

Stephanie Irby Coard, Ph.D.

Teaching Philosophy

My teaching philosophy is designed to empower students through knowledge, illustrate the need for diversity in social settings, create agents of social change, and to accommodate different learning styles. My goal in teaching is to foster the acquisition of a base of concepts and learning skills to facilitate further learning and thinking. In all of my courses I guide students in the evaluation of evidence, critical thinking, argument development, verbal and written expression, and the application of general principles to novel settings. My courses are all structured around three common themes: an emphasis on research, the development of writing skills and the generation of enthusiasm for scientific inquiry and application.

Courses Description(s)

- **HDF 303 Adolescent Development: Puberty ~ Young Adulthood.** This is one of our foundation courses, required of all of our majors. This course also draws students from other departments (e.g., education, social work). This course typically enrolls 50-70 students, and introduces students to concepts, theories, and research related to critical developmental processes occurring during adolescence. The course consists of lecture, discussion, and small group activities and takes a *cultural approach* to development by infusing discussion of every aspect of development with a cultural perspective
- **HDF 321 Issues in Parenting.** This is one of our foundation courses, required of all our majors. Students enroll in this course with modest knowledge of child development and the theoretical foundations of human development and family studies. We examine the theories and principles of parenting from diverse viewpoints and placing emphasis on how various contexts influence parenting (both directly and indirectly).

Research Mission

My research mission is to contribute to the understanding, prevention, and treatment of child and adolescent mental health problems, particularly as they relate to youth and families of color. This includes remaining at the forefront of research in prevention and comprehensive treatments for youth in order to facilitate awareness of the importance of examining and understanding the role of culture and related concepts, such as ethnicity and race. These factors contribute to the complexities of developmental and psychological processes, and are of vital importance to the understanding of culturally diverse populations. My work integrates existing knowledge on culture, ethnicity, and race with intervention efforts aimed at treating and preventing child mental health problems. As these evidenced-based interventions are applied to children within communities of color, the understanding of culture and how specific culture-related factors influence implementation and acceptance become paramount.

With this mission in the forefront, my primary research focus centers around the influence of racial, ethnic, and cultural factors on child and family mental health and well-being. This research focus consists of two modes of inquiry: applied and theoretical. The applied portion of my research focuses on the development and testing of culturally-relevant and contextually-focused preventive interventions that target youth and families of color and the multiple environments in which they operate. These interventions are parent and family directed for the prevention of conduct disorder, aggression and later violence via management of common youth behavior problems. The theoretical portion of my research focuses on the study of race-related developmental and familial processes (e.g., color consciousness, racial socialization) and their influence on the psychological well-being and functioning of youth and families of color.