

SPPH 581M (3): Seminar Series: Early Child Development as a Social Determinant of Health

Course Description

This advanced course provides students with a unique opportunity to learn in depth about critical controversies and current research trends in early child development, from interdisciplinary, applied, cross-cultural, and ecological perspectives. This innovative course combines weekly seminars with research retreats at one of UBC's world-class interdisciplinary research consortia, the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP). Students will be exposed to methodological, ethical, and theoretical debates in regard to early child development research that draws from life course paradigms as well as Indigenous Knowledge approaches. The course will be co-taught by HELP faculty. Emphasis will be placed on critically examining how current research knowledge can be mobilized into community-based action and policies.

- Students should have some background knowledge in child health and development, developmental theories (e.g., PSYCH 319, EPSE 501, EPSE 504), and/or social determinants of health (e.g., SPPH 527) or equivalent or approval from the course co-instructors.
- Location: School of Population and Public Health building, Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP), 440, 2206 East Mall, Vancouver, BC, V6T 1Z3: Room 491

Learning Goals and Objectives

There is an extensive body of evidence linking adult health with processes and experiences that occur in early childhood. Micro, meso, and macro-system influences – from cell to society – may interact to differentially impact development over the life course. In this course, we will discuss ways that the interplay of early child development, early experiences, and societal influences lays the foundation for healthy development and lifelong health.

Overall, goals of this course are for students to:

1. Understand in what ways biological as well as the ecological factors, (all from the most proximal environment to the neighbourhood, regional, national and international environment) and public policy interact to influence health and development from the early years onward.
2. Understand ways that early child development (ECD) is a determinant of health, and the interplay between biological and social factors that promote or undermine healthy development over the life course.
3. Understand ways that population-level measures contribute to knowledge about the health and well-being of populations and the creation of nurturing environments for young children.
4. Learn theories and methodological approaches about the study of human development, drawing from multiple disciplines, such as population health, psychology, education, and sociology in addition to considering Indigenous Peoples Knowledges and emerging research agendas.
5. Understand the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as rights-based approaches for promoting ECD.
6. Identify ways that population-based research in ECD is mobilized to inform planning and decision-making in community contexts.

Course structure

Students will participate in weekly class seminars. Every 4th seminar will involve participation at a HELP research retreat session. HELP retreats are monthly events designed to discuss new and emerging ideas about conducting, sharing, and applying research regarding early child development as a social determinant of health and bio-eco-social influences on children's developmental trajectories.

Co-Instructors

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The co-instructors will provide overall oversight for the course, consolidate the curriculum content, select assigned readings, assess students' assignments, prepare and facilitate seminar sessions, and coordinate linkages between seminar curriculum content with selected sessions in a corresponding monthly HELP research retreat. Guest speakers may also be invited to present material that contributes to and complements a course seminar theme/topic within the seminars and/or the HELP research retreat sessions.

Student Learning Activities

Over the course of the term, students will engage in two main types of learning activities:

- Weekly class seminar: Participate in co-instructor-facilitated class seminars (Thursdays from 1:00 - 4:00 pm in Room 491) with other students in the course to discuss key concepts, assigned readings, and research retreat content.
- HELP research retreats: Every 4th week, students will attend research retreat sessions as part of the class seminar. The research retreats are facilitated by various presenters and intersecting topics discussed include population-level developmental trajectories, neurogenomics, early childhood programs and services, family policy, international child rights, and developmental monitoring initiatives. All retreats take place at HELP in room 491. After the retreat is completed, students will meet to debrief about the retreat session and its connections to the course topics.

Evaluation

The co-instructors will share marking responsibilities for course assignments.

Assignments

Please note: Assignments are subject to change

Critical appraisal paper	35% *	*students have their choice of assignment
Knowledge Mobilization Interview and Summary	35% *	
Research Paper	40%	
Reflective Journals & Participation	25%	

Evaluation Criteria

Assessment is inherent to on-going development: of self (reflection), social assessment (response) and critique, in knowledge generation. All assignments will be assessed in terms of quality of content as well as clarity and conciseness of expression.

