

SYLLABUS

PSYC 856

Socioemotional Development

Winter 2025

The instructor's contact information can be found in OnQ (on the course home page).

1. Land acknowledgment

Queen's University is situated on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Territory. It is important to acknowledge this territory's significance for the Indigenous peoples who lived, and continue to live, upon it – people whose practices and spiritualities were tied to the land and continue to develop in relationship to the territory and its other inhabitants today.

2. Course description

This course will create a critical discourse about social and emotional development, with a particular focus on adolescence. Adolescence is a developmental stage characterized by important shifts in emotional and social behaviour. We will critically examine the evidence for continued development in emotional experience, emotion regulation, and social learning during adolescence, while considering potential neurobiological mechanisms for these changes. This course places an emphasis on developing practical academic skills relevant to research, teaching, and science communication alongside content expertise in developmental psychology.

3. Learning outcomes

By the end of the course, students will have demonstrated the ability to:

1. Analyze and critique current scientific literature on social and emotional development;
2. Create a novel project, through iterative revisions, that synthesizes and extends knowledge about socio-emotional development;
3. Practice skills relevant to academic and peer review, and demonstrate the ability to provide clear, constructive, and supported critique;
4. Develop academic skills relevant to crafting effective proposals (academic or otherwise) and/or preparing educational content for varied audiences and/or science communication.

4. Assessments and grading method

Assessments	% of grade	Due date
Class participation	10%	
Review 1	5%	12PM (noon) on January 21, 2025
Review 2	5%	12PM (noon) on January 28, 2025
Review 3	5%	12PM (noon) on February 4, 2025
Review 4	5%	12PM (noon) on February 11, 2025
Presentation of proposal	20%	During class on February 25 or March 4, 2025
Peer review of first draft	5%	12PM (noon) on March 18, 2025
Peer review of second draft	5%	12PM (noon) on April 1, 2025
Project	40%	First draft due 12PM (noon) on March 11, 2025 Second draft due 12PM (noon) on March 24, 2025 Final version due 12PM (noon) on April 22, 2025

Reviews (4 x 5% = 20%): You will be asked to submit an abridged review of an assigned empirical paper, from the perspective of an academic reviewer (upload to OnQ; due 12PM before class in Weeks 3-6). Your review should be ≈1 page long and contain a) a summary of the paper’s findings and your overall points, b) a brief description of 1 major review point, and c) a brief description of 2 minor review points.

Final project (40%): Your goal in this class will be to craft a final project that aligns with one of three ‘streams’ (see Table below). The central topic of your project should be relevant to **social and emotional development in adolescence** (e.g., influence of peers on emotion regulation, sensitivity to peer norms in adolescence, role of parents and peers in buffering stress, changes in emotional experiences in adolescence, etc.). We will workshop the exact topic together as a group, to find something that is *germane to current understanding of socio-emotional development* in adolescence, would make a *contribution* to the field/the profession, and is *relevant to your growth* in your degree. You will be asked to select the “stream” of your choice in Week 3.

Final project “streams”	
Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a recorded lecture (with captions) on your topic for a 300-level Psychology course - Create related exam questions and/or assessment, with detailed rubrics
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write a grant proposal on your topic, including a budget - Create a detailed knowledge mobilization plan for your proposal
SciComm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write a non-academic article on your topic (e.g., for a publication venue similar to The Atlantic, “what do we know about X”) - Create an accompanying infographic

Note: Lectures should be approximately 50 minutes in length. Grant proposals are typically 5 pages, single spaced (12-point font, 1” margins). Non-academic articles should be approximately 10 pages, single spaced (12-point font, 1” margins).

Proposal presentation (20%): In Weeks 7-8, you will be asked to present your proposed project to your classmates. The proposal should contain a) a detailed description of the project you are planning and its various components, b) a justification/rationale for the format and components of your project, and c) a discussion of its relevance to the field of developmental psychology and your career growth (think: a “pitch” for your project). The presentation should be ≈ 20 minutes and involve visuals of some sort (e.g., PowerPoint slides). Please upload your presentation with its reference list to OnQ prior to class.

You will obtain feedback from me and from your peers on your proposal. Following this, you will be asked to provide a **first and a second draft of your project** to a peer reviewer, by Tuesday 12PM (noon) of Weeks 9 and 11 respectively (upload to OnQ AND send by email to me & your peer reviewer). These do not need to be super polished, but should give your peer reviewer enough material to engage with. It is important that you turn these drafts in on time to allow your peers to review your work and craft meaningful feedback by the next class meeting.

