

# **HG ED 576: SESSION 3**

# **ECOLOGICAL**

# **APPROACHES TO**

# **DEVELOPMENT**

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Spring 2022

# Agenda

- Ecological models of development
  - Micro and Meso Systems
  - Physical and Virtual Systems
  - Zone of Proximal Development

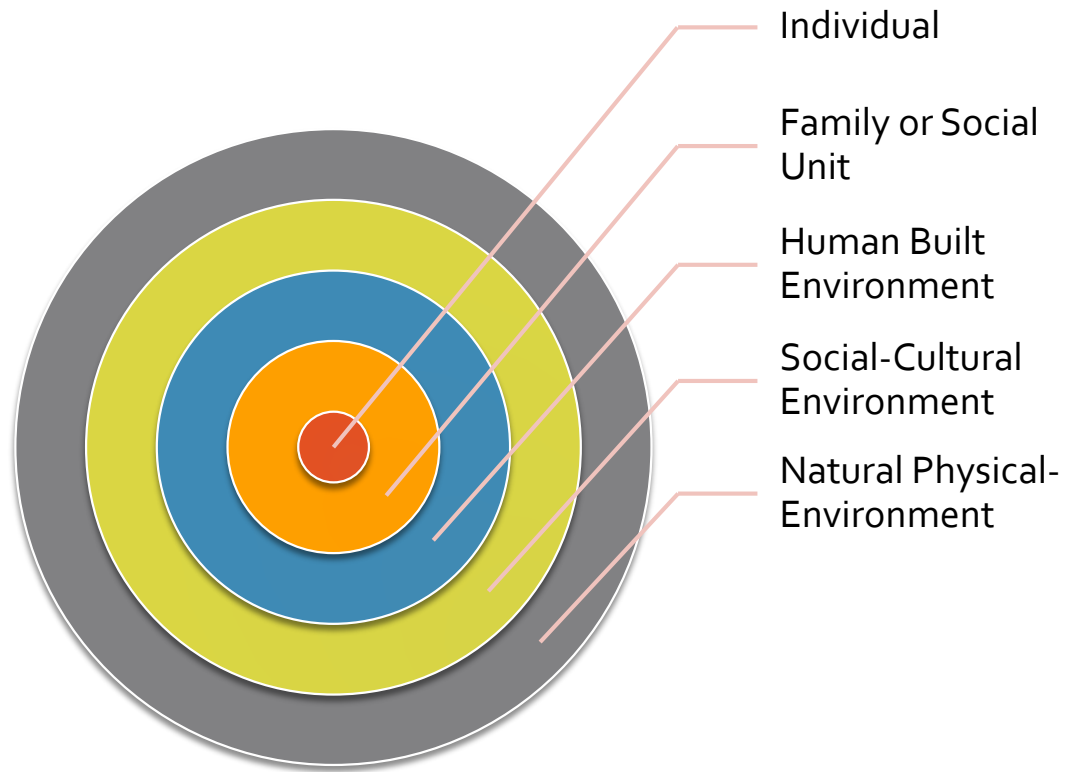
# Learning Outcomes

- By the end of this session, we will:
  - Differentiate families and ecological models
  - Explain and apply Bronfenbrenner's CCPT model
  - Identify some benefits and limitations of ecological models
  - Describe some characteristics of effective developmental interviews
  - Practice developing and conducting developmental interviews

