

# **HDFS 501: OBSERVATIONAL RESEARCH WITH YOUNG CHILDREN**

**Fall Semester 2008**

Fridays, 9-11:30

**Professor:** Julie Poehlmann, Ph.D.

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## **Course description:**

This course focuses on observational and longitudinal research with young children in the family context. In addition to relevant readings and presentations, students assist with data collection for an NIH-funded study of children born preterm; data entry and management using SPSS; and coding videotapes of infant temperament, toddler self-regulation, parent-child interactions, and child attachment interviews. Students work in a positive environment with a group of highly motivated and skilled undergraduate and graduate students. This course provides excellent preparation for students interested in graduate school. Lab meetings are usually held on Friday mornings 9-10:30 at the Waisman Center. A two semester commitment is usually required. The course can be used as a substitute for a variety of requirements in the FS and CD options (e.g., HDFS 471, HDFS 601, FS professional or content skills; CD core area 2 or 3 or professional skills).

(3 credits)

## **Learning goals:**

This course is designed to help students meet the following goals:

1. to understand the nature of risks in preterm infants and their families
2. to understand the rationale and design of the observational research conducted in the Poehlmann lab
3. to learn how to code videotapes of parent-child interaction, parental behavior, and child behavior
4. to engage in critical thinking about observational research with young children

## **Summary of Course Requirements:**

### **Attendance**

- Class attendance is required. If you need to miss part or all of a particular class, please let me know. I will give you additional work to make up for your absence. In addition to the Friday morning lab meetings, you are expected to work in the lab for 8-9 hours per week. You should keep a log of these hours, including what you did during these times (see Timesheet handout). Please hand in your timesheet every other week, with your reflection summaries stapled to it.
- 60% final grade

### **Participation**

- You are expected to actively participate in the research and at each lab meeting discussion. Although I understand that there are individual differences in shyness and facility with spoken language, I still expect participation on a regular basis. This is one of the main ways that I have of gauging whether you understand the material and what interests you.
- 10% of final grade

### **Class Presentation**

- You are required to make a presentation during a lab meeting, including leading discussion on that topic; sign-up will be on the first day of class. The topic can be your choice (although all topics need to be approved by the professor), as long as the topic is related to observational research with young children

If it is an extension of something we have discussed already, make an effort to integrate with our previous discussion.

- Your presentation should be approximately 15 minutes and you should lead a discussion for about 10 minutes
- You should include visuals (e.g., powerpoint; show a video)
- You should assign a relevant reading at least 2 weeks in advance (send digital copy to Dr. Poehlmann who will post it on Learn@UW)
- 10% of final grade

**Reflection Summaries:**

- write one per week (about 1 paragraph or one page); see handout for description of content and form
- due every other week
- 10% of final grade

**Final Project (choose 1 of the following or create your own idea); FYI: you can start it the first semester and finish it the second semester:**

- **Choice #1:** Critically review 4 empirical articles that use observational research methods with children or families.
  - 5-6 pages, typed double spaced; include references using APA-5<sup>th</sup> edition
  - Can be the same topic as your presentation
- **Choice #2:** Work on creating a new edition of the lab newsletter. See previous samples. This can be a joint project with 1-2 other students.
- **Choice #3:** Create a manual for something that we do in the lab (e.g., coding, data entry, administration, interview, etc). See previous samples.
- **Choice 4:** Conduct data analysis on a topic that interests you and create a poster to present at the Undergraduate Research Symposium (held every April; abstracts due in Feb)
- **Choice 5:** Assist Dr. Poehlmann or one of her graduate students with preparation of a national conference presentation. See samples on walls or on S: drive
- 10% of final grade

**Grading Scale:**

A = 93-100%, AB = 89-92%, B = 83-88%, BC =78-82%, C =70-77%, D =60-69%, F =0-59%

**Required Readings:** Digital copies readings can be found under the “content” section of Learn@UW.

**Ethics training:** You must complete the UW IRB human subjects training modules and the HIPPA training before starting in the lab. Always treat data with respect for confidentiality. NEVER take any videos (including short video clips) out of the lab. If you do, you will receive a failing grade in the course.

**Special Needs**

I wish to fully include individuals with disabilities in this course. Please let me know if you need any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or assessments in this course to enable you to fully participate. I will maintain confidentiality of the information you share with me.

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

**Fri, Sept 5:**

- Introduction to class

**Fri, Sept 12:**

- Family context for preterm infants

**Fri, Sept 19:**

- Preterm infant risks
- Melissa presenting

**Fri, Sept 26:**

- Student presentation

**Fri, Oct 3:**

- Student presentation

**Fri, Oct 10:**

- Student presentation

**Fri, Oct 17:**

- Student presentation

**Fri, Oct 24:**

- Student presentation

**Fri, Oct 31:**

- No meeting

**Fri, Nov 7:**

- Student presentation

**Fri, Nov 14:**

- Student presentation

**Fri, Nov 21:**

- No meeting

**Fri, Nov 28: no class,  
Thanksgiving**

**Fri, Dec 5:**

- Student presentation

**Fri, Dec 10: last day of class**

- breakfast potluck

**Required Readings:**

Bhutta et al. (2002) meta-analysis  
Davis & Burns (2001) self-regulation conceptual paper

Holditch-Davis et al. (2006) father support medically fragile infants  
Mangelsdorf et al. (1996) attachment in vlbw infants

Bugental et al. (2008) hormonal sensitivity to maternal depression in preterms  
Hack et al. (2004) vlbw adult outcomes

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