

PSYED 2542—EVIDENCE-BASED INTERVENTIONS IN REAL WORLD CONTEXTS I

Section 1290

Fall 2018

Tuesdays 1:00pm – 3:40pm

5700 Posvar Hall (WWPH)

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Office Hours: by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course provides an introduction to intervention and prevention efforts designed to improve educational, mental health, and behavioral outcomes in children, adolescents, young adults, and families. By the end of the course, you should be able to: (1) conceptualize interventions from the level of the individual child/student to the level of public policy, including interventions in between these levels that focus on families, classrooms, and organizations as the primary target of change; (2) apply multiple theories and practices of human development, social intervention, and prevention science to such programs; and (3) act as an educated and critical consumer of the empirical and evaluation literature in multiple areas of intervention. The overall goal of the course is to add to your existing set of skills in service provision, research, and the ability to conceptualize and develop new programs that foster the well-being of children and youth.

The course relies on several perspectives concerning human development and intervention/prevention—ecological theories of development, developmental psychopathology, positive psychology—as theoretical lenses on various interventions. The first part of the course focuses on key foundational theoretical perspectives from psychological science (e.g., developmental psychopathology, positive psychology), key principles of prevention science and social intervention, concepts of risk and resilience in development, positive psychology theory, and methodological/design and (some) statistical issues. In the second part of the course, we will progress through an ecological overview of social intervention/prevention efforts that target change at several levels of analysis: (1) individual, (2) family, (3) school, and (4) macrosystem (e.g., media and public policy). Throughout the course, the ways in which social interventions can be most responsive to diverse cultures and communities will be emphasized.

COURSE FORMAT

Course meetings will be a combination of lecture and seminar-style learning. Seminar-style includes whole and small group discussions, individual and small group activities, and individual reflection on course content and student learning. Additionally, the course will incorporate online discussions through Courseweb (courseweb.pitt.edu).

Pitt's Courseweb interface (courseweb.pitt.edu) will be used for course announcements, content material postings, student submission of materials, and providing supplemental materials. Students are expected to check Blackboard several times a week.

REQUIRED READING

All readings will be provided on Courseweb at least one week prior to the assigned class period. There is no text to purchase.

Approach the readings in an active, systematic, and deliberate way (skipping occasional paragraphs or reading the texts out-of-order is often acceptable). Read to understand, not to memorize. After you complete a reading, you should be able to summarize the main argument and evaluate the research evidence presented in support of that argument.

For purposes of summarization, ask yourself the following: (a) What issues are of most concern to the author? (b) Why does the author think these issues are important? (c) What are the conceptual/theoretical underpinnings (framework) of the authors' work? That is, what theoretical assumptions guide the questions posed and the interpretation and integration of findings? (d) What are the main points made by the author and what is the most critical evidence presented by the author in support of these points?

For purposes of evaluation, ask yourself the following: (a) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the authors' work (e.g., its theoretical or empirical contribution, the credibility/tenability of the assumptions, appropriateness of the research design, measures, and sample selection criteria relative to the question under investigation, the soundness of the interpretation of the data)? (b) How would you improve on the authors' work? (c) What questions provoked by the authors' work merit further study? (d) What research designs or methods would be most fruitful in addressing these questions in future investigations?

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Participation and Attendance** — Students are expected to attend class and participate in class discussions. And while there will be designated discussion leaders, everyone is expected to read the required material prior to each class. Please come to class prepared to engage in a thoughtful and scholarly discussion of the readings.
2. **Discussion Seeds** — In advance of each class meeting, everyone will prepare a *discussion seed*. The discussion seeds should be about 1-page (double spaced) and raise 1 or 2 different questions that arise from the readings. I expect that the seeds attempt to make links between the readings for the week and try to tie the current week's topic with topics covered in other weeks. That is, discussion seeds should be based on a synthesis of the readings. It would also be acceptable to state an argument that you derive from the articles and ask if others agree. You could also propose an extension of the current work or an additional research question. Another approach is to consider how these theories can be applied in the real world, or how teachers, parents, clinicians can use these insights to help their students, children, or patients. In sum, the content and scope of your discussion seeds

should be geared toward stimulating a good discussion of the readings and related issues. Discussion seeds should go beyond definitional issues or areas of confusion (we will address basic questions at the start of class so please do not include them in your discussion seeds). ***Weekly responses must be submitted to Courseweb by 5PM on Sunday prior to class. Late responses will not receive credit.***