Attendance and participation

Attendance and participation is an important aspect of seminars, given the emphasis on discussion. If you need to miss a class, you can make arrangements with the instructors in person or over email beforehand to find an appropriate substitute (e.g., a presentation).

Checklist for writing

- With few exceptions, (multiple) revisions, after receiving feedback (from us or from others), are the key to good writing.
- Follow assignment criteria.
- APA style (e.g., coherent), 6th edition, and format (e.g., font, spacing) is required.
- Observe required word limits.

Academic integrity

Plagiarism (<http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/get-study-help/academic-integrity/>) may result in zero points for the assignment or a failing grade for the course and can lead to suspension from the university. It is the student's responsibility to familiarize herself/himself with the UBC guidelines for academic integrity.

Late assignments

Typically, no late assignments will be accepted. Extensions of the due date for the written assignments will be considered pending extenuating circumstances. Assignments submitted later than the due date will be penalised 10% of the possible grade for each day past due.

Grading practice

The course will be graded according to the Faculty of Graduate Studies grading criteria (see <http://www.grad.ubc.ca/faculty-staff/policies-procedures/grading-practices>).

Final Grade	Descriptor
A+ (90-100)	Demonstrates exceptional breadth and depth of understanding of the subject matter; demonstrates proficient use of existing research literature and exceptional analytic and critical thinking skills, articulates ideas unusually well in both oral and written form, consistently makes strong, explicit
A (85-89)	
A- (80-84)	

	connections between theory and practice; shows a high degree of creativity and personal engagement with the topic.
B+ (76-79) B (72-75) B- (68-71)	Demonstrates good breadth and depth of understanding of the subject matter; demonstrates good use of existing research literature and strong analytic and critical thinking skills, articulates ideas well in both oral and written form, at times makes strong, explicit connections between theory and practice; shows some creativity and satisfactory personal engagement with the topic.
C+ (64-67) C (60-63) (For Masters students only)	Demonstrates adequate breadth and depth of understanding of the subject matter; demonstrates some ability to use existing research literature in simple ways, and some indication of analytic and critical thinking skills, oral and written skills are adequate but need some work, occasionally makes connections between theory and practice, but ideas need to be developed further; few creative ideas and/or a low level of personal engagement with the topic.
Fail (less than 68; PhD) (less than 60; Masters)	Breadth and depth of understanding of the subject matter are far from adequate; shows consistent misunderstanding of core receipts of the course; may have been caught plagiarizing or copying; work is extremely deficient or sub-standard.

For further information regarding UBC grading practices, please consult the 2013-14 UBC course calendar.

Overview of Weekly Class Seminar and Research Retreat Topics

Key Course Topics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction and overview of the course: Key guiding theoretical foundations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An interdisciplinary introduction to theories, ethics, and methodologies in early child development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Early child development as a social determinant of health: Understanding developmental trajectories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Using ‘Complex Adaptive Systems’ theories to understand effects of services and programs on early child development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proximal processes and social relationships – examining child and family spheres of influence in early childhood
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sociology versus psychology – debating the neighborhood effects literature
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “All my relations” -- Indigenous knowledge perspectives on relational communities and early child development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social reform, policy and program implementation – the Head Start debate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ways of Seeing the World: Global environment as a sphere of influence on early child development

Course timetable:

TERM STARTS MONDAY JANUARY 06

Week 1: Jan 09, 2014

Week 2: January 16, 2014

Week 3: Thursday, January 23, 2014

Week 4: Research Retreat #1: January 30th, 2014

Week 5: February 06, 2014

Week 6: February 13, 2014

READING WEEK: FEBRUARY 17 – 21ST
(NO CLASS)

Week 7: Research Retreat #2: February 27, 2014

Week 8: March 06, 2014

Week 9: March 13, 2014

Week 10: March 20th, 2014

Week 11: Research retreat #3: March 27, 2014

Week 12: April 3rd, 2014

TERM ENDS TUESDAY APRIL 08

SPPH 581M (3): Seminar Series in Early Child Development as a Social Determinant of Health
Course Schedule: January 2014 – April 2014

Please note: The readings and schedule are subject to change.

