



EDF 7118
Lifespan Development
84282 100
Fall 2026

Instructor Name

Sarah Kiefer

University Course Description

Multidisciplinary overview of contemporary lifespan development theory and research, focusing on physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and psychological factors influencing the developing individual, and issues facing educational research and practice.

Course Requisites

Prerequisite(s):

Corequisite(s):

Course Format

This in-person course will include small- and large-group discussions and a range of learner-centered activities.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Understand and evaluate major theories and research perspectives in lifespan development.
2. Learn to analyze domains of lifespan development (physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and moral).
3. Learn to analyze psychological aspects of lifespan development (identity and intimacy, motivation and achievement, risk and resilience, positive development).
4. Learn to analyze lifespan development in various contexts and acquire an understanding of development across the lifespan.
5. Apply lifespan development research and theory to your professional practice and real-world contexts.
6. Identify, analyze, and evaluate lifespan research by conducting a literature review.
7. Conduct and interpret a life story interview using lifespan development theory.

Course Objectives

The course learning objectives are to:

1. Identify and analyze major theories and research perspectives in lifespan development.
2. Analyze domains of lifespan development (physical, cognitive, social, emotional, moral).
3. Analyze psychological aspects of lifespan development (identity and intimacy, motivation, risk and resilience, positive development).
4. Identify and analyze various contexts and individual differences across development.
5. Apply lifespan development research and theory to professional practice and real-world contexts.

Required Texts and/or Readings and Course Materials

Required readings include a textbook that provides a broad overview of Lifespan Development and journal articles. All journal articles are posted on the Canvas course website and are available at the USF library. The Berk textbook is available through the USF bookstore and other vendors, and it provides descriptions of biological, cognitive, social, emotional, and psychological aspects of development, with many examples and applications. All written assignments in the course are expected to adhere to APA 7th style.

1. **Textbook:** Berk, L. E. (2018). *Exploring lifespan development* (4th). Pearson Education.

- **ISBN-13:** 9781071895221
- **ISBN-10:** 0134421159
- **Low-cost Follett Access ISBN#:** 9781071895245
- **Loose-leaf ISBN#:** 9781071895559

The textbook is available through the USF Bookstore and online distributors.

1. **American Psychological Association (2019).** *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.).

- Free access through *Academic Writer* via the USF Library: <https://academicwriter-apa-org.ezproxy.lib.usf.edu/> Create an account with USF id. Manual: <https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/2f9f8786/files/uploaded/aw-pub-manual.pdf>

Supplementary (Optional) Texts and Materials

Additional course readings and materials are provided on Canvas Modules.

How to Succeed in this Course

Successful students should follow several practical tips:

- Check Canvas and emails daily for announcements.
- Allocate enough time each week for reading, thinking, and assignments.
- Complete all readings and submit assignments on time.
- Engage in online discussion and communication to gain insights into the course material.

Grading Scale

Grading Scale (%)

94 – 100 A

90 – 93 A-

87 – 89 B+

84 – 86 B
 80 – 83 B-
 77 – 79 C+
 74 – 76 C
 70 – 73 C-
 67 – 69 D+
 64 – 66 D
 60 – 63 D-
 0 – 59 F

Grade Categories and Weights

Grade Categories and Weights		
Assessment	Percentage	Date Due
Reading Responses	24%	Complete 6 out of 7 responses
Discussion Facilitation	15%	Individually selected
Lifespan Development Project	25%	Monday, November 11
Literature Review	5%	Monday, December 2
Life Story Presentation	25%	Monday, December 9
Life Story Interview Paper		
Participation and Attendance	6%	Evaluated throughout
Total Possible	100%	

Instructor Feedback Policy & Grade Dissemination

Grades are earned according to a straight grading scale; grades will not be assigned on a curve. Grades will be awarded based on the percentage of possible points attained. No grade below "C" will be accepted toward a graduate degree. This includes C- grades. Educational Psychology students

need to earn a 'B' or above in the course for it to count towards their degree. Feedback and grades will be distributed via the "Grades" in Canvas. Please contact me to clarify any feedback or ask a question about your grades.

