

Moravian College
Psychology 371
Adolescence, Adulthood, and Aging
Spring 2008

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Class Time: MW 10:10-11:20

Office Hours: MW 11:20-12:45

Course Goal

This course will provide a comprehensive account of adolescence, adulthood, and aging. The foci will be theoretical, empirical, and topical, to reflect the emerging multidisciplinary nature of the field. Specific topics include transition from adolescence to adulthood, stage and non-stage theories of male and female adult development, physical aging, work, parenthood, family dynamics, psychological adjustment to getting older, retirement, health and aging, institutionalization, dying, and death.

Specific Course Objectives

1. To stimulate critical thinking about complex theoretical and methodological issues within the subdisciplinary context.
2. To promote the oral expression of critical thinking on issues of theoretical and methodological importance.
3. To engage students in the process of collaborative learning with their peers through discussion both inside and outside of class.
4. To instill an appreciation for and understanding of the methods and content of empirical inquiry in developmental psychology.
5. To impart more advanced skills in scientific writing, with specific emphasis on the canons of scientific writing unique to the subdiscipline.

Required Readings

Albon, M. (1997). *Tuesdays with Morrie: An old man, a young man, and life's greatest lesson*. New York: Doubleday.

Cox, H. (2007). *Aging 06/07* (19th ed.) Dubuque, Iowa: Dushkin/McGraw-Hill.

Lemme, B. H. (2006). *Development in adulthood* (4th ed.) Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Selected handouts.

Class Structure

We will follow a standard structure throughout the semester, alternating lecture days with discussion days. For most weeks, we will spend one day with a lecture (on the text material) and one day with a roundtable discussion (on articles that present timely topics for discussion). On "conference days," student conference leaders will facilitate discussions about a topic taken from the Annual Editions reader and selected handouts.

Components of the Course

1. Engagement in our Learning Community

Adulthood and Aging is an advanced course in psychology that requires active discussion and contribution from each member of the class. The course will be greatly enhanced if we can benefit from each participant's experiences, thoughts, and opinions. The class discussions will be as interesting as you make them!

In preparation for our Conference sessions, each student, with the exception of the conference leaders, will be responsible for posting 3 questions on the Discussion Board in Blackboard. These questions should be those that you raise in reaction to the conference day readings. All questions should be posted by midnight on the night before our conference sessions. These questions will help the conference leaders to facilitate discussion during the class session. Not only will you assist your colleagues by posting questions for our conferences, they will assist you when it is your turn to lead the Conference. Including the 1 miss for the day you are conference leader, you may miss 2 postings for the discussion topics.

In order to post messages on Blackboard, you will need to register for the course on-line (password: adulthood).

Class participation/engagement is required in every class. Grades for engagement will depend on both the quantity and the quality of your contributions. If you are not in class, you cannot be engaged and your grade will be a zero. At the end of class on Wednesdays, you will complete a self-evaluation of your nonverbal and verbal participation for the current week. Your self-evaluation and your discussion questions will determine your weekly participation

grade. If at any time you would like to discuss your participation, please feel free to come and see me.

2. Conference Sessions

As stated above, we will devote some of our class days to a conference-style discussion of readings that serve to bridge the gap between principles and theories and the real world. The goal of these conference sessions is for you to enrich your understanding and appreciation of developmental theory as it relates to applied issues. The assigned articles present “hot topics” in adulthood and aging that are related to the week’s topic. These readings are intended to stimulate critical thinking and to promote class discussion.

On Conference days, a team of 2 discussion leaders will lead the conference session. As a discussion leader, your job is to work with your partner to organize the conference session around issues such as (1) identification of the question of interest and the importance of that question to the subfield of adult development, (2) critique and evaluation of the methodology and empirical findings, (3) implications of the information presented in the article (both real world and applied implications), and (4) discussion of directions for future research that follow from the readings. **Each team should be prepared to facilitate 60 minutes of discussion. Although you may have a 5-minute introduction to the topic, DO NOT GIVE A LONG PRESENTATION.** Reading and research beyond the assigned readings is strongly encouraged. You should feel free to assign additional readings to the class. If you choose to do this, please be prepared to provide the instructor and the class with a copy of the reading at least 1 week before the conference date.

Discussion leaders should plan to create a discussion circle and pose questions to the group for open discussion. The goal is for all members of our learning community to actively discuss topics from the readings. Student discussion leaders should provide the class with an organized and thoughtful handout of topics/questions for discussion. Students will provide an evaluation of the conference leaders each week. Student feedback will be considered when assigning a grade to the weekly leaders.