Week 1: Introduction and overview of the course: Key guiding theoretical foundations

The first class will provide an introduction to a guiding theoretical framework: the Total Environment Assessment Model for Early Child Development - TEAM-ECD, which depicts the multiple interacting and interdependent spheres of influence in a child's life. We will discuss ways that the course seminar themes and topics are organized to feature various spheres of influence on human development. The course syllabus will also be discussed.

Coordinator(s): Michele Sam, Brenda Poon, and Martin Guhn,

Readings:

Siddiqui A, Irwin LG, Hertzman C. Total Environment Assessment Model for Early Child Development: Evidence Report [Internet]. Vancouver, BC: Human Early Learning Partnership; 2007 Jun p. pp. 1–17. Available from:
http://www.who.int/social_determinants/resources/ecd_kn_evidence_report_2007.pdf

Week 2: An interdisciplinary introduction to theories, ethics, and methodologies in early child development

This class will introduce axiologies (value theories), ontologies (knowledge theories), and methodologies that are commonly used by different scientific disciplines in order to study early child development. Secondly, the seminar will introduce two interdisciplinary frameworks that are prominent in human development research: Urie Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological theory of human development and Glen Elder's life course paradigm. Theories related to complex dynamic systems and developmental science will also be introduced. Finally, we will consider emerging perspectives from within Indigenous Peoples approaches to early child development research methodologies.

Coordinator(s): Martin Guhn and Brenda Poon

Readings:

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. (2006). The bioecological model of human development. In W. Damon & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of child development, volume 1, theoretical models of human development* (6th ed., pp. 793–828). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/psychology/courses/3615/Readings/BronfenbrennerModelofDevelopment.pdf>

Meyer, M.A (2001). Our Own Liberation: Reflections on Hawaiian Epistemology. *The Contemporary Pacific*, Vol 13 #1, 124-148.
[Http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/cp/summary/v013/13.1_meyer.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/cp/summary/v013/13.1_meyer.html)

Sarche, M. C., & Whitesell, N.R (2012). Child Development Research in North American Native Communities—Looking Back and Moving Forward: Introduction (42-48). *Child Development Perspectives, Special Section on Child Development in Native American Communities*. Vol 6, #1. Article first published online | DOI: 10.1111/j.1750-8606.2011.00218.x

Leischow SJ, Best A, Trochim WM, Clark PI, Gallagher RS, Marcus SE, et al. Systems Thinking to Improve the Public's Health. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*. 2008 Aug;35(2, Supplement):S196–S203. (TBC)

Week 3: Early child development as a social determinant of health: Understanding developmental trajectories

In this module, we will discuss theoretical frameworks for understanding ways that early experiences and exposures may influence lifelong health and development. We will review studies investigating disparities in developmental trajectories and, in particular, ways that social inequities in early childhood experiences and circumstances may have profound and lasting effects on later health and development. One case example will involve review of dental public health data on inequities in oral health outcomes of BC's kindergarten children.

Coordinator(s): Brenda Poon and Martin Guhn

Readings:

- Ferraro KF, Shippee TP. Aging and Cumulative Inequality: How Does Inequality Get Under the Skin? *The Gerontologist*. 2009 Jun 1;49(3):333–43.
- Votruba-Drzal, E., Li-Grining, C. P., & Maldonado-Carreño, C. (2008). A Developmental Perspective on Full- Versus Part-Day Kindergarten and Children's Academic Trajectories Through Fifth Grade. *Child Development*, 79(4), 957–978. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.2008.01170.x
- Guhn, M., Schonert-Reichl, K. A., Gadermann, A., Marriott, D., Pedrini, L., Hymel, S., & Hertzman, C. (2012). Well-Being in middle childhood: An assets-based population-level research-to-action project. *Child Indicators Research*, 5, 393-418. DOI 10.1007/s12187-012-9136-8

Week 4: Research Retreat #1

Readings:

- Schonert-Reichl, K. A., Guhn, M., Gadermann, Hymel, S., & Hertzman, C. (in press). Development and validation of the Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI): Assessing children's well-being and assets across multiple contexts. *Social Indicators Research*. DOI: 10.1007/s11205-012-0149-y

Week 5: Using 'Complex Adaptive Systems' theories to understand effects of services and programs on early child development

In this module, our focus will be on ways that population-level early childhood programs and interventions have been used to address developmental health inequalities. Early childhood programs and services will be discussed in the context of complexity science and complex adaptive systems. An example of designing a program evaluation framework in a complex system of early intervention services for children with special needs will also be discussed.