Major Topics and Course Schedule

Course Schedule

Course Schedule

Date Topics

Assignments

Part I

Overview of Lifespan Development Theory and Research

How can we gain valuable insights from the study of lifespan development?

1	Aug 25 Lifespan Development: Theory, Research, Context	3
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readings

Part II

Stages of Lifespan Development

What do we need to know about physical, cognitive, social, & emotional development across the lifespan?

2	Sept 1 Labor Day – No Class!	
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3	Sept 8 Prenatal Development, Birth, & the Newborn	2
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readings

4	Sept 15 Infancy and Toddlerhood: The First Two Years	
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3 readings

5	Sept 22 Library Session with Susan Ariew	Library
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Modules &
Library Modules/Quizzes: Conducting a Lit Review;
Quizzes; Library

Creating Manageable Topics & Research Questions	Concept
Sheet	

6 Sept 29 Early Childhood: Two to Six Years
3 readings; *RR1/DF1*

7 Oct 6. Middle Childhood: Six to Eleven Years
3 readings; *RR2/DF2*

8 Oct 13 Adolescence: The Transition to Adulthood
3 readings; *RR3/DF3*

9 Oct 20 Early Adulthood (*FASP Conference Oct 15-18*)
3 readings; *RR4/DF4*

10 Oct 27 Middle Adulthood	3 readings
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11 Nov 3 Late Adulthood; The End of Life readings	3
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Lit Review Peer Review

Part III

Psychological Aspects of Lifespan Development

How can psychology guide us in understanding development across the lifespan?

12 Nov 10 Identity and Intimacy
3 readings; *RR5/DF5*

13 Nov 17 Motivation and Achievement
3 readings; *RR6/DF6*

Lit Review

Due

14 Nov 24 Risk and Resilience, Positive Development
3 readings; *RR7/DF7*

15 Dec 1 Blue Zones and Longevity
readings; **Life Story**

3

Conclusion & Celebration

Presentations

Dec 8 **Life Story Paper Due**

Note: *RR* denotes reading response (select 6 total). *DF* denotes discussion facilitation (select 1).

The instructor reserves the right to change this schedule, including reading assignments and due dates. However, advanced notice will always be provided if changes are made.

USF Core Syllabus Policies

USF has a set of central policies related to student recording class sessions, academic integrity and grievances, student accessibility services, academic disruption, religious observances, academic continuity, food insecurity, pregnancy and related conditions, and sexual harassment that **apply to all courses at USF**. Be sure to review these online:

<https://www.usf.edu/provost/faculty-success/resources-policies-forms/core-syllabus-policy-statements.aspx>

Student Recordings

Florida Statute 1004.097 Free Expression on Campus

Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal, educational use (USF Policy 10-048). A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach enrolled students about a particular subject. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty member is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation

and class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the USF Student Conduct Code.

Course Policies: Grades

Late Work Policy: Assignments submitted late will incur a penalty: 10% off for 1-24 hours late, and an additional 10% off for each day after 24 hours. Assignments will not be accepted more than 7 days late. If you have outstanding circumstances that will affect timely submission, please contact me beforehand, and we will discuss it.

Grades of "Incomplete": The university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. An Incomplete grade ("I") is exceptional and granted at the instructor's discretion only when students are unable to complete course requirements due to illness or other circumstances beyond their control. The course instructor and student must complete and sign the "I" Grade Contract Form, which describes the work to be completed, the due date, and the grade the student will earn, including a zero for any incomplete assignments. The due date can be negotiated and extended by the student/instructor, provided it does not exceed two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses from the original due date for that course. An "I" grade not cleared within the two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses (including the summer semester) will revert to the grade noted on the contract. Students must request an incomplete grade by the last day of class.