# Developmental Models of Ecology

- Human Ecology
- Developmental Ecology
- Campus Ecology

# Human Ecology



# How Do Students Learn and Develop?

Kurt Lewin:  $B=f(P, E)$

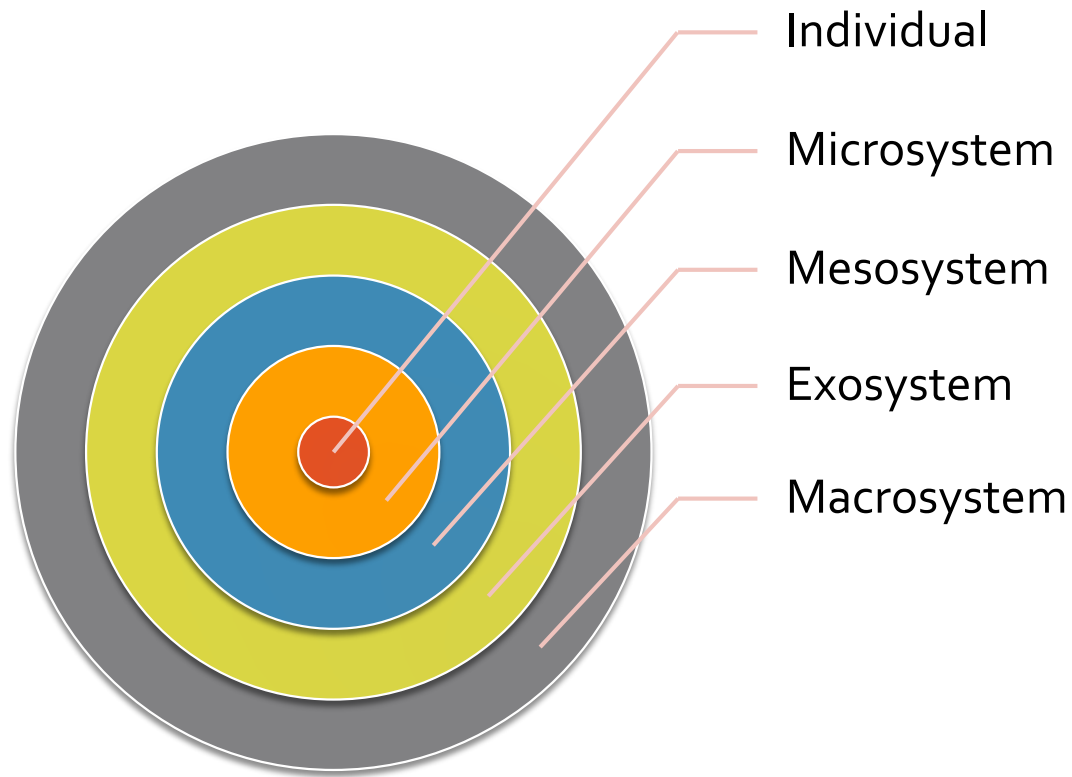
Behavior= is a function of the *interaction*  
between Student and Environmental  
Characteristics

# Developmental Ecology

Urie Bronfenbrenner:  $D=f(P, E)$

Development = is a function of the *interaction* between Student and Environmental Characteristics

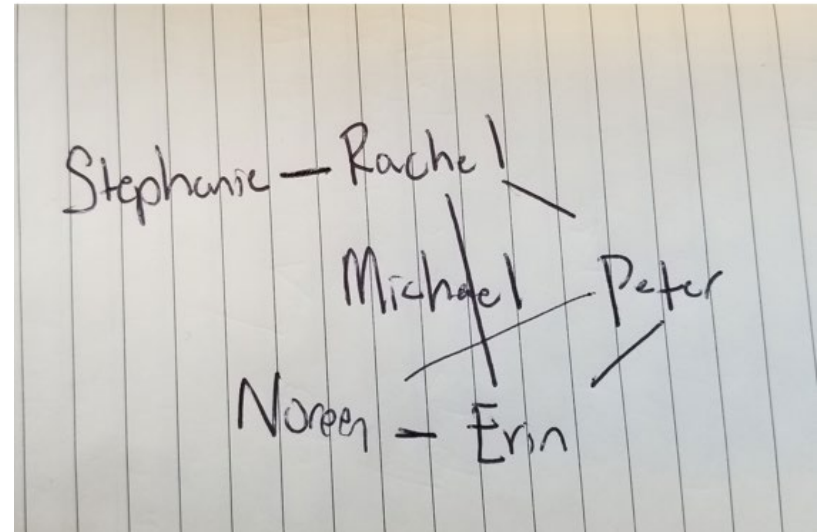
# Bronfenbrenner's PPCT Ecological Model