Coordinator(s): Brenda Poon

Readings:

- Epley, P., Gotto, G. S., Summers, J. A., Brotherson, M. J., Turnbull, A. P., & Friend, A. (2010). Supporting Families of Young Children With Disabilities: Examining the Role of Administrative Structures. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 30(1), 20–31. doi:10.1177/0271121410363400
- Rogers, P. J. (2008). Using Programme Theory to Evaluate Complicated and Complex Aspects of Interventions. *Evaluation*, 14(1), 29–48. doi:10.1177/1356389007084674

Week 6: Proximal processes and social relationships – examining child and family spheres of influence in early childhood

This module will feature discussion of social relationships and their influences in early life on children's development and well-being, as well as a conceptual framework for understanding pathways between upstream and downstream social influences on developmental health. Particular attention will be paid to the role of proximal environments in early childhood, as well as discussion of selected research examples that incorporate children's perspectives of growing up in disadvantaged environments.

Coordinator(s): Brenda Poon & Martin Guhn

Readings:

- Pluess M, Belsky J. Differential susceptibility to parenting and quality child care. *Developmental Psychology*. 2010 Mar;46(2):379–90.
- Attree, P. (2004). Growing up in disadvantage: a systematic review of the qualitative evidence. *Child: Care, Health and Development*, 30(6), 679–689. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2214.2004.00480.x
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (2009). Position statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice. Retrieved from <http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PSDAP.pdf>

READING WEEK: FEBRUARY 17 – 21ST (NO CLASS)

Week 7: Research Retreat #2

Readings:

- Sam, M. A. (2011). An Indigenous Knowledges Perspective on Valid Meaning Making: A Commentary on Research with the EDI and Aboriginal Communities. *Social Indicators Research*, 103(2), 315–325. doi:10.1007/s11205-011-9848-z

Week 8: Sociology versus psychology – debating the neighborhood effects literature

This module will introduce theoretical and methodological intricacies from the 'neighborhood-effects' literature. The literature on neighborhood effects is highly debated and inconclusive—however, policy interventions as well as community-based programs are commonly based on the assumption that human development can be affected via neighborhood-level processes. Seminal studies and review articles will be summarized, and prominent policies and neighborhood interventions will be discussed in light of the research literature.

Coordinator(s): Martin Guhn

Readings:

- Leventhal, T., Fauth, R. C., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2005). Neighborhood poverty and public policy: A 5-year follow-up of children's educational outcomes in the New York City Moving to Opportunity demonstration. *Developmental Psychology*, 41, 933-952.
- Sampson, R. J., Morenoff, J. D., & Gannon-Rowley, T. (2002). Assessing "neighborhood effects": social processes and new directions in research. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 28, 443-478.

Week 9: “All my relations” -- Indigenous knowledge perspectives on relational communities and early child development

Early years experiences within Indigenous societies establish relationships and attachments that do not reflect to Western Modern theories of being. These relationships continue to support health and well being from Indigenous Peoples knowledges and inherently connect knowledge and experience. This module explores this context for research—as social acts shared between researchers and those whose lives are interwoven to the subject of research: Indigenous People as ‘children’. Our goal here is to consider how “population-based developmental research” may be contextually defined, because of its potential influences within Indigenous Peoples’ early child development.