Peer review of first/second drafts (2 x 5%): You will be assigned to review one of your peer’s drafts for their final project, and provide comments to help improve their work. In addition to a written comment (≈ ½ page; upload to OnQ; due 12PM before class on Weeks 10 and 12), you will present a brief version (≈ 5 minutes) of your commentary in class. This is intended to help you practice making oral comments about peers’ work, and to share your feedback with other peers who may have chosen similar “streams” for their projects. You will provide feedback in this way twice in the semester (for two different peers).

Participation (10%): One of the goals of this seminar is to create critical discourse about social and emotional development during adolescence. This only works if folks come to all classes prepared to discuss the assigned material and contribute to the discussion. Your participation grade will be based on your active engagement during class meetings. You will not be graded on the content of your comments, but

rather on your effort and indications that you have read/reviewed and reflected upon the assigned material (whether that be papers or peers' work). (You should plan to attend every class; if you are unable to attend, please notify me via email *before* class.)

Grading method

Grades will be given in letter form, which for purposes of calculating your course average will be translated into numerical equivalents using the Faculty of Arts and Science approved scale. Your course average will then be converted to a final letter grade according to Queen's Official Grade Conversion Scale.

Arts & Science Letter Grade Input Scheme

Assignment mark	Numerical value for calculation of final mark
A+	93
A	87
A-	82
B+	78
B	75
B-	72
C+	68
C	65
C-	62
D+	58
D	55
D-	52
F48 (F+)	48
F24 (F)	24
F0 (0)	0

Queen's Official Grade Conversion Scale

Grade	Numerical Course Average (Range)
A+	90-100
A	85-89
A-	80-84
B+	77-79
B	73-76
B-	70-72
C+	67-69
C	63-66
C-	60-62
D+	57-59
D	53-56
D-	50-52
F	49 and below

Generally,

- A+ You have excelled beyond expectations. Your work is virtually flawless and its quality is commensurate with professional expertise.
- A You have met the requirements of the assignment and provided clear, well-supported arguments.
- A- You have almost met the requirements of the assignment, but some aspects were unsupported/unpolished/incorrect.
- B+ You have not met the requirements of the assignment and/or have shown little to no critical thinking effort.

5. Course materials and timeline

Week	Topic	Readings #	Assignment
WEEK 1 - Jan 7	Introduction		
WEEK 2 - Jan 14	What is socio-emotional development?	1	
WEEK 3 - Jan 21	Emotional experience	2, 3*	Review 1
WEEK 4 - Jan 28	Emotion regulation	4, 5, 6, 7*	Review 2
WEEK 5 - Feb 4	Social learning	8, 9*	Review 3
WEEK 6 - Feb 11	Neurobiological mechanisms	10, 11*	Review 4
READING WEEK			
WEEK 7 - Feb 25	Proposal presentations		Proposal presentation
WEEK 8 - Mar 4			
WEEK 9 - Mar 11	Project check in		First draft

WEEK 10 - Mar 18	Peer review of first drafts		Peer review 1
WEEK 11 - Mar 25	Project check in		Second draft
WEEK 12 - Apr 1	Peer review of second drafts		Peer review 2
Final version of project due April 22, 2025 at 12PM (noon)			

Note. The starred articles (*) are the empirical articles to review in your Review assignment that week.

Weekly schedule

Part 1 (Weeks 1-6): The first half of the course serves to provide you with some content expertise about adolescent socio-emotional development. We will discuss foundational material that will guide our work in class. Please come prepared to discuss the assigned readings. In addition, we will practice skills related to academic peer review. To do so, you will be asked to submit a review of the assigned empirical paper in Weeks 3-6 prior to class; we will discuss those reviews in our class meeting. *Your weekly tasks in Part 1 are to complete the assigned readings and submit your reviews (Weeks 3-6) before class. You should also begin preparation for your final project.*

Part 2 (Weeks 7-12): The second half of the course will be focused on the creation of your final project. As described above, you will be asked to present your proposed project in Weeks 7/8. Students are expected to give active feedback about their peers' proposals during class. The following weeks will either serve as check-ins on your projects (Weeks 9 and 11) to give you a chance to crowdsource ideas and troubleshoot emerging issues, or as presentation of peer feedback (Weeks 10 and 12). *Your weekly tasks in Part 2 are to prepare your proposal presentations (Weeks 7/8), prepare your drafts for submission to your peers (Weeks 9 and 11), and prepare a written and oral presentation of your feedback to your peers (Weeks 10 and 12). You should be actively working on your final project throughout Part 2.*

Attendance

Due to the nature of this class, I cannot facilitate a hybrid course. Students cannot attend class meetings online. You are expected to attend in person whenever possible.

