Course Description:

This course will examine the individual, interpersonal and contextual changes and behaviors that are part of normal adolescent development. Within the context of normal adolescent development, the course will focus on: (1) the epidemiology and etiology of adolescent problem behaviors; (2) the extent to which these behaviors vary across gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic status; (3) the ways in which these behaviors relate to normal adolescent development; and (4) existing programs and policies designed to prevent, and, to a lesser extent treat problem behaviors.

Course Content:

The broad content of this course will focus upon the changes, contexts, and psychosocial development and problems of adolescence. The key changes that occur during adolescence are biological, cognitive, and social. The section of this course on biological changes will focus on the pubertal process and its physical, psychological, and social impact, as well as subgroup and generational differences in its onset and timing. The cognitive development portion of this course will examine the theoretical perspectives on adolescent thinking, and changes in adolescent thinking patterns and abilities that occur from pre-adolescence to late adolescence. Finally, this course will examine the social (e.g., economic, legal, political, and interpersonal) changes that occur as adolescents make the transition to adulthood.

The social contexts that are central to the development of most adolescents include family, peers, schools, work, and leisure environments. The family issues that this course will examine include different parenting styles and their impact on a variety of adolescent outcomes, the effects of changing family patterns on adolescent development, and reciprocal relationships between the family and adolescents. The peer-related issues that this course will address include the historical origins of adolescent peer groups, the nature and structure of peer groups, and the influence of peers on both pro-social and problem behavior. Course content on schools will focus on the varied purposes of schools, the ways in which their organization influences adolescents' learning, and their direct and indirect influence on adolescents' future life chances.

Employment issues that will be addressed include changes in the nature of adolescent employment, the long and short term costs and benefits of adolescent employment, and the meaning of work for young people who do not attend college. Content on adolescent leisure activity will examine its role in socializing adolescents for adulthood, its influence on adolescents' academic success and failure, and its economic importance.
The final section of this course will focus on adolescent psychosocial problem behaviors, such as alcohol, and other substance use, violence, suicide, eating disorder, precocious sex, and delinquency. Particular attention will be given to the epidemiology, etiology, trends and population distributions of these problems. Considerable attention will also be given to identification of the risk and protective factors for these problems and the policies and programs related to their prevention and treatment.

**Course Objectives:**

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and describe the biological, psychological, and social changes that characterize normal adolescence.
2. Identify and describe the primary interpersonal and contextual influences on adolescent behavior.
3. Identify and describe the ways in which the individual, interpersonal, and contextual factors common to adolescence intersect and relate to adolescent problem behaviors.
4. Identify what social workers and other professionals can do to promote adolescent health and well being and prevent and treat adolescent problem behaviors.
5. Discuss typical ethical concerns related to adolescent development and behavior.

**Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes:**

*Multiculturalism and Diversity* will be addressed throughout this course. Racial, ethnic, gender, and social class differences in the timing, sequencing, nature, and outcome of adolescent developmental experiences will be central to every facet of this course. *Social Justice and Social Change* will be addressed through information and discussion on the ways in which social status mediates the experiences of adolescents and the ways in which various programs, practices, and policies help or hinder the successful development of all young people. *Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation* will be central to this course, particularly in the section that focuses on adolescent problem behaviors. General principles of program design, implementation, and evaluation will be presented and examples of successful programs and policies will be discussed. *Behavioral and Social Science Research* will provide the substantive foundation for this course. Emphasis will be placed on the review, critique, and synthesis of the existing scientific knowledge base as prerequisite to interventions that promote health and well being, and prevent or treat adolescent problems.

**Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values**

Values and ethics will be addressed as they relate to working with young people. This course will emphasize the importance of understanding the range of normal adolescent development, working with disadvantaged populations, and sensitivity to the possibility of unintended negative consequences of interventions such as promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation.

**Recommended Journals:**

- Adolescence
- American Journal of Public Health
- American Psychologist
- Child and Youth Care Quarterly
- Child and Youth Services
- Child Development
- International Journal of Adolescence
- Journal of Adolescent Health
- Journal of Adolescent Health Care
- Journal of Adolescent Research
- Journal of Early Adolescence
- Merrill Palmer Quarterly
Required Texts:


Addams, Jane, *The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets*. University of Illinois: Chicago


Coursepack, Excel Test Preparation, Coursepack, & Copies. 1117 South University (734-996-1500)

C. Recommended Texts and Articles:


Kaplan, Elaine Bell. (1997). *Not our kind of girl: Unraveling the myths of Black teenage motherhood*.


