

Early Childhood Cognition, Learning, & Development Pathway

Learning, growth, and change are fundamental parts of the human experience. Further, exploring early childhood can help shed light on the origins of many parts of the human experience. The Early Childhood Cognition, Learning, and Developmental Pathway helps students explore these ideas, paving the way for careers in education, social work, child psychology, or any profession that intersects with children.

Studying early childhood is not only a topic in and of itself; any topic within psychology can benefit from taking a developmental approach. We encourage students who are interested in this pathway to explore synergistically combining this with courses in other pathways (e.g., Early Childhood + Cognition, Neuroscience, Affective Science, Social Psychology, etc.).

Advisors with expertise in these topics:

- [Mike Frank](#)
 - [Hyowon Gweon](#)
 - [Ellen Markman](#)
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Related Scientific Interests (i.e., for which interests should students be directed to this pathway?):

- Cognitive development - how human reasoning and thinking develops in the first few years of life
- Note: Cognitive development is both a topic and a method:
 - Topic: Understanding the developmental origins and trajectory of human cognition
 - Method: Using infants & children as a window for studying how humans think, reason, and learn
- Within cognitive development, more specific topics include:
 - Social cognition / Theory of Mind
 - Language acquisition
 - Causal reasoning
 - Concepts and categories

- Object perception / intuitive physics
 - Understanding of numbers / numerical knowledge
 - Link between behavioral & neural development
 - Early childhood education
 - Developmental disorders and its impact on early learning (e.g., Autism)
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Related Careers (i.e., which career path would this pathway be best for?):

- Professor
 - Research Scientist
 - Child psychology
 - School psychologist
 - Social work (specializing in children and families)
 - Careers in education
 - Formal education
 - Informal education (e.g., museums etc.)
 - Science communication/science journalism (geared towards early childhood/education/development)
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Suggested labs for getting involved in research:

- [Language and Cognition Lab](#) (PI: Mike Frank)
 - [Social Concepts Lab](#) (PIs: Steven Roberts, Claude Steele)
 - [Social Learning Lab](#) (PI: Hyowon Gweon)
 - [The Markman Lab](#) (PI: Ellen Markman)
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Relevant resources:

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Freshman seminar courses:

- PSYCH 21N/AFRICAAM 121N/CSRE 21N: How to Make a Racist
 - PSYCH 12N: Self Theories
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Core courses:

- PSYCH 35/CS 24/LINGUIST 35/PHIL 99/SYMSYS 1: Minds and Machines
 - PSYCH 60: Introduction to Developmental Psychology
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Other psychology courses:

- PSYCH 132: Language and Thought
 - PSYCH 140/LINGUIST 145/LINGUIST 245A: Introduction to Psycholinguistics
 - PSYCH 141: Cognitive Development
 - PSYCH 142A/HUMBIO 142M: Special Topics in Adolescent Mental Health
 - PSYCH 146: Observation of Children
 - PSYCH 147: Development in Early Childhood
 - PSYCH 175: Social Cognition and Learning in Early Childhood
 - PSYCH 187: Research Methods in Cognition & Development
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Graduate level courses that accept advanced undergraduates:

- PSYCH 204: Computation and Cognition: The Probabilistic Approach
 - PSYCH 205: Foundations of Cognition
 - PSYCH 240A/EDUC 234: Curiosity in Artificial Intelligence
 - Many one-off seminars taught by area faculty that are hard to categorize year to year
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Teaching experience:

- PSYCH 60 (Introduction to Developmental Psychology) may occasionally seek undergraduate TAs
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Outside department:

- SYMSYS 1: Minds and Machines
- BIO 158/BIO 258: Developmental Neurobiology
- HUMBIO 3B: Behavior, Health, and Development
- LINGUIST 140: Learning to Speak: An Introduction to Child Language Acquisition

- LINGUIST 248: Seminar in Developmental Psycholinguistics
- EDUC 368: Cognitive Development in Childhood and Adolescence
- PSYC 211: Developmental Psychopathology, Psychotherapy and Psychopharmacology