



**Syllabus for PSYC 205-002
Lifespan Development
Department of Psychology
Spring 2026
E-mail: marpolk@siue.edu**

Instructor: Dr. Maggie Polk
Office: AH 0129
Office Hours: M/W: 11am-12pm.

Term: Spring 2026
Class Location: Founders Hall 0207
Class Meeting time: M/W 1:30pm-2:45 p.m.

Teaching Assistants: Leah Lee
E-mail: lelee@siue.edu
Office Hours: By appointment only. These will be held via zoom unless otherwise discussed.

Course Description and Objectives: This semester we will explore both classic and contemporary research and theory in developmental psychology, from conception through adulthood.

Textbook:
Santrock, J.W. (2022). *A topical approach to lifespan development* (11th Ed.) McGraw-Hill

Undergraduate students can rent textbooks from SIUE. Please visit the [Textbook Service website](#) for more information. For off-campus classes, the textbook may be shipped to you. Look for the option “Off-Campus Classes have special instructions, click here for these.” Note: shipping time may take up to two weeks.

Other course materials
Additional readings may be assigned throughout the semester and will be posted to Blackboard.

Communicating with YOU:
I will send out many emails and announcements via Blackboard so it is your responsibility to check your SIUE email regularly, as well as Blackboard announcements. I STRONGLY encourage you to check your email and/or Blackboard at least once every business day to stay up to date.

Communicating with the instructor:
The most reliable way (and only way) to contact me is via e-mail. I respond to e-mails I receive during the week (M-F, 9-5 p.m.) within 24-48 hours. If I receive an email outside of those business hours, please understand that that timeline may be even longer in response. If you need to speak with me personally, I am easy to find during my office hours in my office. If you are unable to attend office hours due to a scheduling conflict, please contact me for an appointment.

Communicating with the TA:

Communication with the TA should remain via e-mail. The TA will respond to emails within a 48-72 hour window (M-F, 9-5 p.m.) All communication is subject to be shared with the professor. As such, any communication with the TA should be held to the same standard as emailing the professor.

Grades will not be discussed via email. If you have a question about a grade, please discuss with us in person.

E-Mail Guidelines:

E-mail is a wonderful tool when used properly. Please follow these simple guidelines when e-mailing me, so that I can identify you as one of my students quickly and address your concern without having to write you back to say “Who are you and what class are you in??” (This happens, *often!*)

1. Include class info in your subject line (PSY 205 Sec 002).
2. ALWAYS sign your e-mail. Many of you have e-mail addresses that mask your identity.
3. Please treat your e-mails as professional communications. Please use proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Course Requirements and Policies

Assignments are posted in Blackboard throughout the semester and will be due online at the scheduled date and time. The dates of each assignment can be found on Blackboard and in your course calendar at the end of your syllabus. It is your responsibility to make sure that all assignments are completed and turned in on time. Work turned in after the scheduled date and time is considered late work.

Submitting Work

All assignments will be submitted via Blackboard. No emailed assignments will be accepted.

Syllabus Quiz (5 points): All students will need to complete a syllabus quiz at the start of the semester. The syllabus quiz will be completed in person in the first week of class. You will be able to bring your syllabi to class to use during the quiz.

Journal Entries (140)

For each chapter in this course, you will be tasked with writing **3 journal entries** – one as a child (ages 4-7), one as an adolescent (ages 12-16) and one as your current age. Each entry will be about a paragraph long, be relevant to that current chapter and specific to the current age you are discussing. You should title each entry with the age and the topic you will be using for your entry. Each entry should be written in first person as that age. The point of these journal entries is for you to apply what you learned in this chapter across different age groups to see how they are similar or different. For more information, please see Journal Entries Rubric on Blackboard.

Note: Chapters 1, 2 and 14 will have different instructions for journal entries.

Reaction Papers (100)

There are 4 short written assignments called Reaction Papers in this class. There will be one for each unit that will be due before the unit exam. You will write a 1-2 page (double-spaced) reaction paper to 4 research articles that are relevant to the topics we discuss in class. The articles are posted as PDF files on our Blackboard class page. You will turn in your responses via Blackboard. All grades and feedback will be posted on Blackboard. Assignments are graded on a 25-point scale. **Please see the reaction paper guidelines sheet posted on Blackboard for grading rules and tips on how to write the papers.**

A question or two on each exam may include questions from these articles so it is important you read it carefully.