Tips for discussion leaders:

- Thoroughly read the assigned material
- Create a handout for the class that covers the main points related to the readings
- Identify thoughtful questions for the class—they should be substantive; although students can speak about their personal experiences, they should also think objectively and critically about the topic at hand
- Both discussion leaders should contribute equally to the discussion (each student will be graded separately)
- Keep the class moving along—pose questions and engage the class in discussion; ask follow-up questions or make comments in response to students’ comments; you are not only responsible for providing the discussion topics/questions, you should also engage in the discussion
- Approximately 10 minutes before the end of class, summarize for the class the main discussion points that were covered in the class period and have students fill out evaluation forms

3. Exams

There will be three exams over the course of the semester. Exams will be based on readings and any material covered in class (e.g., lecture materials, discussions, videos). Exams may include multiple choice items, terms, or essays. (See make-up exam policy below.)

4. Service Learning

As students, it is essential that your learning experiences extend beyond the walls of our college classrooms. The Lehigh Valley is home to many organizations whose goal it is to assist individuals with different needs. This semester you will have the opportunity to provide services to these local organizations and, in return, these organizations will provide you with a wealth of information about the adult population in the Lehigh Valley.

Each student will be responsible for completing 20 hours of service at a local organization (approximately 2 hours per week during weeks 3 through 12 of the semester—you may not do all of your time in just a few visits). Based on students' availabilities and interests, they will be placed at one of a number of locations. Some possible placements include homeless shelters, elder care facilities, or facilities for adults with mental or physical impairments. A list of suggested sites is attached.

Once approved, students will arrange their 20 hours of service with their site contacts. Once a schedule is established, students will be required to turn in a copy of their anticipated schedules (no later than 1/28—failure to do so will result in a 10-point deduction on the final journal grade). After each week of visiting the site, each student will write a journal entry of his or her experiences (1 type written page per week, please—no more than 10 pages total!) Journal entries should be maintained as a computer document. **Where appropriate, entries should relate field experiences with concepts discussed in class.** A final journal entry must summarize the experience, recounting what you have learned about yourself, the population observed, and the aging process.

Suggestions for reflective journal:

- Describe the setting, the people, and positive/negative feelings you are having.
- What are some of the activities you have been doing with the person(s) with whom you have been working?
- Describe the reactions of the person(s) with whom you are working towards you, citing specific examples.
- Describe how your presence in the community is having an impact on the person(s) with whom you are working.
- What impact, if any, has your volunteer experience made on your life?
- Have your initial impressions been altered? How so? If not, describe observations that have confirmed your initial impressions.
- **When possible, relate what you experience at the site to specific material that we cover in class.**

A midterm review of evaluations will be completed over spring break. All students must turn in their journals mid-semester, February 27, for review. Failure to turn in this mid-term journal will result in a 10-point deduction on the final journal grade and a forfeiture of

feedback on the journal. The due date for final journals is 4/23. Students who fail to turn in their final journals on time will receive a 10-point deduction on the final journal grade for each day late (see late policy below). During the last week of classes, students will share their service learning experiences with one another in class.

5. Research Paper

This semester's research paper will involve groups of students working to collect information on an assigned topic. Students will collect information and share that information with their group members, while working individually on a literature review related to the topic. Separate guidelines will be distributed for this assignment. Papers are due by March 31st at 10:10am.

6. Book Club: Tuesdays with Morrie

This semester, we will read and discuss the book *Tuesdays with Morrie*. You will be expected to read the book and complete a 3-4 page reflection paper on the book. Specific guidelines for writing the paper will be distributed. Papers are due and discussion will take place on April 16.

Grades

Discussion Questions (must be provided for 6 of 9 discussions; failure to do so will result in an 10 pt deduction on the participation grade for each missed topic)

Note: Questions are posted for regular conferences, but not for Tuesdays with Morrie.

Participation	8 points each discussion x 9 required discussions	72
Conference Session Leader		50
Exams (x3)		100
Service Learning (participation & journal)		100
Research paper		100
Tuesdays with Morrie (paper & discussion)		75

I expect that you will spend 5-8 hours per week working outside of the classroom. Each week, you will complete two hours of service and write a journal entry, and read the assigned materials and prepare discussion questions. Additionally, over the course of the semester, you will have 3 exams, a research paper, and a book and related paper assignment. Please plan your time accordingly so that you can effectively manage your assignments.

