

Adolescence, Adulthood, and Aging
Psychology 371
PPHAC - 233

Spring 2009
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PPHAC 226

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Adolescence, Adulthood, and Aging

Development of the person from adolescence through death. Understanding theories, research, and current issues in cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development with emphasis on stability and changes over these stages of development. Topics include physical growth and decline, identity development, peer relations, romantic relations, health and nutrition, leaving home, marriage, parenthood, vocational choice, grandparenthood, retirement, illness, death, developmental methodology and empirical evidence.

Prerequisite: Psychology 211

Objectives

1. To expose you to the most current subject matter on adult development through old age and death.
2. To have each of you personally apply some of the abstract material and theories that we are studying by conducting a developmental interview with a middle aged or beyond adult of your choosing.
3. To invite your full participation in class discussions and in sharing your reactions to audiovisual presentations as well as assigned articles.
4. To engage students in the process of collaborative learning.
5. To promote the oral expression of critical thinking on issues of theoretical and methodological importance.
6. To stimulate, to challenge, and to make the course an interesting and enjoyable experience for all of us.

Textbooks

Bjorklund, B. R. & Bee, H. E. (2008). *The Journey of Adulthood* (6th). New York:

Pearson Prentice Hall.

Cox, H. (2008). *Aging 08/09* (21st ed.), Dubuque, Iowa: Dushkin/McGraw-Hill.

Grading Inputs

Midterm	25%	
Final		25%
Developmental Interview	20%	
Conference Session Leader		5%
Service Learning Component	10%	
Class Attendance &		15%

Active Participation (including generation of discussion questions)

Midterm & Final

Each test will be comprised of 3 essay questions that will allow you to demonstrate mastery of the course material. These questions will be chosen from a larger list of essay questions that you will receive before each test date.

Developmental Interview (Due date 4/15)

A developmental interview explores the contours and milestones of human life. It is not a clinical interview that might involve the disclosure of neurotic or unconscious psychodynamic conflicts. Questions about family, occupation, thoughts about the future, and reflections about the past are the central issues to be explored.

This paper is to be written in APA format and you are expected to use proper citations when referencing.

An important characteristic of these interviews is that the respondent knows how the interview is to be used. Inform your respondent of the exact nature of your project. Assure her/him that you will not be using their real names in your write-up; and will not be using the information except as a general assessment of life-span milestones. Your respondent will of course be censoring information to the extent that he or she is presenting her or his life history in a relatively good light. One reads case histories with a healthy mixture of skepticism and openness.

When interviewing it may be helpful, though not essential, to use a tape recorder. Then you can do the transcribing and editing later. **Make sure that you organize the questions that you want to ask before you meet with your respondent.** Design your interview to cover the following issues:

1. **Basic Biography:** age and cohort, parents, brothers and sisters, vocational information, marital status, etc.
2. **Crucial Life Events:** Design this portion of the interview to explore major milestones and crisis points during the respondent's adult life. Look at the choices they make and how they deal with the consequences.

After the interview, you may want to discuss with the respondent what you learned from the dialogue and what you plan to emphasize in the write-up. This will oftentimes spur your respondent to share more valuable information with you.

The purpose of the interview is to provide you with an opportunity to consider the research, theory, and opinion presented in our textbook and readings and discussed in class as it applies to a "real" individual. Theoretical integration is essential for a good grade on this assignment. You might find it hard to fit the respondent's life into any theory, but do the best you can. In general, you should demonstrate to me that you have solid knowledge of developmental theories and research findings. If you respondent does not fit you might speculate why he or she does not fit. That is, has this life been extremely different from what most people experience or are the developmental theories simply inadequate?

More Guidelines

You will find that the questions you ask will depend on the person you are interviewing; how well you know the person, and what you know about his or her life. You may find that when you ask one question you will want to follow up with other unplanned questions. Feel free to vary the nature of the interview as the situation evolves. Be sure to not offend the person by prying too deeply or focusing too much on negative aspects of your respondent's life. To aid you in planning your interview and to help you in developing a structure for your interview I am including some suggested topics to be explored:

As you look back over your life, what are some of the milestones that stand out?

How does the future look to you in terms of your life?

What is the best thing that ever happened to you?

What is it like to be ____ years old? Is it what you expected?

How do you hope to leave your mark on the world?

What was the single most important experience in your life? How did it affect you?

If there is one bit of wisdom that you have learned in your life that you would like to pass on to younger generations, what is it?

Has your mental image of yourself changed over the years? If so how?

What are your feelings about death? How have these changed over the years?

How did you feel when your first child left home? The empty nest?

What was the particular period in your life when you saw the greatest amount of change in yourself?

Is there a formula for "growing old gracefully"?

What was your most serious problem at age 20? at age 40? at age 60?

What effect, if any, did major events like the depression, wars, or political assassinations have on your life?

How was becoming a grandparent different emotionally from becoming a parent?

