

**The Psychological Development of Black Women Spring 2012**  
**EDP 363M/AFR 374D/WGS 340**

**Instructor: Dr. Keisha Bentley**

**Class Dates:** Tues/Thurs 11:00-12:30p

**Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00-3:30p and/or by appointment**

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**Teaching Assistant: Desiré Taylor**

**Office Hours:** by appointment

**Email is the fastest and most efficient way to contact Desiré & me!!!**

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**Texts:**

**All REQUIRED readings are on Blackboard**

*Suggested book if you are interested in working with Black girls: Belgrave, F. Z. (2009). African American girls: Reframing perceptions and changing experiences. Dordrecht, New York: Springer.*

**Course Description:**

Using a worldview that utilizes Womanism/Black feminist, Africentrism and ecological frameworks, this course will focus on the psychological and social issues that promote and impede the optimal lifespan development of Black women.

**Accommodations:**

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-6441 TTY.

**Cultural Diversity in the United States Flag:**

This course carries the flag for Cultural Diversity in the United States. Cultural Diversity courses are designed to increase your familiarity with the variety and richness of the American cultural experience. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one U.S. cultural group that has experienced persistent marginalization.

**Course Objectives:**

To foster an in-depth, critical discussion of Black women's development, this course will investigate multiple dimensions of philosophical, historical, theoretical, empirical and application matters in the following areas: the importance of African worldviews within African-American cultures, the impact of racism and sexism upon psychological adjustment, the socialization and intersection of racial, gender and sexual identities. A range of contemporary issues will be actively discussed including socioeconomic status, political climate, social norms, gender/ethnic identity, mental health, family dynamics, academic achievement and social adjustment into a unifying, comprehensive framework. *Active student participation is not only encouraged but also expected.*

**Course Ground Rules:**

It is expected that each student will:

- Be courteous and allow speakers to complete her/his thought(s) before speaking
- Be respectful of the opinions of others, even if there is a disagreement
- Be involved by participating in discussions and activities, but not dominating either
- Be an active participant and learner who is interested in increasing her/his knowledge base
- Come to class having completed the readings and prepared to participate in discussions & activities
- Maintain academic integrity – more simply, you will not cheat on an assignment or plagiarize a paper. Doing so will result in immediate failure of this course.

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Please read the syllabus carefully. The content of this syllabus is subject to revision at anytime. Students will be given notice of any changes in advance. You are responsible for knowing about changes whether or not you are present in class at the time of the announcement.

***Grading Scale:***

Grade Percentage:	
10%	Attendance, Participation & Subject
15%	Reading Discussions
25%	Mid-Term Exam
25%	Group Project
25%	Final Exam

93-100% A	90-92% A-	87-89% B+	83-86% B	80-82% B-
77-79% C+	73-76% C	70-72% C-	60-69% D	Below 60% F

**Attendance** is extremely important; class discussion is a critical component of this course. As previously stated, each student is expected to *participate* through the reading presentations, in class assignments and discussions.

**Reading Discussions & Reflections:** Students will choose 2 of the readings for which they will lead the class discussion and submit a **2-page double-spaced** reaction paper. The paper will include a brief summary of the reading, your interpretation or reaction and **2 discussion questions**. Student Led discussions will occur at the beginning of class. **Each student will conduct/submit 2 discussions. 10 Points each.**

**The Mid-Term Exam is cumulative. March 8, 2012**

**Final Project-Group (2-3 students/group) Research Project**

**Due May 1<sup>st</sup> or May 3<sup>rd</sup> at the beginning of class-depending on your scheduled presentation date.**

Group members will agree on a topic related to the development of Black women and **submit a 2 or 3 sentence synopsis for approval by March 1<sup>st</sup>**. This research project must address how the selected topic impacts Black women or girls in at least two developmental stages. This project will utilize **at least 10 references** (from journals, psychological books and class readings) and include interviews of **4-5** Black women that are in at least 2 different developmental stages (*no more than two can be in the same developmental stage as you*).

Your questions should reflect the topic that your group has chosen. Let the person know (and their parent for minors) that you would like to ask them a few questions about their experiences as a Black woman (or girl) as it relates to your topic. *Keep in mind your subject's developmental stage, and level of comprehension when asking questions. Respect their privacy! Do not use real names in papers submitted!*

Because infants and young children are difficult to communicate with, you can select from the following developmental stages:

- Middle childhood, 7-11 years
- Adolescence, 15-19 years
- Middle adulthood-I, 26-40 years
- Late adulthood, 61 + years
- Early Adolescence, 12-14years
- Early adulthood, 19-25 years
- Middle adulthood-II, 41-60 years

**Your project submission will include the following components**

(11-12 pages total, not including references & appendix):

