

# EDUC 360: Child Development in Contexts of Risk and Adversity

Time: Thursdays 2:30pm-5pm  
Instructor: Dr. Jelena Obradović  
E-mail: jelena.obradovic@stanford.edu

## Course Description and Goals

This course provides an overview of theoretical and methodological issues pertaining to the study of child development in contexts of risk and adversity. We will begin by discussing different approaches to conceptualizing and measuring exposure to risk and adversity as well as conceptualizing and measuring children's adaptation. We will review different theoretical frameworks and empirical models that researchers employ to identify factors and processes that are associated with resilient or maladaptive developmental outcomes and trajectories over time. Finally, we will discuss how exemplar biological, family, school, cultural, and economic processes contribute to our understanding of children's adaptation and resilience. Throughout the course, we will discuss limitations of current research, directions for future research, and the translation of research findings for practitioners and policy makers. We will also consider equity issues relevant to studying adversity and adaptive functioning in diverse groups of children. Students will have the opportunity to apply the knowledge gained in the course to develop a research proposal that is aligned with their own interests and work.

## Course Assignments

***Classroom Discussion (30%).*** All students are expected to read the assigned readings carefully before each class and be prepared to participate in active discussion. Please use the Hypothesis app to read and comment on weekly readings. These comments will help you organize your thoughts and inform the course participants of what aspect of the readings you're grappling with. Your comments and questions should be geared toward stimulating a good class discussion. For example, you may wish to discuss unresolved issues or limitations, interesting implications, or ideas for future research. **Your Hypothesis comments for each week should be posted by 1pm prior to each class.**

***Measure Presentations (20%).*** During Weeks 2-4, students will be responsible for summarizing and presenting (10 min presentation + 5 min Q&A) one relevant measure designed to assess: (1) risk/adversity experience, (2) adaptive functioning, or (3) protective resources/processes. You will summarize and present how this measure is administered (e.g., the type of assessment, administration setting, materials needed, etc.),

scored (e.g., the structure/content of the collected data), and used (e.g., an exemplar finding).

- Please use this [spreadsheet](#) to sign up for the measure you want to present (tab 1) and enter the summary information (tab 2).
- Please prepare a 4- to 5-slide deck to guide your presentation and share it via Google docs with the instructors by 1pm on a day of your presentation.

**Research proposal (50%).** The purpose of the research proposal is to apply the knowledge you gained in this course to a specific issue that interests you. Your proposal can focus on: (1) a specific childhood experience that undermines children’s development (e.g., neglect, maternal depression, immigration, armed conflict, discrimination); (2) a factor (e.g., gender, temperament, race, culture) that should be further considered in the conceptualization, measurement, and study of child adaptation in contexts of risk and adversity; (3) the role of a specific processes (e.g., attachment, family routines, sense of belonging, religion) that promote resilience; (4) a specific outcome (e.g., dyslexia, ADHD, socio-emotional learning, academic achievement); or (5) a new intervention designed to promote adaptation in a specific disadvantaged group. Please discuss other ideas with the instructor.

The research proposal should: (1) identify a novel research question(s) that could extend understanding of the selected topic and (2) propose an appropriate study design and measures that could adequately answer the research question(s).

- **Proposal Workshop (10%):** During Weeks 5-7, we will workshop students’ proposal ideas in class. Presenting students should prepare a 5-min overview of their proposal a one-page Google doc handout that includes: (1) background/rationale paragraph, (2) specific research questions, (3) a figure of their proposed study design, and (4) a list of potential measures. Non-presenting students will provide individual feedback and we will discuss each proposal as a class.
- **Final Presentation (10%):** During Weeks 8-10, students will present a fully developed proposal using a 10-minute PowerPoint presentation. Students are expected to address the feedback they get in response to their presentation in the final version of their paper.
- **Final Paper (30%):** Students will write a 5-page (double-spaced, 1-inch margins, not including references and any figures) research proposal that (a) provides an overview of background literature and a rationale for the proposed study; (b) states specific research questions and hypotheses; (c) describes the proposed study design and lists relevant measures; and (d) includes potential implications of

research findings. **Final papers are due one week after the student's oral presentation (please email a Word doc to the instructor).**

- **Please use this to sign up for [spreadsheet](#) to sign up for the date of your workshop and your presentation.**

