

# FRHD\*3180 - Observation and Assessment Laboratory

Fall 2025 Course Outline

Section: 01

Credits: 0.50

## Land Acknowledgement: Guelph

The University of Guelph resides on the ancestral lands of the Attawandaron people and the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. We recognize the significance of the Dish with One Spoon Covenant to this land and offer respect to our Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and Métis neighbours. Today, this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and acknowledging them reminds us of our important connection to this land where we work and learn.

## Calendar Description

Direct observation as a strategy for collecting information on children's behaviour in applied and research settings is the focus of this course. Emphasis will be placed on theory, recording and interpreting observational data and communicating findings in written reports.

**Prerequisite(s):** 1 of FRHD\*2040, FRHD\*2300, FRHD\*2400

**Restriction(s):** Priority Access for CSTU students. Restricted to students in BASc.

**Department(s):** Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition

## Course Description

Direct observation is an important strategy for collecting information in the natural and social sciences, the latter including child and youth development and early childhood education. Observational methodologies have long been a cornerstone of basic research in child development research. Observation-based assessment is a critical skill in applied professions involving individual assessment, environmental assessment, program planning and evaluation. It is also the foundation of traditional, standardized assessment. Students who intend to work with children whether in schools, clinics, or treatment centres will all be expected to conduct systematic observations as part of their job requirements.

A theoretical background for planning, conducting, and evaluating observational assessments will be provided during lectures and as a part of course readings. The course emphasizes the study and assessment of social behaviour and social competencies of normal preschool age children using a variety of methods based on observation of spontaneous behaviour in naturalistic settings. The final portion of the course deals with observation-based standardized instruments such as developmental screening and assessment of home and school environments. The skills in this course are of importance to students in both research and applied streams in the program and can be used as an advantage in the employment market. Students who anticipate entering applied professions will wish to emphasize their observational skills as they apply to the assessment of young children's development. Namely:

- Experience with a variety of observational assessment techniques,
- Exposure to several developmental screening instruments, and
- Task analysis of children's behaviour and the development of assessment instruments.

Students who anticipate applying to graduate school will wish to emphasize their research experience. Namely:

- Mastery of specific methodologies and theoretical concepts,
- Field experience and laboratory work, and
- Experience with developing an observational coding system, conducting analysis, and report writing.

## Lecture Schedule

## Lab / Seminar Schedule

Day	Time	Sections
Wednesday	9:00-9:50 pm.	01

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## Instructor Information

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## Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	Cost
Required	Child Observation for Learning and Research	Theodora Papatheodorou, T. & Luff, P.	Available for free online

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## Learning Resources

### Campus Resources

If you are concerned about any aspect of your academic program: Make an appointment with a Program Counsellor (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/uaic/programcounsellors/>) in your degree program. If you are struggling to succeed academically: There are numerous academic resources offered by the Learning Commons (<https://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/using-library/spaces/learning-commons/>) including, Supported Learning Groups for a variety of courses, workshops related to time management, taking multiple choice exams, and general study skills.

### Library Course Reserve (Ares)

For this course, you will be able to access course reserve materials through the University of Guelph McLaughlin Library. An e-book version of the required textbook is available to all students. To access these items, select **Ares** on the navbar in CourseLink. Note that you will need your Central Login ID and password in order to access items on reserve.

For further instructions on accessing reserve resources, visit How to Get Course Reserve Materials (<https://lib.uoguelph.ca/find/course-reserves-ares/how-get-course-reserve-material/>).

If at any point during the course you have difficulty accessing reserve materials, please contact the e-Learning Operations and Reserve Services staff at: Tel: 519-824-4120 ext. 53621 | Email: [libres2@uoguelph.ca](mailto:libres2@uoguelph.ca) | Location: McLaughlin Library, First Floor, University of Guelph

## Course Learning Outcomes

1. Explain the types and uses of observational assessments;
2. Collect and interpret data from systematic observation and coding systems with respect to empirical research on and theories of normal development;
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the methodology of observational assessment by using an observational coding system;
4. Demonstrate the ability to write an APA Style scientific report;
5. Assess the reliability of coding systems, and
6. Describe three standardized observational systems including screening for developmental disorders, screening for conduct disorders, and assessing home and school environments.

## Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Day	Date:	Topic	Activities	Due
Wed	9/10	Introduction to Observation Observation and Learning Child Observation - Historical Perspective	Readings: Chapters 1 & 2 Class Activities: In Class Engagement #1 Seminar: Lab 1 Tutorial	N/A
Wed	9/17	The Problem of Perspective Ethical Implications of Child Observation Finding the Role of the Observer	Readings: Chapters 5 & 6, Narrative Recordings pg. 34-36 Class Activities: In Class Engagement #2 & Lab 1: Exercise 1 Seminar: No seminars this week	September 17th @ 6:59 pm.: Quiz #1
Wed	9/24	Levels of Description Participant and Non-Participant Observation Conducting and Recording Narrative Observations	Readings: Chapters 7 & 8 Class Activities: In Class Engagement #3 & Lab 1: Exercise 2 Seminar: Lab 1 Q & A and Lab 2 Tutorial	September 24th @ 6:59 pm.: Quiz #2 September 26th @ 11:59 pm.: Lab 1
Wed	10/2	Sampling Behaviour and Time Sampling Methods of Observation Planning for Child Observation	Readings: Chapter 3 & 4 Class Activities: In Class Engagement #4 Seminar: No seminars this week	October 2nd @ 6:59 pm.: Quiz #3
Wed	10/8	Guest Lecture: TBD	Readings: N/A Class Activities: In Class Engagement #5 Seminar: Observation/ Assessment Tool Presentations (Self-directed)	N/A
Wed	10/15	Guest Speaker: TBD	Readings: Chapter 9 Class Activities: In Class Engagement #6 Seminar: Observation/ Assessment Tool Presentations (Self-directed)	October 15th @ 6:59 pm.: Quiz #4
Wed	10/22	Observation and the Reflective Process Analysis of Observational Records Interpretation of Child Observation Creating a Coding System System Reliability	Readings: Chapters 10 & 11 Class Activities: In Class Engagement #7 Seminar: Observation/ Assessment Tool Presentations (Self-directed)	October 22nd @ 6:59 pm.: Quiz #5
Wed	10/29	Observation as a Research Tool Writing on Child Observations Environmental Assessment Guest Speaker: Library Services	Readings: Chapters 12 & 13 Class Activities: In Class Engagement #8 Seminar: Lab 3 Tutorial & Lab 3 Observations	October 29th @ 6:59 pm.: Quiz #6
Wed	11/5	Developmental Screening Observation in Child Care and Education	Readings: Chapter 14 Class Activities: In Class Engagement #9 Seminar: No seminars this week	November 5th @ 6:59 pm.: Quiz #7
Wed	11/12	Screening for Behavioural Disorders the Power of Observation	Readings: Chapter 15 Class Activities: In Class Engagement #10 Seminar: No seminar this week	November 12th @ 6:59 pm.: Quiz #8
Wed	11/19	Methods of Indirect Observation	Readings: N/A Class Activities: In Class Engagement #11 Seminar: No seminars this week	N/A
Wed	11/26	Guest Speakers: Panelists - Using Observation & Assessment in the Workplace	Readings: N/A Class Activities: In Class Engagement #12 Seminar: Lab 3 Q & A	November 26th @ 11:59 pm.: Overall In Class Engagement November 28th @ 11:59 pm.: Lab 3

## Assessment Breakdown

Description	Weighting (%)	Due Date
Lab 1: Designing Operational Definitions Assignment	10%	September 26th
Lab 2: Observation/ Assessment Tool Presentation	25%	Weeks 6, 7, 8
Lab 3: Play Observation Scale Assignment	35%	November 28th
Online Quizzes	20% (each worth 2.5%)	Weekly (see course schedule)
Overall In Class Engagement	10%	November 29th

## Last Day to Drop Course

The final day to drop Fall 2025 courses without academic penalty is the last day of classes: November 26

After this date, a mark will be recorded, whether course work is completed or not (a zero is assigned for missed tests/assignments). This mark will show on the student's transcript and will be calculated into their average.