Reading list

Materials will be posted to OnQ. There are no costs to acquire the readings; you should be able to access each reading through OnQ or the Queen's Library. You are expected to read all the assigned readings before class and be prepared to discuss each. These readings are intended as foundational materials; it is expected that you will have to read beyond this list to prepare your final project and its accompanying deliverables.

1. Cheng, T.W., Mills, K.L., & Pfeifer, J.H. (2024). Revisiting adolescence as a sensitive period for sociocultural processing. *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*, 164, 105820.
2. Bailen, N.H., Green, L.M., & Thompson, R.J. (2019). Understanding emotion in adolescents: A review of emotional frequency, intensity, instability, and clarity. *Emotion Review*, 11(1), 63-73.
3. Nook, E.C., Sasse, S.F., Lambert, H.K., McLaughlin, K.A., & Somerville, L.H. (2018). The nonlinear development of emotion differentiation: Granular emotional experience is low in adolescence. *Psychological Science*, 29(8), 1346-1357.
4. Silvers, J.A. (2022). Adolescence as a pivotal period for emotion regulation development. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 44, 258-263.
5. Sahi, R.S., Eisenberger, N.I., & Silvers, J.A. (2023). Peer facilitation of emotion regulation in adolescence. *Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience*, 62, 101262.
6. Savina, E., & Wan, K.P. (2017). Cultural pathways to socio-emotional development and learning. *Journal of Relationships Research*, 8(e19), 1-9.
7. Cracco, E., Goossens, L., Braet, C. (2017). Emotion regulation across childhood and adolescence: Evidence for a maladaptive shift in adolescence. *European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 26, 909-921.
8. Hofmans, L., & van den Bos, W. (2022). Social learning across adolescence: A Bayesian neurocognitive perspective. *Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience*, 58, 101151.

9. Van Hoorn, J., Crone, E.A., & Van Leijenhorst, L. (2016). Hanging out with the right crowd: Peer influence on risk-taking behavior in adolescence. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 27(1), 189-200.
10. Guyer, A.E., Silk, J.S., & Nelson, E.E. (2016). The neurobiology of the emotional adolescent: From the inside out. *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*, 70, 74-85.
11. Doom, J.R., Hostinar, C.E., VanZomeren-Dohm, A.A., & Gunnar, M.R. (2015). The roles of puberty and age in explaining the diminished effectiveness of parental buffering of HPA reactivity and recovery in adolescence. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, 59, 102-111.

6. Accommodations and accessibility

If you have accommodations or accessibility needs that it would be helpful for me to know about, please let me know in advance/as relevant so that I can best support your success in the course.

7. Miscellaneous

Turnitin: This course makes use of Turnitin, a third-party application that helps maintain standards of excellence in academic integrity. Normally, students will be required to submit their course assignments to through onQ to Turnitin. In doing so, students' work will be included as source documents in the Turnitin reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. Turnitin is a suite of tools that provide instructors with information about the authenticity of submitted work and facilitates the process of grading. Turnitin compares submitted files against its extensive database of content, and produces a similarity report and a similarity score for each assignment. A similarity score is the percentage of a document that is similar to content held within the database. Turnitin does not determine if an instance of plagiarism has occurred. Instead, it gives instructors the information they need to determine the authenticity of work as a part of a larger process. Please read [Turnitin's Privacy Pledge, Privacy Policy, and Terms of Service](#), which governs users' relationship with Turnitin. Also, please note that Turnitin uses cookies and other tracking technologies; however, in its service contract with Queen's Turnitin has agreed that neither Turnitin nor its third-party partners will use data collected through cookies or other tracking technologies for marketing or advertising purposes. For further information about how you can exercise control over cookies, see [Turnitin's Privacy Policy](#). Turnitin may provide other services that are not connected to the purpose for which Queen's University has engaged Turnitin. Your independent use of Turnitin's other services is subject solely to Turnitin's Terms of Service and Privacy Policy, and Queen's University has no liability for any independent interaction you choose to have with Turnitin.

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