

INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH

IECMH 537

Course Title: Development and Psychopathology: Parents and Infants

Instructor: Susan J. Spieker, PhD

Credits: 3 Autumn 2018

Course Description

This is a core, foundational course in the field of infant and early childhood mental health (IECMH) practice. This course covers typical social and emotional development and psychopathology in children ages 3 and younger, with particular emphasis on the parent, the infant, and the parent-child dyad. Students will evaluate attachment-theory approaches to the development of psychopathology in a dyadic context as it occurs in infants, toddlers and preschoolers, and understand the contribution of prenatal factors, parent-child relationships, post-institutional effects, and international and cross-cultural issues to development and developmental psychopathology. The goal is to critically appraise research and theory-based content as it applies to clinical practice with infants and very young children and their adult caregivers, and to develop awareness of multi-disciplinary approaches to understanding clinical issues working with families.

Course Objectives

By the end of the quarter, students who complete all the readings and assignments and engage in all the online activities will be able to:

- Demonstrate clinical insight into the social and emotional development of children ages 5 and younger, with special emphasis on typical and atypical patterns of emotional regulation and attachment;
- Evaluate the contribution of diversity in culture, ethnicity and class to variations in development and the identification and understanding developmental psychopathology in children ages 5 and younger
- Critically evaluate individual, biological, familial, and system-level risk factors for the development of psychopathology, with special emphasis on parental and intergenerational issues related to safety and danger.
- Critically appraise the contribution of attachment theory to our understanding of risk and protective factors for the development of regulatory problems in children ages 5 and younger;
- Understand the complementary roles of multiple disciplines within the field of infant mental health to our understanding of infant development and psychopathology