Exams (150 + 65). There will be a total of 5 exams in this class: 3 mid-term exams that cover the first three units of the course, a final exam during Final Exam Week that covers the last unit of the course, and an *optional* comprehensive make-up exam on the last day of class that includes material from all four units. All exams will be **in person**. You can use notes during the exam but they cannot be digital – you can print off as much as you want but I strongly recommend that you condense your notes before the exam. These exams will include a mixture of multiple choice questions, fill-in-the-blank and some short answer questions in a **75 minute period**. Any material presented in lecture, your textbook, or the articles posts are fair game for an exam. You will have 75 minutes to complete the exams, except your final exam which will be 90 minutes. Mid-term exams will be graded on a 50-point scale and the final exam will be graded on a 65-point scale.

How the comprehensive make-up exam works: I do not schedule individual make-up exams for students who miss a test. If you miss an exam and wish to make it up, you may take the comprehensive make-up on the last day of class. You may also use the make-up exam to replace a low grade on one of the first three mid-terms. **You may not take the comprehensive make-up in place of the Final Exam!** The make-up includes questions from the entire semester.

Your makeup exam will take place at the very beginning of the final week of the course. Your makeup exam cannot hurt your grade, only help. It will include material from every single chapter covered.

Attendance (40 points).

I will be taking attendance in this course, and you will be expected to be in class. Each class is worth 1.5 points. We will meet for a total of 29 times in this class which means you have the opportunity to earn 43.5 points. This means that you can miss 3 classes with no penalty and still receive full attendance credit. (If you attend 26 classes you will earn a 39 which I will round up to 40). Attendance will look different each class – sometimes it will be collecting your names at the start of class, end of class, participate in an activity, or will be in the form of a discussion question. Some days there will be extra credit that can count towards your attendance. Since there will be extra credit opportunities, I will not allow for make-up participation opportunities. If you are absent that day, you do not get credit for participation happening that day. In addition, if you are late to class and I collect attendance at the beginning of class, it will be up to my discretion if you will receive attendance for that day. You may talk to me after class to see if you can receive credit for that day. Please make sure you show up on time to class. Only in the case if

you have an excused absence, you will be allowed to make this up, but it needs to be properly documented and properly communicated with me **in advance**.

What should I do if I miss a class?

- You do not need to notify me if it is unexcused. Remember, you have 3 absences you can miss. If you are not feeling well but don't have a doctor's note, you don't need to email me. If you have car issues, you do not need to email me. Etc. Only email me if you have an excused absence.
- You should reach out to a classmate to go over the notes missed. If you have questions about material you have missed, you can come to office hours to go over questions. I will not provide a full lecture re-do if you miss class. You can also reach out to the TAs if you have questions.

Course Policies

Course Questions

It is natural for everyone to have questions and I want you to feel comfortable asking questions. That said, in some cases, students ask questions that could be easily answered by looking in the syllabus or course materials. In order to facilitate personal responsibility, I ask that you follow the "rule of 3 then me" before asking a question. If your question is about the course requirements or some aspect of the course check in 3 places for the answer before you ask me. When you ask me, tell me where you have looked for the answer and explain your question. This helps me understand the question so I can give you a better answer. If you do have a question, you can send me an email.

Technology

This course will use Blackboard (<https://bb.siu.edu>) as the primary vehicle for disseminating class materials. Announcements, updates, grades, and other important course information will be posted to Blackboard. It is your responsibility to regularly check this course's Blackboard website throughout the semester. All assignments will be turned in on Blackboard (when applicable) unless otherwise instructed to do something differently by the instructor of this course.

Academic integrity/plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use of another person's words or ideas without crediting that person. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and may lead to failure on an assignment, in the class, or dismissal from the University, per the SIUE academic dishonesty policy. Students are responsible for complying with University policies about academic honesty as stated in the University's Student Academic Conduct Code.