What were your goals and expectations when you were 20? 30? etc. Have you achieved them?

How have your dreams changed? What were the main things that helped you to reach or prevented you from reaching the goals?

What has been the progress of your relationship with your children? with your parents?

As you have gotten older, have you noticed changes in the way people react to you?

What sort of changes in behavior have you noticed over the years and are specific events in your life that led to these changes? (Ex. - more maternal)

Expectations of marriage before, during, and/or after. Characteristics of a good marriage? Have the characteristics changed?

When and what were your first physical changes in your health that you saw?

Did you experience or observe sex, racial, or age discrimination in a job situation that you held?

Views of society today? (Ex. drugs, alcohol, abortion, AIDS)

Is there anything that has remained constant in your life?

What aspects of your job (current and/or favorite) give you the greatest sense of satisfaction?

What were the most and least enjoyable periods of your married life?

Was your retirement a planned event or something that you looked forward to as opposed to forced and not preferred?

Were there any unexpected events that changed the course of your life?

Did you see your spouse taking on traits that were unique to you? (i.e. Does your spouse look and act like you?)

How would you define success in marriage, career, and family?

What role does religion play in your life? Has this changed significantly over your adult years?

How stable have your personality traits remained over time? Did you take on different traits at different periods?

Do you have the same friends that you did when you were younger?

How has your social class impacted on your development? (moving up or down the social ladder)

What was one of your most traumatic experiences in your life? (respect privacy rights!)

What health changes (habits) have you made in your life?

What type of role has work played in your life?

Has there been someone besides a spouse or a parent that has had a major impact on your life? How?

How has the impact of sex roles changed over your life?

What expectations did you have for your children in elementary school, high school, and later? How have your expectations changed? What were the influences for these changes?

What are your thoughts on the divorce rate today and how it has risen over the years? What are the social causes for these changes?

How has your career changed including promotions and job satisfaction? How has this been related to your overall life satisfaction?

Have your views on women's roles changed over your life? Men's roles? Include the effects of the women's movement. (nurturer - bread winner)

Conference Sessions

We will devote eight 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 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 3 discussion leaders will lead the conference session. As a discussion leader, your job is to work with your partners 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.** The class will be randomly divided into three groups after your introduction. Each small group will have approximately 25 minutes to discuss one of the three assigned articles, led by one of the discussion groups leaders. After the small group discussions are completed our larger class will use the remaining time for a larger group discussion of what transpired in the small groups, led by the three discussion leaders. Reading and research beyond the assigned readings is strongly encouraged. You should feel free to assign additional readings to the class or if you would like to substitute an additional reading for one of those that was assigned. 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.

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 8 p.m. 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.

Conference Session Topics

Conference Session 1 - Making the Transition to Adulthood
Conference Session 2 - Mating, Sex, and Love
Conference Session 3 – Societal Attitudes Toward Old Age
Conference Session 4 – Contemporary Issues in Parenting
Conference Session 5 – Marriage
Conference Session 6 – Retirement
Conference Session 7 – Care Giving in Late Adulthood
Conference Session 8 – Death and Dying

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 25, for review. The due date for final journals is 4/22. Students who fail to turn in their journals, on either the 2/25 or the 4/22 due dates will receive a 10-point deduction on the final journal and will forfeit feedback. During the last class, students will share their service learning experiences with one another in class.

Penalty Policy for Late Papers

Ten points will be deducted from the grade of a paper for each 24-hour period that it is late.

Class Attendance and Active Participation

Attendance and participation at all regularly scheduled classes is both desired and expected. We will explore material in class that is not covered in our textbook. As an advanced seminar with prerequisites I expect you to come to class well prepared to discuss the assigned readings and to have you actively participate.

At the end of the semester I will make a subjective evaluation of your overall effort to contribute to the quality of class discussions and activities, including your generation of discussion questions for our conferences. I will also review your self-evaluations of your engagement for the weeks that we have conferences.

Note: If you tend to hesitate to speak out in class and want to do well on this component of the course please come to talk with me to see if we can't come up with a strategy to help you overcome this habit.

Policy on Plagiarism

The Moravian College faculty has become increasingly concerned about the problem of plagiarism on campus. The Psychology Department's policy on this subject is important for students to understand. Simply put, plagiarism is the intentional misrepresentation of someone else's work as your own. This includes such diverse situations as quoting directly from a published work without giving the author credit, having your roommate write the paper, "borrowing" from fraternity or sorority files, buying a paper from a professional service and so on. The policy of the department is that the student must keep all note cards and rough drafts of a paper until the graded paper is returned. Please keep a rough draft of your paper on

your disk if you are creating the paper on a computer. The instructor may request these materials, along with the source materials, at any time.

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.

Office Hours

Monday 2:00 – 4:00
Tuesday 9:00 – 10:00
Wednesday 4:00 – 5:00
Thursday 11:30 – 12:00
Friday by appointment

If you need to see me at some other time, both office and home phone numbers are listed on the first page. My email address is also listed there. Please contact me and we will arrange for a mutually convenient time to get together.

