

HDFS 501: Research in Early Developmental Contexts & School Readiness

Spring 2009

Instructor: Janean Dilworth-Bart, PhD

Course Meeting: 114 Waisman

Office: 543 Waisman

Office Hours: By appointment

Email: jedilworth@wisc.edu

Course Website: <https://uwmad.courses.wisconsin.edu>

Additional Project information is stored on the S: drive on the Waisman lab computers. You need a Waisman logon to access this information.

COURSE OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this course is to provide students with valuable hands-on research experience working higher risk children and their families.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students will participate in 2 ongoing research projects:

1. Home Time to School Time Project (HTST): Correlates of Neurocognitive Resilience and School Readiness. This new study focuses on the relationships between mothers' scaffolding behaviors and home environment quality and the emergence of 3 inter-related neurocognitive skills: executive functions, affective decision-making, and theory of mind. These neurocognitive skills, in turn, likely underlie the preacademic and socioemotional prerequisites for readiness to enter school.

2. Parent and Child Predictors of Nonverbal Learning and School Readiness Among Toddlers Born Preterm. Using data from Dr. Julie Poehlmann's Preterm Infant Attachment Study, Dr. Dilworth-Bart is researching how maternal scaffolding behaviors impact early EF, visual-spatial reasoning, and nonverbal comprehension abilities in children at 24- and 36-months of age. This study is important because these early abilities likely have direct relationships with low birth-weight, very low birth-weight, and extremely low birth weight children's readiness to enter school as well as their future academic and socioemotional competence.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Students will participate in all aspects of the projects including:

- assisting with home and Waisman Center laboratory visits
- coding of parent-child interactions
- data scoring
- data entry
- library research
- presentation of research findings

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Students will be evaluated based on:

- Completion of hourly requirement
 - 1 credit = 45 hour minimum
 - 2 credits = 90 hour minimum
 - 3 credits = 135 hour minimum

- 6 credits = 270 hour minimum
- Completion of lab assignments
- Weekly lab meeting attendance
- Weekly readings and “Journal Club” participation for new students; completed binder presentation for returning students
- Group Project

Lab Assignments

Students will participate in all aspects of the project as specified in the COURSE STRUCTURE.

Weekly Readings

Students are assigned 3 to 4 readings per week that provide background for the project. There are additional readings available in the *Readings* folder on the HTST project drive.

Journal Club

Each new student will present an article of their own choosing for Journal Club. Chosen articles should correspond to the day’s topic. Journal Club articles should be distributed at least one week prior to the scheduled presentations.

Journal Club presentations are *informal* opportunities for students to discuss their research topic following a simple format:

1. Briefly summarize the chosen article
2. Lead discussion of article with at least 3 questions. Discussion questions can relate to strengths and weaknesses of the research methodology, possible next steps in the research, things students wish the researchers had addressed, “real world” relevance of the research, etc.

Group Projects

Students will work in groups of two on 2 group projects:

1. Resource Books: Students will work in groups to develop a resource book corresponding to the major constructs of the HTST project. These resource books will contain:
 - a. An executive summary that defines the key constructs (2 – 3 pages).
 - b. Relevant and up to date references for studies of the key construct (up to 20).
 - c. Technical reports for the state-of-the-art measures for these key constructs. Technical reports will contain psychometric information from the existing literature and the measure itself (if feasible). Groups will contact the measure developers, as needed, to obtain reliability and validity information.
 - d. As needed, students will contact the authors of the measures for reliability/validity information.

Students will present their Resource Books at the end of the semester.

2. Management Groups: Students will participate in one or more Management Groups. The purpose of these groups is to designate students who are responsible for taking the lead in one aspect of running the project. Each Management Group coordinate their aspect of the project, provide progress reports, and recruit additional students to help complete small projects, as needed. Management Groups include:
 - a. Participant Recruitment/ Community Liaison
 - b. Interview Transcription and Analysis

- c. Data Management
- d. Lab Management

Groups will be added or modified as needed.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all lab meeting, scheduled activities, and group meetings. If a student signs up to assist with a lab or home visit, but cannot attend, it is her/his responsibility to find a replacement.

Etiquette

Members of the class are expected to be respectful of each other and each other's opinions at all times. It is acceptable to disagree, but not to be disagreeable.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty in any form, including cheating on exams, plagiarism, or submitting others' work as your own is unacceptable. These actions will result in a final course grade of "F" without exception.

Personal Security

Although it is possible to access the Waisman Center in the evenings and over weekends, Students are *strongly encouraged* not to be in the building alone after hours. Instead, students are encouraged to coordinate project meetings or other group work at these times.

Data Security

In order to protect the confidential information provided by study participants, project data *are not* to leave the Waisman Center building unless specified by the instructor or the PA. Doing so will result in a course grade of "F" without exception. Similarly, friends, acquaintances, etc. who are not affiliated with the project should not loiter in the project offices.

Extra Credit

There will be *no* extra credit or extra assignments offered for this course under any circumstances.

Religious Observances

I wish to accommodate students' religious beliefs and cultural practices as much as possible. Please inform me within the first two weeks of class of the specific days or dates of any religious observances for which you will miss class or that conflict with course requirements.

Students with Special Needs

If you have, or suspect you have, a disability that could interfere with your learning and performance in the class, please contact the McBurney Center (263-2741 [phone]; 263-6393 [TTY]; 263-2998 [FAX]. Additional resources include:

The Writing Center: www.wisc.edu/writing or 263-9305

UW Counseling and Consultation Services: 262-1744

CLASS SCHEDULE*

Date	Topic	Readings
1/23	Project Overview & Lab Orientation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Collect IRB and HIPAA certificates • Logons, Keys, Course Registration, etc. • Lab Tour 	
1/30	Neurocognitive Development	Anderson (2002)
2/6	Risk and Resilience	Appleyard et al. (2005) Curtis & Cicchetti (2003) Masten (1999)
2/13	Intergenerational Transfer of Risk	Serbin & Karp (2004)
2/20	Parent-Child Interactions	Dietrich et al. (2006) Landry et al. (2006) McDowell & Parke (2005)
2/27	Home Environment Quality	Evans (2004) Johnson, Martin, Brooks-Gunn, & Petrill (2008).
3/6	Academic Socialization	Bus, van IJzendoorn, & Pellegrini (1995) Taylor, Clayton, & Rowley (2004)
3/13	School Readiness	Blair (2002) Carlton & Winsler (1999) Pianta & La Paro (2003)
3/20	Spring Break – No lab meeting	
3/27	Group Presentation	
4/3	No lab meeting	
4/10	Group Presentation	
4/17	Group Presentation	
4/24	Group Presentation	
5/1	Group Presentation	
5/8	Group Presentation Course Wrap-Up	

*Schedule Subject to Change as Needed.