## **Course Expectations**

- Attendance is expected at all sessions, but there is flexibility to accommodate COVID-related situations. Please discuss any accommodations you may need with the instructor, and let her know *in advance* if you are going to miss class.
- Read and comment on required readings using the Hypothesis app by 1pm prior to each class session.
- Actively participate in zoom discussions.
- Please be considerate. During class, please refrain from disruptive or distracting behavior. Please be respectful of alternative viewpoints and experiences that you may disagree with. Please make sure that all class members have equal opportunity to talk during discussion. Please provide respectful and constructive feedback on other participants' research ideas.
- If you are having difficulties in this class for any reason, please meet with the instructor as soon as possible. The sooner we talk about your concerns, the more I can help you.
- If you have any questions, suggestions, feedback about class format or want some additional information on a certain topic please feel free to e-mail or schedule a meeting.

## **Students with Documented Disabilities**

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC) located within the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). SDRC staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an *Accommodation Letter* for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the SDRC as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, 723-1067 TTY).

## Class Format (Weeks 2-7) - subject to change, pending class size

Time	Activity
<b>2:30-2:40 pm</b>	Check-in/Intro
<b>2:40-3:00 pm</b>	Lecture/ Activity
<b>3:00-3:15 pm</b>	Reading discussion in groups
<b>3:15-3:45 pm</b>	Share out
<b>3:45-3:55 pm</b>	Break
<b>4:00-4:15 pm</b>	Presentation 1
<b>4:15-4:30 pm</b>	Presentation 2
<b>4:30-4:45 pm</b>	Presentation 3
<b>4:45-5:00 pm</b>	(Presentation 4)
<b>5:00-5:20 pm</b>	Independent work time / Check-ins

Class Notes Document is [here](#).

## Course Topics and Reading Assignments

### WEEK 1 (JAN 13): CONTEXTS OF RISK & ADVERSITY

---

Lecture: conceptualizing and measuring stress, risk, and adversity

- Brown, C. S., Mistry, R. S., & Yip, T. (2019). Moving from the margins to the mainstream: Equity and justice as key considerations for developmental science. *Child Development Perspectives*, 13, 235-240.
- Syed, M., Santos, C., Yoo, H. C., & Juang, L. P. (2018). Invisibility of racial/ethnic minorities in developmental science: Implications for research and institutional practices. *American Psychologist*, 73, 812-826.

## **WEEK 2 (JAN 20): ADAPTATION & RESILIENCE**

---

Lecture: conceptualizing and measuring adaption and resilience

- White, R., Nair, R. L., & Bradley, R. H. (2018). Theorizing the benefits and costs of adaptive cultures for development. *American Psychologist, 73*, 727-739.
- Gaylord-Harden, N. K., Barbarin, O., Tolan, P. H., & Murry, V. M. (2018). Understanding development of African American boys and young men: Moving from risks to positive youth development. *American Psychologist, 73*, 753-767.
- Measures Presentation 1:
- Measures Presentation 2:
- Measures Presentation 3:

## **WEEK 3 (JAN 27): THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS & STUDY DESIGNS**

---

Lecture: direct effects, moderation, mediation, and cascades

- Masten, A., & Barnes, A. (2018). Resilience in children: Developmental perspectives. *Children, 5*:98, 1-16.
- Ellis, B. J., Abrams, L. S., Masten, A. S., Sternberg, R. J., Tottenham, N., & Frankenhuis, W. E. (2020). Hidden talents in harsh environments. *Development and Psychopathology, 1*-19.
- Background Statistical Article: Fairchild, A. J., & McQuillin, S. D. (2010). Evaluating mediation and moderation effects in school psychology: A presentation of methods and review of current practice. *Journal of school psychology, 48*(1), 53-84.
- Measures Presentation 1:
- Measures Presentation 2:
- Measures Presentation 3:

## **WEEK 4 (FEB 3): BIOLOGICAL EMBEDDING OF ADVERSITY**

---

Lecture: Physiological stress response systems, DST, allostatic load

- Lanphear, B. P. (2015). The impact of toxins on the developing brain. *Annual Review of Public Health, 36*, 211-230.