3. **Leading Class Discussions** — Working in small groups, students will be asked to sign up to be discussion leaders during the semester. Students will be responsible for collecting and organizing discussion seeds, assisting in moderating the discussion, and expanding on ideas about the weekly readings. Students are also encouraged to share additional insight from other readings, current events, personal experiences, or information gathered from outside experiences (research and practice). Plan for your discussions to be **20 to 30 minutes**. Be as creative as possible!
4. **Critique Paper** — Each student will individually write a two-page (maximum) critique of an empirical article that incorporates mediators, moderators, or both.
5. **Final Research Paper** — Working in small groups (2 to 3) throughout the semester, students will write a short (10-page) research proposal for an intervention designed to help prevent or mitigate a problem that children, adolescents, or families may encounter on an intervention/prevention program.
 - a. *Part 1: Final Paper Plan* – Decide on a problem that you’d like to solve through an intervention. Define the problem. Define the intervention solution. What level will you be intervening upon (individual, family, organization, community)? What is the outcome you want to achieve? In one page, your group should provide brief answers to these questions. This exercise is a helpful way for you to start thinking about the literature/studies you will need to review for your annotated bibliography.
 - b. *Part 2: Annotated Bibliography* – An annotated bibliography is an organized list of citations to books, journal articles, or other documents. You will need to research, read, and write annotations for a **minimum of 6-to-8** sources. For this project, you should primarily use scholarly research sources (i.e., journal articles, book chapters, books, legal documents); other sources (e.g., Wikipedia, TED Talks) are not acceptable. Students will be given a template for how to review each of 8 sources. Your group will work together to find and summarize articles pertaining to the final paper.
 - c. *Part 3: Mid-Term Paper* – The purpose of this paper is to give you an opportunity to start working on your final paper and get early feedback before turning in the complete document. This mid-term paper should include the first three parts of your final paper (problem statement, literature review, and theory of change). The mid-term paper should be about 5 double-spaced pages.
 - d. *Part 4: Final Paper* – The final paper will include all the elements of the mid-term paper (i.e., problem statement, literature review, theory of change) in addition to sections on

intervention/program description, implementation, and evaluation. The final paper should be about 10 double-spaced pages (not including references and figures/tables).

6. **Final Paper Presentation** – Your final paper will be accompanied by a 30-minute presentation during the last two weeks of class. Your group presentation should cover the main points of your paper. Specifically, you should provide a clear statement about the purpose of the paper (i.e., problem statement), a synthesis of the key literatures surrounding your topic and the intervention, a theory of change, program description, and evaluation. View this as an opportunity to teach your classmates about an important topic in prevention research. So, be as creative as possible in your presentation—feel free to include videos, sample sessions from the intervention, and other activities.

*****A note about group projects:** I know that group writing assignments can be challenging. And I know that most of you probably have had bad experiences working in groups. But cooperative learning can also lead to a wonderfully productive experience. There are things we can do to increase the likelihood of a good and productive experience. Research on cooperative learning highlights the following: clear and public group goals, individual accountability, specific roles (not everyone does the same thing), trust, and delegation. We can talk more about this in class.

COURSE GRADING

There are a total of 100 points for this class.

Assignment	Points
Discussion Seeds (10 of 11 total)	10 (1 each)
Lead Class Discussion	15
Individual Critique Paper	15
Final Paper Plan	5
Annotated Bibliography	10
Mid-Term Paper	10
Final Presentation	15
Final Paper	20
Total	100

Grades will be calculated as follows:

A+	97-100 points	C	73-76.9 points
A	93-96.9 points	C-	70-72.9 points
A-	90-92.9 points	D+	67-69.9 points
B+	87-89.9 points	D	63-66.9 points
B	83-86.9 points	D-	60-62.9 points
B-	80-82.9 points	F	< 60 points
C+	77-79.9 points		

Total points will be rounded to nearest whole. So, 0.01 to 0.49 will be rounded down, and 0.50 to 0.99 will be rounded up.

THE FINE PRINT

Grades and Assignments

In class, you will receive more explicit instructions for completing each assignment. Please ask if you have questions regarding how you will be evaluated in this course. I am happy to discuss your learning goals and progress toward them at any time, though the earlier in the semester the better. Please note, however, that I do not discuss grades over email, due to the sensitive nature of grades and laws about student rights and privacy. If you would like to speak to me about such matters, we can talk in person. If you feel there is a specific, technical error in the grading, I will review that particular concern. However, grades, in general, are non-negotiable. I am, however, happy to discuss ways in which you may enhance your learning and performance in this course.

Technology in Class

I feel ambivalent about students using laptops in class. On the one hand, they can be helpful tools in your learning. On the other hand, Facebook and Instagram are only a click away, and they can hinder learning and prevent engaging class discussions. I expect you to manage your attention productively in class. This means limiting Instagram-checking and playing games online. But it also means that when “Google-able” topics come up in class discussion, I encourage you to search and share.