Grades of "Incomplete"

An Incomplete grade ("I") is exceptional and granted at the instructor's discretion only when students are unable to complete course requirements due to illness or other circumstances beyond their control. The course instructor and student must complete and sign the "I" Grade Contract Form that describes the work to be completed, the date it is due, and the grade the student would earn factoring in a zero for all incomplete assignments. The due date can be negotiated and extended by student/instructor as long as it does not exceed two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses from the original date grades were due for that course. An "I" grade not

cleared within the two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses (including summer semester) will revert to the grade noted on the contract.

Campus Free Expression

It is fundamental to the University of South Florida's mission to support an environment where divergent ideas, theories, and philosophies can be openly exchanged and critically evaluated. Consistent with these principles, this course may involve discussion of ideas that you find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even offensive.

In the instructional setting, ideas are intended to be presented in an objective manner and not as an endorsement of what you should personally believe. "Objective" means that the idea(s) presented can be tested by critical peer review and rigorous debate, and that the idea(s) is supported by credible research.

In this course you may be asked to engage with complex ideas and to demonstrate an understanding of the ideas. Understanding and engaging with an idea does not require you to believe it or to agree with it.

Course Policies: Technology and Media

Email: Emails about individual concerns will be addressed as soon as possible, generally within 24-48 business hours. Emails asking questions about the course in general may be shared via email or in class if other members may benefit.

Email, Discussion Board, and Message Guidelines: (1) Use the subject line effectively by using a meaningful line of what your email or discussion is about. (2) Keep your emails and postings related to the course content. You should not post anything personal on a discussion board, unless is requested by the instructor. (3) Any personal, course, or confidential issues should be directly communicated to the instructor via email. The discussion boards are public spaces; therefore, any issues should not be posted there.

Canvas: You are responsible for checking Canvas **daily** for updates and announcements. This course is offered via USF's learning management system (LMS), Canvas. If you need help learning how to perform various

tasks related to this course in Canvas, please consult the Canvas help guides or contact USF's IT department at (813) 974-1222 or help@usf.edu.

Laptop Usage: Reliable access to a computer (and Internet) is necessary; all assignments are submitted via Canvas. The Canvas app on a handheld device may not be as effective/reliable.

Notes/Student Recording: Course materials are provided for students enrolled in this course to facilitate learning. The instructor does not give permission for course lecture notes and other original materials to be reproduced for the purposes of commercial sale, mass reproduction, and Internet postings; to use to teach other courses, to give to other students or others NOT enrolled in this course, or for other reasons than to facilitate learning for students currently enrolled in this course. All unauthorized recordings of class are prohibited. Recordings that accommodate student needs must be approved in advance by the instructor and may be used for personal purposes only during the semester; redistribution is prohibited.

Course Policies: Student Expectations

Health and Wellness

Your health is a priority at the University of South Florida. We encourage members of our community to look out for each other and to reach out for help if someone is in need. If you or someone you know is in distress, please make a referral at www.usf.edu/sos so that the Student Outreach & Support can contact and provide helpful resources to the student in distress. A 24-hour licensed mental healthcare professional, offered through the counseling center, is available by phone at 813-974-2831, option 3. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

Title IX Policy

USF is committed to fostering a safe and respectful learning environment, free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment, in accordance with Title IX and USF Policy 0-004. If a student shares an experience of sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, or relationship violence with a USF employee (including

faculty), that employee will notify the Title IX Office. This allows the Title IX Office to send the student an email with information about support resources and options—if it is safe to do so. Students are not required to respond to this email. The Title IX Office is a private resource. Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis to provide students with support measures. To speak to a confidential resource, students may contact USF Center for Victim Advocacy at 813-974-5757. Confidential resources do not notify the Title IX Office unless the student requests it. For more information about Title IX, available resources, or to make a report, please visit www.usf.edu/title-ix.

Course Hero / Chegg Policy

The USF Policy on Academic Integrity specifies that students may not use websites that enable cheating, such as by uploading or downloading material for this purpose. This does apply specifically to Chegg.com and CourseHero.com – almost any use of these websites (including uploading proprietary materials) constitutes a violation of the academic integrity policy.