Coordinator(s):

Readings:

- Allen, J., Mohatt, J.V., Markstrom, C.A., Byers, L. and Novins, D.K. “Oh No, We Are Just Getting to Know You”: The Relationship in Research With Children and Youth in Indigenous Communities (pages 55–60). *Child Development Perspectives, Special Section on Child Development in Native American Communities*, Vol 6, #1. Article first published online: 26 AUG 2011 | DOI: 10.1111/j.1750-8606.2011.00199.x
- Fitzgerald, H. E., Farrell, P. Fulfilling the Promise: Creating a Child Development Research Agenda With Native Communities (pages 75–78). *Child Development Perspectives, Special Section on Child Development in Native American Communities*, Vol 6, #1. Article first published online: 9 FEB 2012 | DOI: 10.1111/j.1750-8606.2011.00216.x
- Galliher, R.V., Tsethlikai, M.M., & Stolle, D. Perspectives of Native and Non-Native Scholars: Opportunities for Collaboration (pages 66–74). *Child Development Perspectives, Special Section on Child Development in Native American Communities*, Vol 6, #1. Article first published online: 26 AUG 2011 | DOI: 10.1111/j.1750-8606.2011.00200.x
- Spicer, P., LaFramboise, T., Markstrom, C., Niles, M., West, A., Fehringer, K., Grayson, L., and Sarche, M. Toward an Applied Developmental Science for Native Children, Families, and Communities (pages 49–54). *Child Development Perspectives, Special Section on Child Development in Native American Communities*, Vol 6, #1. Article first published online: 31 OCT 2011 | DOI: 10.1111/j.1750-8606.2011.00212.x

Week 10: Social reform, policy and program implementation – the Head Start debate

This module presents the Head Start debate and reviews policy attempts to reform health and education. Head Start is the longest-standing, evidence-based federal early child development program in the US. To this day, its effectiveness is a matter of heated scientific and political debate. This module reviews the literature—from a scientific and from an applied-political perspective—in an attempt to integrate the two. The discussion is informed by examples of successes and failures of large-scale policy interventions.

Coordinator(s): Martin Guhn

Readings:

- Berliner, D. C. (2005). Our impoverished view of educational reform. *Teachers College Record*. Retrieved on November 20, 2006, from <http://www.tcrecord.org/content.asp?contentid=12106>
- Zigler, E. & Bishop-Josef, S. (2006). *The cognitive child vs. the whole child: Lessons from 40 years of Head Start*. Retrieved on July 11, 2010 from http://udel.edu/~roberta/play/Zigler_Bishop.pdf

Guhn, M. (2009). Insights from successful and unsuccessful implementations of school reform programs. *Journal of Educational Change*, 10, 337-363. DOI: 10.1007/s10833-008-9063-0

Week 11: Research Retreat #3

Readings:

- Guhn, M., Zumbo, B. D., Janus, M., & Hertzman, C. (2011). Validation theory and research for a population-level measure of children's development, wellbeing, and school readiness at kindergarten. *Social Indicators Research*, 103, 183-191. DOI: 10.1007/s11205-011-9841-6
- Meyer, M.A. (2003). Hawaiian Hermeneutics and the Triangulation of Meaning: Gross, Subtle, Causal. *Social Justice*, Vol 30, #4, 54-63.

Week 12: Ways of Seeing the World: Global environment as a sphere of influence on early child development

This module presents cross-cultural, global, and international Indigenous perspectives on early childhood development dialogue, captured within international policies and principles that support human rights. The goal is to consider how these international policies intersect in practice and programming in addition to linking local issues to global efforts of human rights.

Coordinator(s):

Guest lecturer: (TBC)

Readings:

- Vaghri Z, Arkadas A, Kruse S, Hertzman C. 2011. CRC General Comment 7 Indicators Framework: A Tool for Monitoring the Implementation of Child Rights in Early Childhood, *Journal of Human Rights*, 10:2, 178 – 188.
- United Nations, 2008. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf
- Greenwood, M., de Leeuw, S., Fraser, T.N. Aboriginal children and Early Childhood Development and Education in Canada: Linking the Past and the Present to the Future. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, Indigenous Approaches to Early Childhood Care and Education*, 2007, Volume 30, #1, 5-18.
- Thompson, N.L., Whitesell, N.R., Galliher, R.V., & Gfellner B.M. Unique Challenges of Child Development Research in Sovereign Nations in the United States and Canada (pages 61–65). *Child Development Perspectives, Special Section on Child Development in Native American Communities*, Vol 6, #1. Article first published online: 22 JUN 2011 | DOI: 10.1111/j.1750-8606.2011.00186.x

END OF TERM