As for cell phones: Please silence them during class, and only use them in an emergency. There are breaks during each class where you will have the opportunity to use your phone if you'd like.

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to adhere to the standards of academic honesty. Any student engaged in cheating, plagiarism, or other acts of academic dishonesty would be subject to disciplinary action. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity <http://www.provost.pitt.edu/info/ai1.html>. A minimum sanction of a zero score for the assignment will be imposed for any assignments that violate these obligations, with possible additional consequences, including failure of the course for the semester.

Students with Disabilities

I wish to fully include all students in this course. If you have a disability requiring testing accommodations or other classroom modifications, you need to notify the course instructor and Disability Resources and Services (DRS) no later than the 2nd week of the term. You will need to provide documentation from DRS of your disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations. To contact Disability Resources and Services, call 412-648-7890 (Voice or TTD) or e-mail drsrecep@pitt.edu to schedule an appointment. The DRS office is located in 140 William Pitt Union.

Statement on Classroom Recording

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any

such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

Additional Student Resources

- *Technology/Computer Help Desk*: 412-624-HELP [4357] (<http://technology.pitt.edu/>)
- *Student Health Services*: 412-383-1800 (<http://www.studhlth.pitt.edu/>)
- *Counseling Center*: 412-648-7930 (<http://www.counseling.pitt.edu/>)
- *The Writing Center*: 412-624-6556 (<http://www.writingcenter.pitt.edu/>)
- *Disability Resources and Services*: 412-648-7890 (<http://www.drs.pitt.edu/>)
- *Office of International Services*: 412-624-7120 (<http://www.ois.pitt.edu/>)

COURSE CALENDAR

Class Date	Topics and Readings	Assignments & Activities
Wk1, Aug 28	Introduction to Course / Ecological Systems Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review syllabus (in class) • Watch and discuss movie, <i>The Wild Child</i> (in class)
Wk2, Sep 4	Basic Concepts of Risk/Resilience I: Developmental Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Seed #1 Due (by 5PM on 09/02/18) • Create final project groups (in class)
Wk3, Sep 11	Basic Concepts of Risk/Resilience II: Prevention Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Seed #2 Due (by 5PM on 09/09/18)
Wk 4, Sep 18	Positive Psychology: Beyond Risk, Considering Assets and Strengths of Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Seed #3 Due (by 5PM on 09/16/18)
Wk 5, Sep 25	Linking Research and Practice: Developing Theory of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Seed #4 Due (by 5PM on 09/23/18) • <i>Final Paper Plan Due</i>
Wk 6, Oct 2	Evaluating Theory of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Seed #5 Due (by 5PM on 09/30/18)
Wk 7, Oct 9	Issues in Social Intervention: Implementation Fidelity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Seed #6 Due (by 5PM on 10/07/18)
Wk 8, Oct 16	***NO CLASS (Classes on Monday Oct 15th are rescheduled for today)***	
Week 9, Oct 23	Individual-level Change: Children and Adolescents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Seed #7 Due (by 5PM on 10/21/18) • <i>Annotated Bibliography Due</i>

COURSE CALENDAR (CONT'D)

Class Date	Topics and Readings	Assignments & Activities
Wk 10, Oct 30	Changing Systems: Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Seed #8 Due (by 5PM on 10/28/18)
Wk 11, Nov 6	Changing Systems: Whole School Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Seed #9 Due (by 5PM on 11/04/18) • <i>Mid-Term Paper Due</i>
Wk 12, Nov 13	Pilot Testing and Scaling Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Seed #10 Due (by 5PM on 11/11/18)
Wk 13, Nov 20	Changing the Way We Talk about Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Seed #11 Due (by 5PM on 11/18/18) • <i>Critique Paper Due</i>
Wk 14, Nov 27	Class Presentations: Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual meetings with instructor about final paper (in class)
Wk 15, Dec 4	Class Presentations: Day 2 (final class meeting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual meetings with instructor about final paper (in class)
FINAL PAPER DUE BY 5PM DECEMBER 11		

DETAILED SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY READINGS

Week 1 August 28: Introduction / Bronfenbrenner Ecological Systems Theory

Required:

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American Psychologist*, 32, 513-531.

Week 2 Sept 4: Basic Concepts of Risk/Resilience I: Developmental Science

Required:

Cicchetti, D., & Rogosch, F. A. (2002). A developmental psychopathology perspective on adolescence. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 70(1), 6-20.