Professionalism Policy

Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPods, etc. must be silenced during all classroom and lab lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom/lab immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade.

Turnitin.com

In this course, turnitin.com may be utilized. Turnitin is an automated system which instructors may use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you may be expected to submit all assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the

assignment. For a more detailed look at this process visit <http://www.turnitin.com>.

Netiquette Guidelines

- Act professionally in the way you communicate. Treat your instructors and peers with respect, the same way you would do in a face-to-face environment. Respect other people's ideas and be constructive when explaining your views about points you may not agree with.
- Be sensitive. Be respectful and sensitive when sharing your ideas and opinions. There will be people in your class with different linguistic backgrounds, political and religious beliefs or other general differences.
- Proofread and check spelling. Doing this before sending an email or posting a thread on a discussion board will allow you to make sure your message is clear and thoughtful. Avoid the use of all capital letters, it can be perceived as if you are shouting, and it is more difficult to read.
- Keep your communications focused and stay on topic. Complete your ideas before changing the subject. By keeping the message on focus you allow the readers to easily get your idea or answers they are looking for.
- Be clear with your message. Avoid using humor or sarcasm. Since people can't see your expressions or hear your tone of voice, meaning can be misinterpreted.

Email and Discussion Board Guidelines

- Use the subject line effectively by using a meaningful line of what your email or discussion is about.
- Keep your emails and postings related to the course content. You should not post anything personal on a discussion board unless it is requested by the instructor.
- Any personal, course or confidential issues should be directly communicated to the instructor via email. The discussion boards are public spaces; therefore, any issues should not be posted there.

End of Semester Student Evaluations

All classes at USF make use of an online system for students to provide feedback to the University regarding the course. These surveys will be made available at the end of the semester, and the University will notify you by email when the response window opens. Your participation is highly encouraged and valued.

Food and Drink Policy (for in-campus sessions only).

Please adhere to the firm policy of no beverages (other than bottled/capped water), food, tobacco products, or like items in the classroom. Your understanding of the necessity for this policy and cooperation will be greatly appreciated. This policy will be strictly enforced.

Learning Support and Campus Offices

Academic Accommodations

Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in order to receive academic accommodations. For additional information about academic accommodations and resources, you can visit the SAS website.

[SAS website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[SAS website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Academic Support Services

The USF Office of Student Success coordinates and promotes university-wide efforts to enhance undergraduate and graduate student success. For a comprehensive list of academic support services available to all USF students, please visit the [Office of Student Success website](#).

Canvas Technical Support

If you have technical difficulties in Canvas, you can find access to the Canvas guides and video resources in the “Canvas Help” page on the homepage of your Canvas course. You can also contact the help desk by calling 813-974-1222 in Tampa or emailing help@usf.edu.

[USF IT Services](#)

Center for Victim Advocacy

The [Center for Victim Advocacy](#) empowers survivors of crime, violence, or abuse by promoting the restoration of decision making, by advocating for their rights, and by offering support and resources. Contact information is available online.

Counseling Center

The Counseling Center promotes the wellbeing of the campus community by providing culturally sensitive counseling, consultation, prevention, and training that enhances student academic and personal success. Contact information is available online.

[Counseling Center website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[Counseling Center website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Tutoring

The Tutoring Hub offers free tutoring in several subjects to USF undergraduates. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information, email asctampa@usf.edu.

[Tutoring website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[Tutoring website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Writing Studio

The Writing Studio is a free resource for USF undergraduate and graduate students. At the Writing Studio, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you, at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, email: writingstudio@usf.edu.

[Writing studio website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout Site.](#)

[Writing studio website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Student Ombuds Office

Florida Statute 1006.51 and Florida Board of Governors Regulation 6.011 require that all public institutions provide ombuds services to students. The Student Ombuds Office at USF is a confidential, impartial, informal, and independent

resource for students experiencing challenges related to the university. Ombuds can help students safely explore options, clarify processes, and consider next steps. [Learn more or make an appointment at usf.edu/student-ombuds.](https://usf.edu/student-ombuds)