Note:

Please note that it is within the instructor’s purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for any assignments and for the course final grade.

Please note while I will try to hold to the flow of the syllabus it is subject to change over the course of the semester.

Students with Disabilities

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for support of learning disabilities and/or ADHD, should contact Mrs. Laurie Roth, Director of Learning Services, 1307 Main Street (extension 1510).

Students who wish to request accommodations for support of other disabilities, should contact Dr. Ron Kline, Director of the Counseling Center, 1307 Main Street (extension 1510).

Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the appropriate disability support provider on campus.

Learning Services Office

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

Class Flow

In order to obtain maximum benefit from each class it is expected that you will have the assigned reading and work completed on the dates shown on the course calendar. At times lecture topics and class activities may not coincide with the assigned readings. Don't be misled by this, please keep up with the assignments as listed. I will announce in class if there are any deviations to our schedule. (You never know when the weather will throw us a curve!)

Class Calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
1/19	No class due to midwinter retreat in San Diego
1/21	Course Introductions
1/26	Chapter 1, Introduction to Adult Development The Drama of Everyday Life – video “49”
1/28	Deadline for establishment of service learning component
2/2	Chapter 2, Physical Changes
2/4	Conference Session 1 - Making the Transition to Adulthood 1. Grow Up? Not So Fast, Lev Grossman, <i>Time</i> , 1/24/05. 2. Hello to College Joys; Keep Stress Off Campus, Jane E. Brody, <i>New York Times</i> , 8/23/03. 3. What Makes Teens Tick, Claudia Wallis & Kristina Dell, 9/26/08.
2/9	Chapter 3, Health and Health Disorders
2/11	video - Forgetting
2/16	Chapter 4, Cognitive Abilities
2/18	Conference Session 2 - Mating, Sex, and Love 1. Why We Love, Jeffrey Kluger, <i>Time</i> , 1/28/08. 2. Lust for the Long Haul, Elizabeth Devita-Raeburn, <i>Psychology Today</i> , 1/2/06. 3. Reinventing Sex: New Technologies and Changing Attitudes, <i>The Futurist</i> , 11/12/04.
2/23	Chapter 5, Social Roles
2/25	Conference Session 3 - Societal Attitudes Toward Old Age 1. Annual Editions, Article 11 2. Annual Editions, Article 13 3. Annual Editions, Article 14
3/2	Spring Break

- 3/4 Spring Break
- 3/9 Chapter 6, Social Relationships
- 3/11 Conference Session 4 - Contemporary Issues in Parenting
1. Kaleidoscope of Parenting Cultures, Viya Thirumurthy, *Childhood Education*, Winter 04 & Brave New Babies, Claudia Kalb, *Newsweek*, 1/26/04
 2. Stress and the Superdad, Michele ORecklion, *Time*, 8/23/04
 3. Are Married Parents Really Better for Children?, Mary Parke, *Family Focus on Marriage*, 9/03.
- 3/16 **Midterm Exam**
- 3/18 Conference Session 5 - Marriage
1. Who Needs a Husband, Tamala Edwards, *Time*, 7/5/07
 2. Marry Me, Lori Oliwenstein, *Time*, 1/28/08
 3. Ideas & Trends: Untying the Knot; For Better or Worse: Marriage's Stormy Future, Tamar Lewin, *The New York Times*, 11/23/03.
- 3/23 Chapter 8, Personality
- 3/25
- 3/30 Chapter 7, Work and Retirement
- 4/1 Conference Session 6 - Retirement
1. Annual Editions, Article 22 & How to Land on Your Feet, Jane Quinn, *Newsweek*, 2/14/05
 2. Annual Editions, Article 38
 3. Aging Naturally, Andrew Weil, *Time*, 10/9/05
- 4/6 Chapter 9, The Quest for Meaning
- 4/8 Chapter 10, Stress, Coping, and Resistance
- 4/13 No class, Easter Monday
- 4/15 Conference Session 7 - Care Giving in Late Adulthood
1. When Families Take Care of Their Own & Caring for Family, Caring for Yourself, Jane Brody, *The New York Times*, 11/11/08 & 11/11/08.
 2. Annual Editions, Article 28
 3. Annual Editions, Article 29

Developmental Interview Due Date

4/20 Chapter 11, Death and Bereavement

4/22 Conference Session 8 -Death and Dying

1. Annual Editions, Article 26 & 27
2. Annual Editions, Article 27
3. Assisted Suicide of Healthy 79 Year-Old Renews German Debate on Right to Die, Mark Landler, *NY Times*, 7/3/08 and End-of Life Issues and Care, APA On-Line.

Service Learning Journal Due Date

4/27 Chapter 12, The Successful Journey

4/29 Course Wrap-up and discussion of Service Learning Component

5/6 **Final Exam - time slot 8:30 a.m.**