Learning Objectives for CAS 325A:
Development from Conception through Age 8

Prerequisites: CAS 301, Inquiry and Methodology in Child and Adolescent Development
CAS 300, Elements of Effective Professional Communication.

“CAS 325A: Development from Conception through Age 8” is the first of an in-depth two-part course sequence for Child and Adolescent Development (CHAD) majors examining normative human development through adolescence. In addition to examining individual and societal factors influencing development, these courses examine theories of development and their implications for practice with children and their families from a multicultural perspective. CAS 325 A and B provide CHAD majors with an extensive foundation for their work as effective practitioners with and advocates for children.

Child development is very complex. To help you organize this information about developmental changes, we have organized learning goals into theoretical perspectives, three domains of development (biological/physical, social-emotional, and cognitive/language), and applications and implications. Changes occur in each of these domains as the child moves from prenatal development, through the infant/toddler period, to preschool and the primary grades. Although the developmental changes in each of these areas take place in the child, they are influenced by the nature the child’s environment. The image below (based on Bronfenbrenner’s model) summarizes the different domains, age-ranges, and environmental contexts addressed by this course.
I. Theoretical Perspectives

A. Key concepts associated with major theories of development.
   1. Erikson’s psychosocial theory (stages: Trust vs. Mistrust, Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt, Initiative vs. Guilt)
   2. Behaviorism
      a. General concepts (extinction, recovery)
      b. Classical conditioning/Associations (Unconditioned stimulus [UCS], Conditioned stimulus [CS], Unconditioned response [UCR], conditioned response [CR])
      c. Operant conditioning (Positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, punishment, reinforcement schedules, law of effect, performance vs. ability)
   3. Social learning theory (Modeling/Vicarious learning, identification, observation)
   4. Piaget’s cognitive-developmental theory
      a. General concepts (equilibration, assimilation, accommodation, constructivist “little scientist,” operations)
      b. Sensorimotor stage (object permanence, circular reactions, symbolic representation)
      c. Preoperational stage (perspective taking, egocentrism, centration)
      d. Concrete Operational stage (conservation [number, volume, mass], decentration, egocentric speech, reversibility, intuitive thought)
      e. Information processing (sensory register, short-term store/working memory, long-term memory, attention, automatization, encoding, retrieval, control/executive processes, production systems, subitizing)
   5. Ethology (imprinting, bonding, babyness, critical period, sensitive period)
   6. Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory (Microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macrosystems, chronosystems)
   7. Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory (scaffolding, “little apprentice,” zone of proximal development, private speech, contextualized learning)

B. The characterization of each of the above theories on the following dimensions:
   1. Active vs. Passive - Viewing developmental change as originating within the organism (active, organismic, or endogenous theories) versus emphasizing environmental stimulation (passive, mechanistic, or exogenous theories).
   2. Continuous vs. Discontinuous - Describing development as continuous versus using a discontinuous, stage-based model.
II. Biological/Physical Development
1. The methods and limitations of habituation and preference studies, and how they help us understand neonatal sensation and perception.
2. Pre- and post-natal brain development, including:
   A. The development of dendrites, neurons, synapses, and myelin
   B. The effects of experience and nutrition.
   C. The influence of brain structure on perception and cognition.
3. The definition of teratogens and the factors moderating their effects on development.
4. Major milestones and changes in physical development during different age periods (prenatal/neonatal, infant/toddler, preschool, primary), including:
   A. Cephalocaudal and proximodistal trends in physical growth.
   B. Stepping, rooting, sucking, and grasping reflexes and their developmental significance.
   C. Changes in body size, proportions, and skeletal maturity.
   D. Gross motor development, including environmental and physical factors related to gross motor development and ways to enhance gross motor skills.
   E. Fine motor development.

III. Social/Emotional Development
1. The concepts of “bonding” and “imprinting,” and their implications of each with respect to development.
2. The concept of “babyness.”
3. Infant states and their effect on infants’ social interaction and assessment.
4. Temperament (particularly the Thomas and Chess model of temperament, including the nine dimensions, three constellations, and concept of goodness of fit) and the findings on the stability of temperament.
5. The patterns of attachment behaviors, factors that affect attachment, and outcomes associated with attachment patterns.
6. Children’s emotional development, including smiling, crying, display of anger, and temper tantrums.
7. Developmental changes in the concept of self, including self awareness, self concept, and self esteem, and issues related to programs designed to enhance self esteem.
8. The development of gender identity, including labeling and constancy.
9. The development of sociodramatic play, including progression of social interaction (types of play).

IV. Cognitive/Language Development
1. Key issues in language acquisition (theories, stages/milestones, characteristics, and common errors).
2. The components of language including form (phonological, morphological, and syntactic systems), content (semantics), and use (pragmatics).
3. The development of object permanence and object use, including the relation between object concepts and social issues (e.g., sociodramatic/imaginary play, gender constancy).
4. The difference between Piagetian (assimilation/accommodation) based explanations of learning and environmental explanations (e.g., Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development), and their implications for children’s environments and instruction.
5. The development of mental scripts and change in children’s use of mental scripts (including their facilitative effect on memory and their ability to produce memory errors).
6. Key characteristics of children’s remembering strategies at different ages (including attention, planning, metacognition, rehearsal).
7. The development of representational thought and logical processes.

IV. Applications and Implications
1. The development of literacy in early childhood, including whole language and phonics/basic-skills approaches to instruction and their relationship to the development of literacy.
2. The patterns of nonparental child care use, indicators of quality care, and impact on children.
3. The concept of Developmentally Appropriate Practice (age appropriateness, individual appropriateness, cultural appropriateness).
4. The concept of “school readiness,” the purpose of kindergarten, and developmental outcomes associated with various kindergarten configurations.
5. Developmental outcomes related to the following factors: class size, retention in grade.
6. Baumrind’s parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative, permissive-indulgent, permissive-indifferent), including cultural differences and developmental outcomes for children.