

Proposal for Summer Course in Basic and Applied Developmental Psychology—Research Methods

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Prompted by the US-Greece Academic Collaboration Initiative, we propose organizing and teaching a summer course in the area of Cognitive and Social Development—basic and applied with an emphasis on educational applications in collaboration with Departments of Psychology, Cognitive Science, and Education in Greece.

We envision this course (or set of parallel mini-courses) to be for upper-level undergraduates and master students (Greek and international). The students will attend courses in cognitive and social development, cognitive neuroscience, applied developmental psychology to education, and research methods. They will also be involved in a collaborative research project (pairing of Greek and international students in small groups), which will provide hands-on experience conducting psychological research, presenting it, and writing it up. While the students encounter these methods in their regular courses, this course would allow them to deepen their understanding by actively engaging in research, collecting data in schools (when possible), or working with already existing data, coding and analyzing them, as well as writing it up and presenting their work to a group of peers.

The summer school will give Greek and international students the opportunity to practice their oral and written English academic skills. The students will also learn to collaborate in ways that will benefit all concerned. Thus, the course will provide Greek and international students with rich linguistic and cultural experiences.

Depending on interest from colleagues in Greece and the US, we envision the summer school courses to be on various aspects of development--cognition, language, socio-emotional and brain development--that have implications for multiple professions (e.g., education, speech pathology, pediatrics, clinical/counseling psychology). Specific examples include: theory of mind research and perspective-taking across the lifespan, brain development, developing beliefs about things we do not see but learn from others (e.g., science and religion), learning of science concepts, storytelling and narratives across the lifespan to capture language development, social-moral concepts, and identity development, etc.

We seek to partner with Psychology, Cognitive Science, or Education Departments in Greek Universities to deliver this summer course. We welcome Greek faculty who are interested in contributing or expanding on the proposed topics. We hope that such collaboration will be beneficial for both students and faculty, as it can lead to new research ideas and profitable collaborations—and possibly joint graduate programs in the future.