Class Policies

Attendance Policy

As Moravian College's Attendance Policy in the Student Handbook states, "students are expected to attend classes regularly." If you have an unavoidable situation that prevents you from being in class, please advise the instructor before the class meeting. Excused absences will require appropriate documentation (e.g., doctor's note). Otherwise, your attendance will be expected. Excessive absences, meaning more than two, will result in a 3-point deduction per absence on the final average. Remember, on discussion days, you will get a 0 for participation. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to get missed material from a classmate.

Academic Integrity

The Policy on Academic Honesty (Student Handbook, 2006-2007) states, "Moravian College expects its students to perform their academic work honestly and fairly." Therefore, students are expected to be honest in all matters pertaining to this class, without exception.

Put simply: **If you are caught cheating, you will receive a failing grade. All situations of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Academic Dean's Office. Taking summaries from sites such as SparkNotes and using them in a paper is considered plagiarizing. If they are not your thoughts and ideas and you present them as such, then it is plagiarism.**

All work submitted for evaluation in this course must be original work. It may not be "borrowed" from another student, a printed source, or online source without proper credit as outlined by the APA Manual (5th ed.) (available in the Reference section of Reeves Library). Please note that no part of your assignments may be shared with other students in this class or with students in future classes, and you may not refer to papers from previous classes. All papers submitted for this class must be original work completed to meet the requirements of this class. **Psychology 211 is a prerequisite for this class, and thus, you are expected to know APA style for citations and references.**

Students may not plagiarize. The Moravian College Student Handbook states, "[w]hen students use the specific thoughts, ideas, writings, or expressions of another person, they must accompany each instance of use with some form of attribution to the source." Failure to do so is plagiarism, a major form of dishonesty. Specific procedures for attribution for this course are outlined in the APA Publication Manual (5th Ed.) (three copies available in the reference section of the library). If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism, please set up an appointment with the instructor. Otherwise, adherence to the guidelines set forth by APA will be expected. **Students must turn in copies of all sources used for papers and are expected to "keep all notes, drafts, and materials used in preparing assignments until a final course grade is given."** A student judged to have violated the policy on academic honesty will receive a grade of zero for the relevant assignment or a failing grade for the course, at the discretion of the instructor. Any such violation will be reported in writing to the office of the Academic Dean.

Note: You are responsible for reading the Student Handbook as well as this syllabus, and for adhering to all outlined policies.

Late Papers

A 10-point deduction will be applied for **each partial or full day** a paper is late, beginning at the start of class (10:10)—no exceptions...not even “my printer wouldn’t work,” “my computer broke,” or “the computer didn’t save it.” Back up all your files...save to the server...save to disk...SAVE EARLY AND SAVE OFTEN. If there is a printer problem and you are minutes from the start of class, email me the finished document as an attachment (before class) and then get me a hard copy ASAP after class. If I cannot open the attachment, late deductions will apply (I do not have the latest version of WORD). This policy applies to all papers for this course.

If you turn in a paper late, you know the policy...do not tell me it is unfair if you get deductions. Plan ahead and get your papers in on time.

Make-up Exams

The standard policy for this course is no make up exams. In the event of extraordinary emergencies (with documentation), a student will take a make up exam that is a different version than what the class takes and it will be taken at the earliest possible time, to be determined by the instructor.

Learning Services Office

The Learning Services Office “provides assistance to students who are experiencing academic difficulties” (Student Handbook, 2003-2004). If you feel you need special services through this office, you may call 610-861-1510 or visit their offices at 1307 Main Street.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

DATE	TOPIC	READING
Week 1		
1/14	Introduction to the course	
1/16	Introduction to Adolescence, Adulthood, & Aging	Ch 1, AE 1
Week 2		
1/21	NO CLASSES	
1/23	Theories of Psychosocial Development	Ch 2
Week 3		
1/28	Late Adolescence to Early Adulthood Service learning plan due	(Lecture only)
1/30	<u>Conference Session I</u> : Making the transition to adulthood	Handouts only
	1. Hello to College Joys: Keep Stress Off Campus, Jane E. Brody, <i>New York Times</i> , August 26, 2003.	
	2. Grow Up? Not So Fast, Lev Grossman, <i>Time</i> , January 24, 2005.	
Week 4		
2/4	The Self	Ch 3
2/6	<u>Conference Session II</u> : Societal Attitudes about Aging	AE 12, 13, 14
Week 5		
2/11	EXAM 1 (weeks 1-4; chapters 1-3, handouts, readings, discussions)	
2/13	Friendship & Mate Selection	Ch 6
Week 6		
2/18	Family Ties: Family and Marriage	Ch 7
2/20	<u>Conference Session III</u> : Mating, Sex, and Love	Handouts
	1. This Thing Called Love, Lauren Slater, <i>National Geographic</i> , February 2006.	