1. Title Page
2. Abstract
3. Introduction of the topic, 1 page
4. Literature Review, 3-4 pages

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- a. Includes a theoretical framework that you are basing your research strategy upon
- b. Includes relevant research on your topic and how your topic affects Black women in the specific developmental stages of your interviewees
5. Research Objectives/Hypothesis, ½-1 page
6. Method Section, 1-2 pages
  - a. Subject information
  - b. A list or summary of your questions
  - c. Explanation of your procedures
7. Results, 3-4 pages
  - a. Summarize your interviewees' responses to questions
  - b. Summarize your interviewees' reactions to questions
  - c. Compare responses/reaction within and between developmental stages.
8. Discussion, 2 pages
  - a. Explain how the interviewee's responses fit or does not fit into your theoretical framework and existing research presented in the literature review.
9. References
  - a. At least 10 references (total) from journals, psychological books and class readings
  - b. In APA format
10. Appendix
  - a. Your questions and each interviewees responses
    - i. Although I suggest that you record and take notes of the interviews, exact transcriptions are not necessary, but annotated responses are required.

**Final Projects include a group presentation that discusses your findings.** Each member of the group is required to present on their specific contributions (3-4 minutes per person is allotted for each group). **After submitting your paper, you will complete a peer and self-assessment that will be included as 5% of your specific grade on the project.**

#### ***Subject Pool Requirement:***

This course has a requirement that you participate in some form of research. The requirement is aligned with the goals of the course because we will be discussing concepts and findings that have come from research with all sorts of human participants, children, young adults, and older people. It only seems fair that we contribute to the ongoing research going on associated with Educational Psychology. In addition, it is my hope that you will learn something about how research is done and about some particular research projects by participating, So the requirement has a personal benefit as well as a general benefit to the research enterprise.

The requirement itself is that you must participate in no more than 4 hours of research distributed across no more than 3 studies. This means that you may do 2 studies of 2 hours, or 2 studies of 90 minutes and 1 study of 1 hour, or some combination like that. Occasionally, you may be assigned to 3 studies that don't add up to 4 hours but not to worry. That will still fulfill the requirement. (By the way, you will be assigned to the studies in which you can participate, so you need not worry about how to add up the hours to fulfill the requirement.)

One bit of information that is most important: Even though you are required to fulfill the subject pool requirement in order to get credit for this course (otherwise I will be forced to give you an incomplete), there are actually TWO ways to fulfill the requirement:

1. You may participate in research as assigned by the Subject Pool system;
2. If you do not want to participate in research, you may fulfill the requirement by completing an alternate assignment that will take you about 4 hours to complete. This alternate assignment involves reading a research article or 2 and responding to an essay-type question about it. It is important for you to know that you have every right to choose this second option and there will be no repercussion against you for choosing it. Although I believe that it is better for your education and the good of the field to participate in actual research studies, I want to reassure you that taking this second option is fully within your rights.

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One final thing about the subject pool: It is run through the central office of the department of Educational Psychology. The TA assigned to run the subject pool is Summer Lane. Her email address is summerlane76@gmail.com. She will be added to our Blackboard site for the class, and so, do not be surprised if you get an email from her via the Blackboard system. There is a faculty member who supervises the subject pool and who arbitrates any final decisions or problems that come up. Her name is Diane Schallert, dschallert@mail.utexas.edu. The proper sequence of contact related to any subject pool issue would be to contact the researcher of the study to which you've been assigned, then Summer, then Dr. Schallert.

***The Final Exam is cumulative. Monday, May 14, 9:00-12:00 noon***

### **Note on All Assignments:**

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**All assignments will be collected at the BEGINNING of class.** Assignments submitted after the first five minutes of class will be reduced by half a letter grade and those submitted after class will be reduced a full letter grade for each calendar day it is late. *No rewriting of assignments will be allowed since there will be ample time and opportunity to ask questions about each assignment during class time and between classes.*

All written assignments should be written in 12-point (Arial or Times New Roman) font, double-spaced, with 1" margins on all sides and page numbers. Cover sheets, appendices and reference pages are not included in the page count. Assignments should meet the stated *minimum or maximum* page limit. All written assignments should make reference to the readings and theoretical frameworks in this course. The content of your papers and how you present your written thoughts are important. Therefore, students must carefully proofread and spell-check their written assignments. Writing assistance can be found at the Undergraduate Writing Center; <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>.

All papers will be submitted according to APA style, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. *This style is of particular importance for in-text citation and the representation of sources in the reference section.* A digestible APA resource can be found at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01>.

### **Academic Integrity:**

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**Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty:** Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information please visit the Student Judicial Services Web site: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>.