## Course Grading Policies

### Late Assignments:

*All deadlines have a grace period of 48 hours.* This means that there will not be docked marks if you submit before the extra 48 hours period expires. Please, do not treat the grace period as the deadline, because it is not. The deadline is a hard deadline and the grace period is in place to account for potential difficulties and life events that can occur at the time of the hard deadline.

*Emails asking for late submission during the grace period are not needed* and will not be answered: just submit within the grace period. CourseLink will say that it is late, but if it is within 48 hours of the deadline is within the grace period and it is not late.

*No extensions over the grace period will be given.* You can submit the assignment after the grace period has expired; however, your mark will be docked 10% per day including weekends EXCEPT under documented grounds for compassionate consideration. Assignments submitted more than one week late without documented grounds will receive a grade of zero. If you are going to hand an assignment in late, you must contact your course instructor to inform them when you will be submitting your assignment. This policy is in place to guarantee fairness for all students.

### Receipt of Grades:

After you receive a grade on CourseLink, please review your feedback. Any inquiry or dispute over the grade must be made within two weeks from the date they are posted. If you fail to protest any grade during this time limit, changes to the grade will not be considered. Grades will be based on the Grading Procedures outlined in the Undergraduate Calendar. (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/grades/>)

## Experiential Learning Component

Experiential Learning (EL) at the University of Guelph means learning through action. EL activities provide students with the opportunity to apply course material to real-world, meaningful contexts.

This course has integrated the following Experiential Learning Components: Course-Integrated Learning (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/experientiallearning/students/search-experiential-learning-opportunities/curricular-and-course-based-opportunities-0/>).

Upon successful completion, this experiential learning course will be reflected on the student's Professional and Career Development Record (PCDR). Learn about the PCDR and experiential learning at [www.uoguelph.ca/pcdr](http://www.uoguelph.ca/pcdr) (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/experientiallearning/pcdr/>).

## CSAHS Academic Misconduct Policy

The *Academic Misconduct Policy* is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar. The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and **it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what**

**constitutes academic misconduct** and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

Instructors **shall not** determine if academic misconduct has occurred. This is up to the Associate Dean Academic's office. Instructors shall not assign a grade of zero even if they believe that the student has committed some form of academic misconduct (e.g., copied material from a website like CourseHero) on an assignment or exam.

Instructors **can** determine if a student has poorly paraphrased and/or improperly cited material and can provide a grade accordingly as long as this is clearly identified as part of the assessment criteria via a rubric or other assessment tools.

For more information about Academic Integrity resources and how to prevent Academic Misconduct.

## Standard Statements for Undergraduate Courses

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The Academic Misconduct Policy (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/academic-misconduct/>) is outlined in the Undergraduate Calendar.

### Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability. Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to make a booking at least 10 days in advance, and no later than the first business day in November, March or July as appropriate for the semester. Similarly, new or changed accommodations for online quizzes, tests and exams must be approved at least a week ahead of time. For students at the Guelph campus, information can be found on the SAS website. (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/sas/>)

### Accommodation of Religious Obligations

If you are unable to meet an in-course requirement due to religious obligations, please email the course instructor within two weeks of the start of the semester to make alternate arrangements.

See the Academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Accommodations of Religious Obligations (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/academic-accommodation-religious-obligations/>).

### Copies of Out-of-class Assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

### Drop Date

Students will have until the last day of classes to drop courses without academic penalty. The deadline to drop two-semester courses will be the last day of classes in the second semester. This applies to all undergraduate students except for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Associate Diploma in Veterinary Technology (conventional and alternative delivery) students. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available

in the Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/dropping-courses/>).

## Email Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

## Health and Wellbeing

The University of Guelph provides a wide range of health and wellbeing services at the Vaccarino Centre for Student Wellness (<https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/>). If you are concerned about your mental health and not sure where to start, connect with a Student Wellness Navigator (<https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/navigators/>) who can help develop a plan to manage and support your mental health or check out our mental wellbeing resources (<https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/shine-this-year/>). The Student Wellness team are here to help and welcome the opportunity to connect with you.

## Illness

Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).

## Recording of Materials

Presentations that are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

## Resources

The Academic Calendars (<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/?index>) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

## When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration. (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/academic-consideration-appeals-petitions/>)