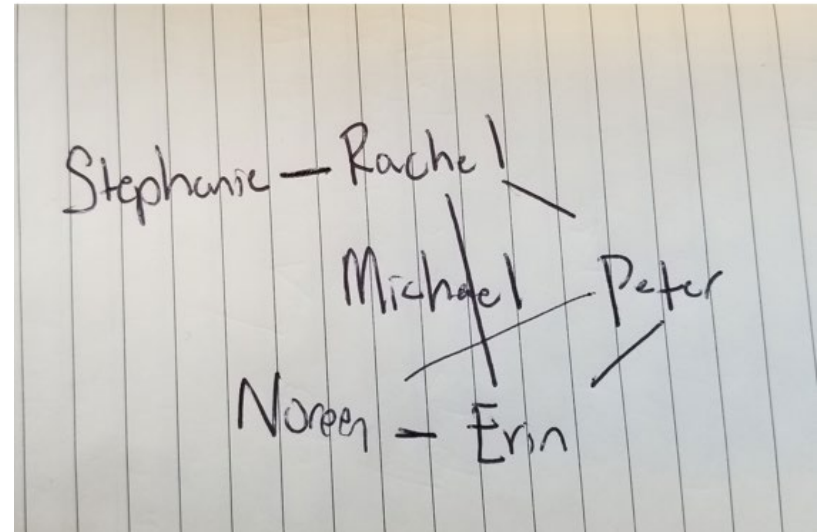
# Core Discussion Network

- Who are the five people that you talk to *most often*?
- These may not be people that you are close to, but people that you have to regularly interact with
- Label yourself in the center and write the names of the five people around you
- Draw a line between each person on the diagram that knows or interacts with another person in the network



# Closeness and Intimacy

- Now add the five people that you feel the closest to (if they are different from the people that you identified as your core discussion network)
- Again, identify the people in the network that know each other



# The Microsystem

pattern of activities, social roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given face-to-face setting with particular physical, social, and symbolic features that invite, permit, or inhibit, engagement in sustained, progressively more complex interaction with, and activity in, the immediate environment. (Bronfenbrenner et al., 1996, p. 1645, italics added)

Virtual microsystem and Face-to-Face microsystem

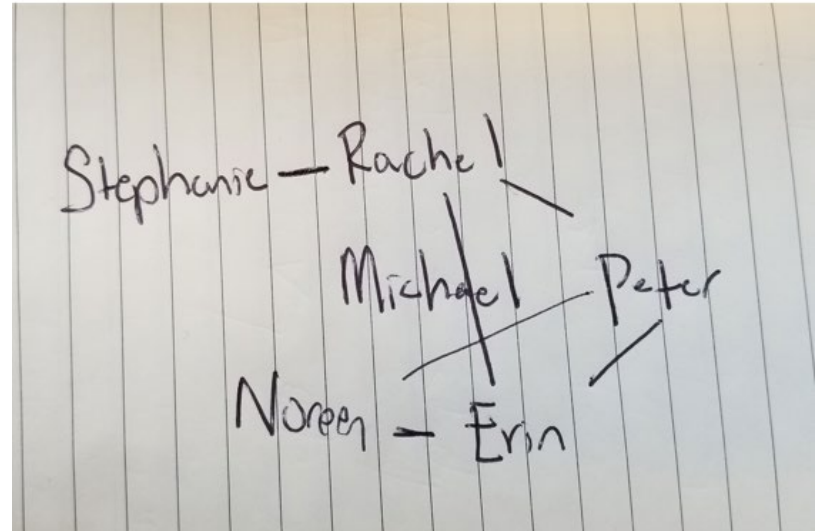
# The Microsystem: Virtual and Physical

Factors that impact whether interactions occur in the virtual or physical system:

- Synchronicity
- Availability
- Permanence
- Publicness
- Cue Absence
- Multi-modality

# Does your diagram change

- If you were to focus on *how* you communicated with people?
- How might virtual interactions allow you to expand your core discussion network and/or maintain close ties as a distance?