Wright, M. O'D., & Masten, A. S. (2005). Resilience processes in development: Fostering positive adaptation in the context of adversity. In S. Goldstein, & R. Brooks (Eds.), *Handbook of resilience in children* (pp. 17-37). New York, NY: Kluwer Academic/Plenum.

Kraemer, H. C., Kazdin, A.E., Offord, D. R., Kessler, R. C., Jensen, P. S., Kupfer, D. J., (1997). Coming to terms with the terms of risk. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 54, 337-343.

Prevention/Intervention Example for Discussion:

Boo, K. (2006, February 6). Swamp Nurse. *The New Yorker*, 81(46), 54-65.

Week 3 Sept 11: Basic Concepts of Risk/Resilience II: Prevention Science

Required:

Coie, J. D., Miller-Johnson, S. & Bagwell, C. (2000). *Prevention science*. In A.J. Sameroff, M. Lewis, and S. Miller (Eds.), *Handbook of developmental psychopathology*, pp. 93-112.

Kellam, S. G., & Langevin, D. J. (2003). A framework for understanding “evidence” in prevention research programs. *Prevention Science*, 4, 137-153.

Yeager, D. S., Dahl, R., & Dweck, C.S. (in press). Why interventions to influence adolescent behavior often fail but could succeed. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*.

Intervention/Prevention Example for Discussion:

Bryan, C. J., Yeager, D. S., Hinojosa, C. P., Chabot, A., Bergen, H., Kawamura, M., & Steubing, F. (2016). Harnessing adolescent values to motivate healthier eating. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

Week 4 Sept 18: Positive Psychology: Beyond Risk, Considering Assets and Strengths of Character

Required:

Seligman, M. E. P., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive psychology: An introduction. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 5-14.

Duckworth, A. L., Steen, T. A., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2005). Positive psychology in clinical practice. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 1(1), 629-651.

Damon, W. (2004). What is positive youth development? *Annals of the American Association of Political Scientists*, 591, 13-24.

Intervention Example for Discussion

Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. A., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005). Positive psychology progress: Empirical validation of interventions. *American Psychologist*, 60(5), 410-421.

Week 5 Sept 25: Linking Research and Practice: Developing Theory of Change

Required:

Weiss, C. H. (1995). Nothing as practical as good theory: Exploring theory-based evaluation for comprehensive community initiatives for children and families. In J.P. Connell, A.C. Kubisch, L.B. Schorr, & C.H. Weiss (Eds.), *New approaches to evaluating community initiatives: Concepts, methods and contexts* (pp. 65-92). Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute.

Funnell, S. C. & Rogers, P. J. (2011). *Purposeful program theory: Effective use of theories of change and logic models*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Chapters 6-7.

W. K. Kellogg Foundation (2004). *Logic model development guide*. Chapters 1-3.

Taylor, R. D., Oberle, E., Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2017). Promoting positive youth development through school-based social and emotional learning interventions: A meta-analysis of follow-up effects. *Child Development*, 88(4), 1156-1171.

Intervention/Prevention Example for Discussion:

Sorensen, L. C., Dodge, K. A., & Conduct Problems Prevention Research, G. (2016). How does the Fast Track intervention prevent adverse outcomes in young adulthood? *Child Development*, 87(2), 429-445.

Week 6 Oct 2: Evaluating Theory of Change

Required:

Weiss, C. (2000). Which links in which theories shall we evaluate? *New Directions for Evaluation*, 87 (Fall): 35-45.

W. K. Kellogg Foundation (2004). *Logic model development guide*. Chapter 4.

Rogers, P. J., & Weiss, C. H. (2007). Theory-based evaluation: Reflections ten years on / Theory-based evaluation: Past, present, and future. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 114, 63-81.

Duckworth, A. L., & Yeager, D. S. (2015). Measurement matters: Assessing personal qualities other than cognitive ability for educational purposes. *Educational Researcher*, 44(4), 237-251.

Intervention/Prevention Example for Discussion:

Raver, C. C., Jones, S. M., Li-Grining, C., Zhai, F., Bub, K., & Pressler, E. (2011). CSRPs' impact on low-income preschoolers' pre-academic skills: Self-regulation as a mediating mechanism. *Child Development*, 82, 362-378.

Week 7 Oct 9: Issues in Social Intervention: Implementation Fidelity

Required:

Domitrovich, C. E., & Greenberg, M.T. (2000). The study of implementation: Current findings from effective programs that prevent mental disorders in school-aged children. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 11, 193–221.

Durlak, J. A., & DuPre, E. P. (2008). Implementation matters: A review of research on the influence of implementation on program outcomes and the factors affecting implementation. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 41(3-4), 327-350.