- Nelson III, C. A., & Gabard-Durnam, L. J. (2020). Early Adversity and Critical Periods: Neurodevelopmental Consequences of Violating the Expectable Environment. *Trends in Neurosciences*, 43(3), 133-143.
- Read after the lecture if you have no familiarity with stress physiology: Berens, A. E., Jensen, S. K., & Nelson, C. A. (2017). Biological embedding of childhood adversity: from physiological mechanisms to clinical implications. *BMC medicine*, 15:135, 1-12.
- Measures Presentation 1:
- Measures Presentation 2:
- Measures Presentation 3:

## **WEEK 5 (FEB 10): EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS**

---

Lecture: Executive function assessment and application; factor analyses

- Zelazo, P. D. (2020). Executive function and psychopathology: A neurodevelopmental perspective. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 16, 431-454.
- Raver, C. C., & Blair, C. (2020). Developmental science aimed at reducing inequality: Maximizing the social impact of research on executive function in context. *Infant and Child Development*, 29(1), e2175.
- Proposal Workshop 1:
- Proposal Workshop 2:
- Proposal Workshop 3:

## **WEEK 6 (FEB 17): FAMILY SYSTEM**

---

Lecture: Quick overview of MacPhee et al. (2015). Resilience as regulation of developmental and family processes. *Family relations*, 64, 153-175.

- Kalil, A., & Ryan, R. (2020). Parenting practices and socioeconomic gaps in childhood outcomes. *The Future of Children*, 30(2020), 29-54.
- Anderson, R. E., & Stevenson, H. C. (2019). RECASTing racial stress and trauma: Theorizing the healing potential of racial socialization in families. *American Psychologist*, 74(1), 63-75.
- Valentino, K. (2017). Relational interventions for maltreated children. *Child development*, 88, 359-367.

- Proposal Workshop 1:
- Proposal Workshop 2:
- Proposal Workshop 3:

## **WEEK 7 (FEB 24): CLASSROOM & SCHOOL PROCESSES**

---

- Valiente, C., Swanson, J., DeLay, D., Fraser, A. M., & Parker, J. H. (2020). Emotion-related socialization in the classroom: Considering the roles of teachers, peers, and the classroom context. *Developmental psychology*, 56(3), 578-594.
- Obradović, J. & Armstrong-Carter, E. (2020). Addressing educational inequalities and promoting learning through studies of stress physiology in elementary school students. *Development and Psychopathology*, 1-15.

- Proposal Workshop 1:
- Proposal Workshop 2:
- Proposal Workshop 3:

## **WEEK 8 (MAR 3): IMMIGRATION EXPERIENCE**

---

- Suárez-Orozco, C., Motti-Stefanidi, F., Marks, A., & Katsiaficas, D. (2018). An integrative risk and resilience model for understanding the adaptation of immigrant-origin children and youth. *American Psychologist*, 73, 781-796.
- Yoshikawa, H., Mistry, R., Wang, Y. (2016). Advancing methods in research on Asian American children and youth. *Child Development*, 87, 1033-1050.

- Final Presentation 1:
- Final Presentation 2:
- Final Presentation 3:

## **WEEK 9 (MAR 10): CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN GLOBAL SETTINGS**

---

- Black, M. M., Walker, S. P., Fernald, L. C., Andersen, C. T., DiGirolamo, A. M., Lu, C., ... & Devercelli, A. E. (2017). Early childhood development coming of age: science through the life course. *The Lancet*, 389(10064), 77-90.

- Britto, P. R., Lye, S. J., Proulx, K., Yousafzai, A. K., Matthews, S. G., Vaivada, T., ... & MacMillan, H. (2017). Nurturing care: promoting early childhood development. *The Lancet*, 389(10064), 91-102.
- Final Presentation 1:
- Final Presentation 2:
- Final Presentation 3:

## **WEEK 10 (MAR 17):      GLOBAL PANDEMIC**

---

- Yoshikawa et al. (2020). Effects of the global coronavirus disease-2019 pandemic on early childhood development: Short- and long-term risks and mitigating program and policy actions. *The Journal of Pediatrics*.
- Roubinov, D., Bush, N. R., & Boyce, W. T. (2020). How a pandemic could advance the science of early adversity. *JAMA Pediatrics*.
- SRCD Statement of the Evidence (2020). Addressing inequities in education during the COVID-19 pandemic: How education policy and schools can support historically and currently marginalized children and youth.
- Final Presentation 1:
- Final Presentation 2:
- Final Presentation 3: