

### **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.
- If you have performance anxiety, don't drink coffee before a test or exam.
- 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.
- When all questions are of equal value, 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 on a multiple-choice test, you must 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 vigorously 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**

Jeremy Burman has co-taught different variations of this course since 2008, when he first began revising its curriculum. As a result of the popularity of his approach, it has expanded every year since then. More than half of all students in developmental psychology at York now follow his program. For these efforts, he received a certificate of teaching excellence from the Council of Canadian Departments of Psychology in 2010.

Educated at Trinity College in the University of Toronto, Burman received his Bachelor of Science in Psychology (with honours) in 2004. He then joined the History and Theory graduate program in the Department of Psychology as a doctoral student in 2007. He also received a Master's degree in Interdisciplinary Studies at York in 2009.

Burman has first-authored essays published in several peer-reviewed journals: the *Journal of Consciousness Studies* (2006), *Theory & Psychology* (2007 & 2011c), *Perspectives on Science* (2008 & 2012), and *History of Psychology* (2011a & 2011b). A new manuscript is currently under review at the *Swiss Journal of Psychology* and a further two have been reviewed and are being revised for publication in *New Ideas in Psychology*. At the upcoming meeting of the American Psychological Association in Orlando, Florida, Burman will also give an invited address about how students can develop and publish their own original research.

Burman is a regular reviewer of papers submitted for presentation at the annual meeting of the Canadian Psychological Association. This year, he also reviewed papers the Society for Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology (APA Division 24). He has reviewed manuscripts for *History of Psychology*, the *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology*, *New Ideas in Psychology*, and—most recently—a book manuscript for Oxford University Press. He has also served on the board of advisors for PsycINFO, the psychology search engine, since 2007.

Burman received the Pufall Award from the Jean Piaget Society in 2009 and the International Emerging Scholars Award from the Jacobs Foundation in 2010. He was also short-listed as Canadian national nominee for a Fulbright Fellowship at Harvard University in 2011. His research is funded by the Government of Ontario.

### **About the TAs**

Ben Zabinski is an MA student in the History and Theory of Psychology. He graduated *magna cum laude* from Clark University in 2005. He published his first solo-authored article in the *International Journal for Dialogical Science* in 2008. He also received the Mary J. Wright Award for best student paper from the Canadian Psychological Association in 2011.

Dan Lahham is an MA student in the History and Theory of Psychology. He completed his bachelor's degree at York in 2010. His undergraduate thesis was nominated for the Ivanna-Guglietti Award. This was then revised, in collaboration with his supervisor, and is now in press at the *Canadian Journal of Psychology*.

### 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 April 2.

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 180, this means we can expect that fewer than 9 students will get an ‘A+’.

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**Quick reference: Winter 2012**

| <b>Date</b>  | <b>Reading</b>  | <b>Online (mandatory)</b>   | <b>Media (optional)</b>  |
|--|---|---|--|
| January 9:<br>Introduction                               | Required:<br>Berk (Ch. 1, 2)<br><br>Recommended:<br>Shenk (Ch. 7, intro)                | Sign up for Wiki<br>Collaboration from list<br>of topics posted<br><br>Prep for Wiki Critique | <a href="#">After birth</a><br><br><a href="#">Interview with<br/>David Shenk</a>  |
| <b>Part 1: "How do you build a baby?"</b>                |   |   |  |
| January 16:<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                 | <a href="#">What Darwin never<br/>knew</a> (9 parts)<br><br><a href="#">The ghost in your<br/>genes</a>  |
| January 23:<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)<br><br>First draft of Wiki<br>Critique due online               | <a href="#">Nature? Nurture?<br/>What makes us<br/>Human?</a><br><br><a href="#">Great Brain Debate:<br/>Nature or Nurture?</a><br><br><a href="#">Romanian<br/>Orphanage Babies</a> |
| January 30:<br>Epigenetics and<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)<br><br>Second draft of Wiki<br>Critique due online            | <a href="#">The Mind's<br/>Hidden Switches</a><br><br><a href="#">Stress special</a><br><br><a href="#">Stressed out!</a>  |
| <b>February 6:<br/>TEST</b>                              | <b>Berk: 1-4, 13, 15</b>  | <b>Quiz 1 &amp; Quiz 2<br/>closed</b>   |  |
| <b>Part 2: "How do you build a brain?"</b>               |   |   |  |
| February 13:<br>Brain Development<br>and Neuroplasticity | Required:<br>Berk (Ch. 5)   | Peer review of Wiki<br>Critique due online  | <a href="#">The Brains of Babes</a><br><br><a href="#">Brain Development</a>   |
| February 20:<br>READING WEEK<br>(NO CLASS)               |   | Final draft of Wiki<br>Critique due online  | <a href="#">The Brain that<br/>Changes Itself</a><br>(4 parts)<br><br><a href="#">Interview with<br/>Norman Doidge</a>   |

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| February 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. 5, 14)<br><br>First draft of Wiki<br>Collaboration online   | <a href="#">The infant brain</a><br><br><a href="#">Play</a><br><br><a href="#">The neuroscience of play</a><br><br><a href="#">Love is a Battlefield: Parenting an Autistic Child</a> |
| March 5:<br>Language, Emotion,<br>and Mirror Neurons    | Required:<br>Berk (Ch. 9, 10)<br><br>Recommended:<br>Shenk (Ch. 9)       | Quiz 4<br>(Berk: Ch. 9, 10)<br><br>Second draft of Wiki<br>Collaboration online  | <a href="#">Words</a><br><br><a href="#">The First Idea</a><br><br><a href="#">Mirror Neurons</a><br><br><a href="#">Is music the universal language?</a>                              |
| <b>March 12:<br/>TEST</b>                               | <b>Berk: 4-5, 9-10, 14</b>   | <b>Quiz 3 &amp; Quiz 4<br/>closed</b>  |  |
| <b>Part 3: "How do you make a mind?"</b>                |  |  |  |
| March 19:<br>What is intelligence?                      | Required:<br>Berk (Ch. 8)<br><br>Recommended:<br>Shenk (Ch. 2, 5)        | Peer review of Wiki<br>Collaboration online                                      | <a href="#">Intelligence</a><br><br><a href="#">Anniversary of the Intelligence Test</a>   |
| March 26:<br>How do babies<br>become intelligent?       | Required:<br>Berk (Ch. 6, 7)<br><br>Recommended:<br>Shenk (Ch. 2, 5)     | Quiz 5<br>(Berk: Ch. 6, 7, 8)<br><br>Final draft of Wiki<br>Collaboration online | <a href="#">Hurried Child</a><br><br><a href="#">Imaginative Child</a>   |
| April 2:<br>Conclusion                                  | Required:<br>Berk (Ch. 11, 12)<br><br>Recommended:<br>Witherington, 2011 | Quiz 6<br>(Berk: Ch. 11, 12)<br><br>Self-reflective report                       | <a href="#">Morality</a>   |
| <b>April 4-20:<br/>EXAM</b>                             | <b>Berk: 6-8, 11-12<br/>(with additional<br/>earlier questions)</b>      |  |  |

N.B.: All materials are "recommended" and "optional" unless marked "required" or "mandatory." 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.