Meyers, D. C., Durlak, J. A., & Wandersman, A. (2012). The quality implementation framework: A synthesis of critical steps in the implementation process. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 50(3-4), 462-480.

Intervention/Prevention Example for Discussion:

Wanless, S. B., Patton, C. S., Rimm-Kaufman, S. E., & Deutsch, N. L. (2013). Setting-level influences on implementation of the Responsive Classroom approach. *Prevention Science*, 14, 40–51.

Week 9 Oct 23: Individual-Level Change: Children and Adolescents

Required:

Schonert-Reichl, K. A., Oberle, E., Lawlor, M. S., Abbott, D., Thomson, K., Oberlander, T. F., & Diamond, A. (2015). Enhancing cognitive and social–emotional development through a simple-to-administer mindfulness-based school program for elementary school children: A randomized controlled trial. *Developmental Psychology*, 51(1), 52-66.

Cohen, G. L., Garcia, J., Apfel, N., & Master, A. (2006). Reducing the racial achievement gap: A social-psychological intervention. *Science*, 313(5791), 1307-1310.

Bierman, K. et al., (2008). Promoting Academic and Social-Emotional School Readiness: The Head Start REDI Program. *Child Development*, 79, 1802 – 1817.

Week 10 Oct 30: Changing Systems: Families

Required:

Coatsworth, J. D., Duncan, L. G., Nix, R. L., Greenberg, M. T., Gayles, J. G., Bamberger, K. T., . . . Demi, M. A. (2015). Integrating mindfulness with parent training: Effects of the mindfulness-enhanced strengthening families program. *Developmental Psychology*, *51*(1), 26-35.

Landry, S.H., Smith, K.E., Swank, P.R. & Guttentag, C. (2008) A Responsive Parenting Intervention: The Optimal Timing Across Early Childhood for Impacting Maternal Behaviors and Child Outcomes. *Developmental Psychology*, *44*, 1335-1353.

Dishion, et al., (2008). The Family Check-Up with high-risk indigent families: Preventing problem behavior by increasing parents' positive behavior support in early childhood. *Child Development*, *79*, 1395-1414.

Week 11 Nov 6: Changing Systems: Whole School Reform

Required:

Jones, S. M., Brown, J. L. & Aber, J. L. (2011). Two-Year Impacts of a Universal School-Based Social-Emotional and Literacy Intervention: An Experiment in Translational Research. *Child Development*, *82*, 533-554.

Borman, G. D., Slavin, R. E., Cheung, A. C. K., Chamberlain, A. M., Madden, N. E., & Chambers, B. (2005). The national randomized field trial of Success for All: Second-year outcomes. *American Educational Research Journal*, *42*, 673-696.

Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The Impact of Enhancing Student's Social and Emotional Learning: A Meta-Analysis of School-Based Universal interventions. *Child Development*, *82*, 405-432.

Week 12 Nov 13: pilot testing and scaling up

Required:

Yeager, D. S., Walton, G. M., Brady, S. T., Akcinar, E. N., Paunesku, D., Keane, L., . . . Dweck, C. S. (2016). Teaching a lay theory before college narrows achievement gaps at scale. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *113*(24), E3341–E3348.

Yeager, D. S., Romero, C., Paunesku, D., Hulleman, C. S., Schneider, B., Hinojosa, C., . . . Dweck, C. S. (2016). Using design thinking to improve psychological interventions: The case of the growth mindset during the transition to high school. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *108*(3), 374-391.

Paunesku, D., Walton, G. M., Romero, C., Smith, E. N., Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. (2015). Mind-set interventions are a scalable treatment for academic underachievement. *Psychological Science*, 26(6), 784-793.

Week 13 Nov 20: Changing the Way We Talk About Change: “Framing” and “Reframing” Effects and Policy

Required:

Ikizer, E. G., & Blanton, H. (2016). Media coverage of “wise” interventions can reduce concern for the disadvantaged. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, 22(2), 135-147.

Gilliam F., & Bales, S. N. (2001). Strategic frame analysis: Reframing America’s youth. *Social Policy Reports of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 15, 3-14.
<http://www.srpd.org/sites/default/files/documents/spr15-3.pdf>

Aber, J. L. (2008). A big new investment in America’s poorest (and youngest?) children. *Big Ideas for Children: Investing in Our Nation’s Future*. First Focus, Washington, DC.
<http://wagner.nyu.edu/files/faculty/publications/A20Big20New20Investment20in20America27s20Poorest20and20Youngest2920Children-20Conditional20Cash20Transfers20-20Aber.pdf>