# Classroom Ecologies

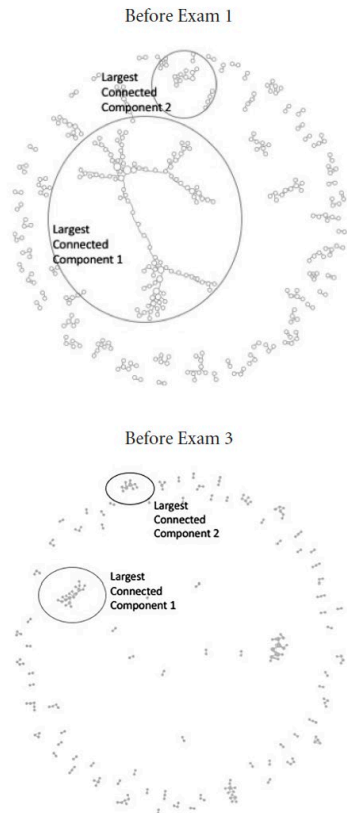


Figure 1. Course Network over the semester: Largest connected component before and after first exam; sized by betweenness centrality

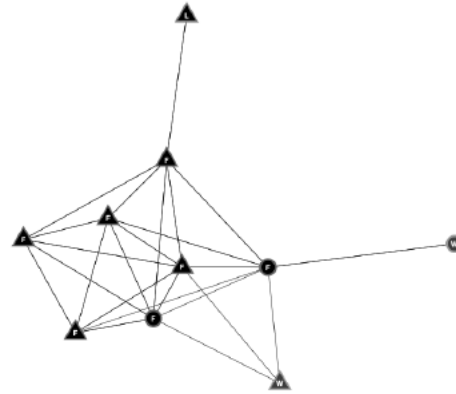


Figure 3. Filipino Student Association Study Group

Key: Filipino/a, Latina, White;  
Circle=Women, Triangle=Men

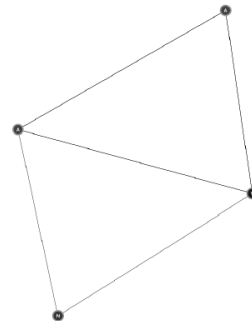
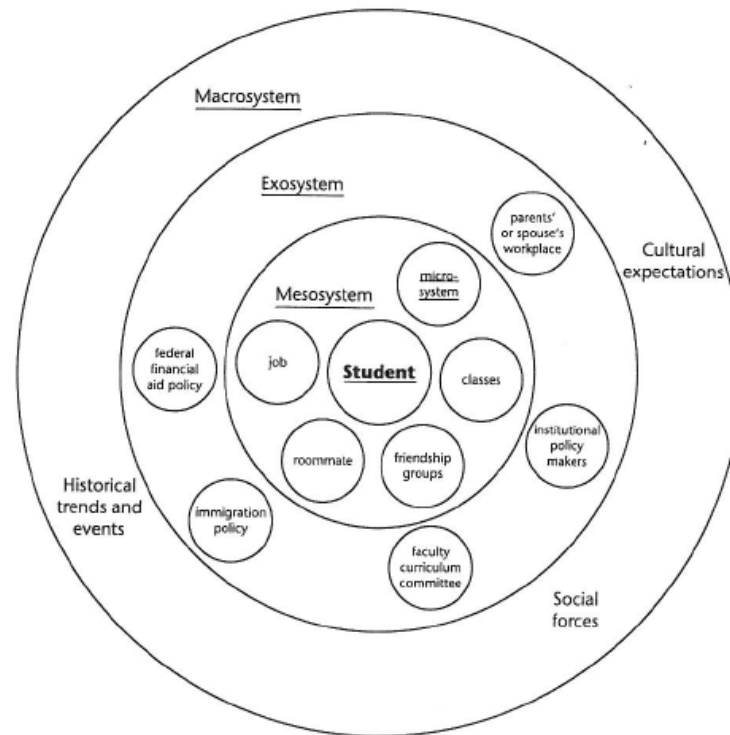