Use of an AI Generator such as ChatGPT, iA Writer, MidJourney, DALL-E, etc. is **explicitly prohibited** unless otherwise noted by the instructor. The information derived from these tools is based on previously published materials. Therefore, using these tools without proper citation constitutes plagiarism. Additionally, be aware that the information derived from these tools is often inaccurate or incomplete. It's imperative that all work submitted should be your own. Any

assignment that is found to have been plagiarized or to have used unauthorized AI tools may receive a zero and / or be reported for academic misconduct. By submitting assignments in this class, you pledge to affirm that they are your own work and you attribute use of any tools and sources.

Turnitin

This course will utilize the Turnitin plagiarism detection software. Turnitin can also detect chatGPT or other AI sources of writing. A Turnitin link will be available anywhere written work is to be submitted in the course. Find out more about using Turnitin.

Grading

Assignment	Percentage Breakdown
Syllabus Quiz	5
Attendance	40
Reaction Papers	100
Journal Entries	140
Mid-Term exams	150
Final Exam	65
Total	500

If you notice an error in your grade, you have ONE WEEK after the grade is posted to inquire with the professor. Grades will not be modified if more than one week has passed.

Final grades are not negotiable. I do NOT round up. There will be opportunity to receive extra credit in this course, but it is your responsibility to work for it. If you are upset about a grade on an assignment, you need to set up a meeting with me to discuss that within a week of the published grade of the assignment. After that, I will not consider a grade dispute. ***I especially do not respond to end-of-semester e-mails that request unearned grade bumps.***

Department of Psychology Writing Policy

As a student in this course, you will be expected to display university-level writing, which includes completing course assignments that meet the following basic writing criteria.

Specifically, all written assignments completed for this course should include:

- clear transitions from sentence to sentence and idea to idea (e.g., paper is organized/flows well);
- verb tense consistency;
- clear and unambiguous sentences and ideas;
- writing that is free of typos, spelling errors, and major grammatical errors;
- properly formatted paper including headings, citations and references, per the 7th edition of the APA manual.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of basic writing skills, but will give you an idea of what we are looking for in our papers. If you feel you need help with your writing, you are encouraged

to seek assistance from the writing center on campus (<http://www.siue.edu/is/writing>) or utilize one of the many online resources they have identified to help students (<http://www.siue.edu/lss/writing/resources.shtml>).

If your graded written assignments fail to meet the basic writing requirements listed above (and any others found to be appropriate by your instructor), the instructor will stop the grading process and return the paper to you (see below for the specific policy for this class).

- **The penalty for unacceptable writing in this class is as follows: If more than three writing errors are found on any one page of a written assignment, grading will cease, and the student's paper will be returned with a grade equal to 50% of the total point value for the assignment.**

Late or Missed Assignments

Any **written assignment** must be completed and submitted via Blackboard by their assigned time. Assignments turned within 24 hours of due date will receive a **10% deduction**.

Assignments turned within 48 hours of due date will receive a **20% deduction. Anything more than 48 hours will not be accepted and receive a 0.** Students are responsible for anticipating that technology can often fail and should be in communication with the instructor if necessary, PRIOR to the deadline. Assignments cannot be submitted via email unless communicated with the instructor ahead of time. If assignment is emailed without prior approval, assignment will immediately receive 20% deduction. You are encouraged to confirm that your assignment has been received via blackboard.

University Policies

Services for Students Needing Accommodations

Students needing accommodations because of medical diagnosis or major life impairment will need to register with Accessible Campus Community & Equitable Student Support (ACCESS) and complete an intake process before accommodations will be given. Students who believe they have a diagnosis, but do not have documentation, should contact ACCESS for assistance and/or appropriate referral. The ACCESS office is located in the Student Success Center, Room 1203. You can also reach the office by emailing us at myaccess@siue.edu or by calling 618-650-3726. If you feel you would need additional help in the event of an emergency situation, please notify your instructor to be shown the evacuation route and discuss specific needs for assistance.

Diversity and Inclusion

SIUE is committed to respecting everyone's dignity at all times. In order to learn, exchange ideas, and support one another, our virtual and physical classrooms must be places where students and teachers feel safe and supported. Systems of oppression permeate our institutions and our classrooms. All students and faculty have the responsibility to co-create a classroom that affirms inclusion, equity, and social justice, where racism, sexism, classism, ableism, heterosexism, xenophobia, and other social pathologies are not tolerated. Violations of this policy will be enforced in line with the SIUE Student Conduct Code.

