This course will provide a survey of traditional and current issues in Cognitive Development. Students will acquire an understanding of (1) the developmental perspective as applied to human cognition, (2) characteristics and constraints on cognitive abilities in infancy, childhood, and adolescence, (3) mechanisms of developmental change, and (4) links between cognitive development and selected applied topics such as reading and writing skills, and eyewitness testimony.

Class Format. Each class discussion will be organized by one of the students, cycling through the students so that each presents twice during the semester (some topics may be organized by two students if necessary). The first class discussion on Jan 26th will be organized by Dr. Waters. Students will be expected to prepare a power point presentation for the class discussions for which they are responsible. All students are expected to contribute to class discussions.

All power point presentations are due at the end of the semester. Those students who are assigned an early topic are only expected to prepare a rudimentary set of slides. Dr. Waters will meet with all students to help organize their presentations before they begin preparing for their presentations.

Exams and Grading. Course grades will be based primarily on each student’s power point presentations, although some weight will be given to participation in class discussions.
If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact on your ability to carry out assigned course work, I would urge that you contact the staff in the Disabled Student Services office (DSS), ECC Building (Educational Communications Center), 1st floor, 632-6748/TDD. DSS will review your concerns and determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation of disability are confidential.

Reading List

Although there is not a required textbook for this course, it is recommended that you obtain a copy of the 4th edition of Robert Siegler’s *Children’s Thinking*. Used copies may be available at Stony Books – 25A in Setauket.

Primary readings for the course will be original research and theoretical articles

I. What is development?


II. Piaget – Basic concepts, principles of organization and change


III. Vygotsky – Language and social context in development


IV. Information Processing Perspectives on Development


V. Strategy Development


VI. Metacognition


VII. Scientific Reasoning and Theory Building


VIII. Knowledge and Expertise


IX. Concept Formation


X. Application to Practical Issues: Reading


XI. Application to Practical Issues: Writing

XII. Eyewitness Testimony


XIII. Autobiographical Memory


XIV. Attachment Representations and Co-Construction