Figure 4. Southeast Asian Dance Troup Study Group

Key: Asian American, Nepali, Vietnamese

# Context of College Student Development (Renn & Arnold, 2003)



Source: Renn, K. A., & Arnold, K. D. (2003). Reconceptualizing research on college student peer culture. *Journal of Higher Education*, 74(3). © 2003 The Ohio State University. Reprinted with permission.

# The Mesosystem

“...as comprising the relationships existing between two or more settings; in short, it is a system of two or more microsystems” (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006, p. 817)

- Two different classrooms
- Learning Community and a Residence Hall Floor
- Workplace and Home



# Exosystem

An exosystem represents the linkages and processes taking place between two or more microsystems, at least one of which does not contain the developing person, but in which events occur that indirectly influence proximal processes within one or more of the microsystems in which the developing person engages.

- Curriculum Development and Classroom Learning
- Fortnite being removed from the Apple store

# Macrosystem

...the overarching pattern of micro-, meso-, and exosystems characteristic of a given culture, subculture, or other broader social context, with particular reference to the developmentally-investigative [sic] belief systems, resources, hazards, life styles, opportunity structures, life course options, and patterns of social interchange that are embedded in each of these systems. (p. 228, 1989)

## Culture:

A group of people who share a set of values, beliefs, and practices; who have access to the same institutions, resources, and technologies; who have a sense of identity of themselves as constituting a group; and who attempt to communicate those values, beliefs, and practices to the following generation. (pp. 3–4)



# Activity

- Take 5 minutes and try to sketch out your undergraduate ecology in a model similar to Renn & Arnold
  - Student at the center (Developmentally instigative characteristics)
  - Identify microsystems and mesosystems
  - Try to see if you can recognize exosystems or macrosystems
  - What role do virtual and physical systems play?



# Questions/Reflection

- Try to find someone you do not know well. Talk with them about your model. Then consider these questions:
  - What are similarities between your models?
  - What are differences between your models?
  - What processes contributed?
  - What role does time play?

# Proximal Processes

...human development takes place through processes of progressively more complex reciprocal interaction between an active, evolving biopsychological human organism and the persons, objects, and symbols in its immediate external environment. To be effective, the interaction must occur on a fairly regular basis over extended periods of time. Such enduring forms of interaction in the immediate environment are referred to as proximal processes. (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006, p. 797)

# Proximal Processes

- a. **Symbolic proximal processes** are reciprocal, increasingly complex interactions between the developing individual and objects and/or symbols within a microsystem over extended periods on a regular basis.
- b. **Relational proximal processes** are reciprocal, increasingly complex interactions between the developing individual and persons within a microsystem over extended periods on a regular basis.
- c. **Complex proximal processes** are reciprocal, increasingly complex interactions between the developing individual and both persons and objects and/or symbols within a microsystem over extended periods on a regular basis.

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***Most student affairs work is relational.***

***Inverse virtual proximal processes: Online Bullying***

# Campus Ecology

- Examines reciprocal relationship between students and their environments
- Key contributions:
  1. People behave in similar ways in specific environments
  2. Subcultures exist
  3. Personality or typology influences fit
  4. Behavior = f(Need, Press)
  5. Social ecological approach → Climate
  6. Transactional approach



# Social Annotation

- Place holder for social annotation articles
  - Identify what additions, adaptations, changes, or shifts that the authors call for?
  - What was missing in the original models?
  - How does the authors' focus change what needs to be included in an ecology?
  - When working with students, how can you help them uncover the ecology of resources, relationships, and environments that they interact with?
  - How do institutions make environmental changes to reflect the diverse needs of their students (if at all)?
  - How could we re-orient ecological models away from deficit perspectives?