The Center for Student Diversity & Inclusion <https://www.siue.edu/csdi> is an excellent resource for students for support and community. Any person who believes they have experienced or

witnessed discrimination or harassment can contact Ms. Jamie Ball, Director in the Office of Equal Opportunity, Access and Title IX Coordination at (618) 650-2333 or jball@siue.edu. There is also an online form for reporting bias incidents at https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?SIUEdwardsville&layout_id=10.

Additional Support

Academic and Other Student Services

As an enrolled SIUE student, you have a variety of support available to you, including:

- [Lovejoy Library Resources](#)
- [The Writing Center](#)
- [Academic Advising](#)
- [Campus Events](#)
- [Counseling Services](#)

If you find that you need additional support, please reach out to me and let me know.

Cougar Care

Dealing with the fast-paced life of a college student can be challenging, and I always support a student's decisions to prioritize mental health. Students have access to counseling services on campus (Student Success Center, 0222). Make an appointment by visiting cougarcare.siue.edu or by calling 618-650-2842.

Academic Integrity

Students are reminded that the expectations and academic standards outlined in the Student Academic Code (3C2) apply to all courses, field experiences and educational experiences at the University, regardless of modality or location. The full text of the policy can be found here: <https://www.siue.edu/policies/3c2.shtml>.

Recordings of Class Content

Faculty recordings of lectures and/or other course materials are meant to facilitate student learning and to help facilitate a student catching up who has missed class due to illness or quarantine. As such, students are reminded that the recording, as well as replicating or sharing of any course content and/or course materials without the express permission of the instructor of record, is not permitted, and may be considered a violation of the University's Student Conduct Code (3C1), linked here: <https://www.siue.edu/policies/3c1.shtml>.

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Course Calendar:

Note: All assignments will be due at 11:59pm on their assigned date through Blackboard.

Day	Date	Topic	Reading	Assignments due
M	1/12	Syllabus	Syllabus	
W	1/14	<i>Syllabus Quiz (in class)</i> Introduction to Development	Chapter 1	
M	1/19	MLK holiday		
W	1/21	Introduction + Biological Beginning	Chapter 1,2	
M	1/26	Biological Beginnings	Chapter 2	
W	1/28	Physical Devel & Biological Aging	Chapter 3	Reaction Paper 1
M	2/2	Physical Devel & Biological Aging	Chapter 3	
W	2/4	Motor, Sensory and Perceptual Development	Chapter 5	
M	2/9	M,S, P Development	Chapter 5	
W	2/11	EXAM 1		<i>Journal Entries Unit 1</i>
M	2/16	<i>Asynchronous: Cognitive Devel</i>	Chapter 6	
W	2/18	<i>Asynchronous: Cognitive Devel</i>	Chapter 6	
M	2/23	Information Processing	Chapter 7	Reaction Paper 2
W	2/25	Information Processing /Intelligence	Chapter 8	
M	3/2	Intelligence	Chapter 8	
W	3/4	EXAM 2		Journal entries Unit 2
3/9-3/13		SPRING BREAK!		
M	3/16	Self, Identity & Personality	Chapter 11	
W	3/18	Self, Identity & Personality	Chapter 11	
M	3/23	Gender & Sexuality	Chapter 12	Reaction Paper 3
W	3/25	Language Development	Chapter 9	
M	3/30	Language Development	Chapter 9	
W	4/1	EXAM 3		Journal Entries Unit 3
M	4/6	Emotional Devel. and Attachment	Chapter 10	
W	4/8	Emotional Devel. and Attachment	Chapter 10	
M	4/13	Moral Development	Chapter 13	
W	4/15	Family, Lifestyles and Parenting	Chapter 14	
M	4/20	Family, Lifestyles and Parenting	Chapter 14	Reaction Paper 4
W	4/22	Peer Relations	Chapter 15	
M	4/27	Peer Relations	Chapter 15	Journal Entries Unit 4
W	4/29	MAKEUP EXAM OPTIONAL CLASS MEETING		
M	5/4	FINAL EXAM 12-1:40		

Subject to change notice All material, assignments, and deadlines are subject to change with prior notice. It is your responsibility to stay in touch with your instructor, review the course site regularly, or communicate with other students, to adjust as needed if assignments or due dates change.