2. Great Expectations, Polly Shulman, *Psychology Today*, March/April 2004.
3. Lust for the Long Haul, Elizabeth Devita-Raeburn, *Psychology Today*, January/February 2006.
4. Reinventing Sex: New Technologies and Changing Attitudes, *The Futurist*, November/December, 2004.

Week 7

2/25 Parenthood Ch 7

2/27 Conference Session IV: Contemporary Issues in Parenting Handouts

1. Kaleidoscope of Parenting Cultures, Viya Thirumurthy, *Childhood Education*, Winter 2004.
2. Stress and the Superdad, Michele ORecklin, *Time*, August 23, 2004.
3. Are Married Parents Really Better for Children? Mary Parke, *Family Focus on Marriage*, September 2003.

Mid-semester Service Journals Due

SPRING BREAK

Week 8

3/10 Work Ch 8 (300-333)

3/12 Retirement Ch 8 (333-352)

Week 9

3/17 Conference V: Retired...but still working? AE 21-25

3/19 **EXAM 2 (weeks 5-9; chapters 6-8, handouts, readings, discussions)**

Week 10

3/24 NO CLASS

3/26 From happiness to depression Ch 11 (419-447)

Week 11

3/31 Death and the dying person Ch 12 (460-474)
Research Project Due

4/2 Conference Session VI: Alzheimer's disease Ch 11 (447-459);
AE 19, 20, handout

COMMUNITY-BASED GROUP RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT

Each student will complete a research project that is part group-produced and part individually-produced. Four students will be assigned to each group and the students will work together to collect data on services available in the Lehigh Valley. The students will pool together the information they gather and will use that information to write a larger individual research paper.

TOPICS

Group 1

Marriage: Contact various religions institutions (at least 5, representing at least 3 religions) to find out what kinds of counseling, if any, they do with couples preparing for marriage and if they offer support groups for newly married individuals. If possible, you should do these interviews in person. To what extent do religious institutions help individuals with the commitment to marriage?

Group 2

Assisted Living: What facilities are available in the area to assist families with caring for elderly loved ones? Research at least 5 facilities in order to understand what services are provided, what are the costs of the services, what support is offered to the families, etc.

(Note: You may not do this project if your service site is an assisted living/retirement/elder care facility.)

Group 3

Death: Contact local funeral homes (at least 5) in order to understand culturally appropriate funeral/burial/cremation services for diverse communities.

Group 4

Death and dying: Develop an analysis of how the mass media portray death and how this reflects and/or reinforces dominant societal beliefs about death and dying. You should speculate on the consequences of this portrayal. Interview people of different ages, races, sex, etc. and summarize how different groups/populations view death and dying. Each student should interview 10 people using an inventory that the group creates.

Group 5

Grief and bereavement: Identify local organizations (churches, hospitals, etc) that offer support services to individuals who have lost loved ones. Investigate which groups are available and to what age groups. Are the groups very narrowly focused or do they include people who have experienced various kinds of losses? Are some people more likely to use these services than others (e.g., old vs. young, those who lost someone to illness vs. old age).

PAPER FORMAT

Papers will be broken down into three sections (you should use these labels in your paper):

Section 1: Background Literature

Do a literature review to identify “best practices” for your area of inquiry. You will need to find at least 10 sources that relate to your topic area. Write a review of that literature that runs approximately 4 pages in length, and which uses appropriate APA citations (with corresponding APA style Reference page).

Section 2: Lehigh Valley Services/Information (you may use subheadings and bullet points here, if appropriate)

Describe the data that your group collected. What services are available to people in the Lehigh Valley? Be specific in describing the information that your group collected. Although you combined information from members of your group, you can write this section of the paper alone, based on your own interpretations of what was discovered. This section will likely run approximately 3 pages.

Section 3: Analysis

Compare what the literature says and what you found out about the Lehigh Valley. Provide a detailed analysis of why the services/information you found are/is appropriate. This section of the paper will likely run 2-3 pages.

*** Papers should not exceed 10 pages, not including Reference page(s). Be sure you are using appropriate APA style throughout. If you do not use appropriate APA style, you will receive a 3-10 point deduction on your paper grade, depending on the extent of the problems. See syllabus for policy on late papers.