Required and some recommended texts will be on reserve at the Social Work Library

B. Suggestions of Popular Fiction/ Videos Highlighting Adolescent Characters:

White Oleander       Girl, Interrupted       This Boy’s Life
October Sky          The Virgin Suicides     Welcome to the Dollhouse
Boy's Don't Cry      The Best Little Girl in the World What's Eating Gilbert Grape?
TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

(All readings appear in the schedule on the date they will be discussed in class)

Jan. 10

Intro /Class Expectations
History of Adolescence, Particular issues for Minority Youth

Readings:
Feldman & Elliot Chapter 4 – Historical Perspectives – (coursepack)
Adams, Introduction, Ch. 1-2

Jan. 17

MLK Birthday

Jan. 24

Developmental Tasks of Adolescence: Identity Construction and Physical, Affective-Moral, Cognitive and Psychosocial Changes during Adolescence

Readings:
F&E, Ch. 2, The Role of the Pubertal Process (coursepack)
F&E, Ch. 14, Self and Identity Development
Steinberg & Morris – Adolescent Development (coursepack)
Tatum – The Complexity of Identity – Chap 2 (Coursepack)
Tatum, Identity Development in Adolescents Ch. 4 (coursepack)
Fisher, Jackson, & Villarruel—African American and Latino Children & Youth (Coursepack)

Jan. 31

Physical, Affective-Moral, Cognitive and Psychosocial Changes during Adolescence II. The Impact of Gender.

Readings:
The Making of an 8 Year Old Woman – NY Times (coursepack)
Pollack, Introduction, Chapter 1
F&E, Ch. 13 (coursepack)
Inside the Teen Brain (Brownlee) (Coursepack)
Gender Differences – Chap 4 (Potter) (coursepack)
Shewder, Goodnow, Hatano et al —Cultural psychology of development (coursepack)

Video: Reviving Ophelia (or Thirteen)

Feb. 7

Developmental Tasks of Families of Adolescents

Readings:
Adams Ch 3-4
Pollack, Ch 5&6
Owens, Ch. 10
F&E, Ch 6&10 (coursepack)
Multisystemic Therapy (coursepack)
Feb. 14  
*Psychosocial Factors and Stressors 1*

- Poverty
- Sexual Orientation
- *Media Project 1*

**Readings:**
Adams, Ch5-6
Pollack, Chs. 9
Owens, *Queer Kids* Chaps 1-4
*Isolation or Inclusion: Creating safe spaces for lesbian & gay youth* (coursepack)
Romer, Ch. 1

*(Presentation: From the Office Of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Affairs, will assist with a panel presentation on working with LGBT teens)*

**PAPER 1 DUE**

Feb. 21  
*Psychosocial Factors and Stressors 2*

- Trauma
- Ethnicity
- *Media Project 2*

**Readings:**
Jenson, Ch. 5 – Violence and Aggression in Girls (coursepack)
Owens, Ch. 6
Spencer, *New Theorizing about African American Adolescents* (Coursepack)
Romer, Ch 4

Feb. 28  
**SPRING BREAK**

March 7  
*Peer Relationships, Leisure and Work*

**Readings:**
Pollack, Ch. 8
Males, M. *Myth: The Media Tell the Truth about Youth* (coursepack)
Feldman and Elliott, Ch. 7, *Peer Groups and Peer Cultures*
Feldman and Elliott, Ch. 9, *Leisure, Work, and the Mass Media*
Romer, Ch 21-22

*(Presentation: Presentation from Theater Group)*

March 14  
*Thinking about prevention in relation to problems in adolescence*

- Eating Disorders
- *Media Project 3*

**Readings:**
Owens, Ch. 8
Steiner, Chs. 4, 5, 9 (coursepack)
Scales and Leffert – Developmental Assets (coursepack)
Mattaini, Peace Power (coursepack)
Romer Ch 2, 10
Pittman, Positive Youth Development (coursepack)

March 21  
**Externalizing Behaviors I**

- ADHD
- Conduct Disorders
- HIV Risk
- *Media Project 4*

**Readings:**
Steiner, Ch. 2 (Coursepack)
Pollack, 253-262
Romer, Ch 7

March 28  
**Externalizing Behaviors II**

- Substance Abuse
- *Parenting Teens Conference 1*

**Readings:**
Steiner, Ch 3 (coursepack)
Owens, Ch. 8
Romer, Ch 11

April 4  
**Schools and Achievement/Violence in Schools/Community**

- *Parenting Teens Conference 2*

**Readings:**
Pollack, Ch 10,13
Surgeon General Report on Youth Violence (coursepack)
Jenson, *Youth Violence* Ch. 1,4 (coursepack)
Owens, Ch. 5
*Kids & Guns: How Politicians, Experts, and the Press Fabricate Fear of Youth* by Mike Males (online book)
http://home.earthlink.net/~mmales/contents.htm
Columbine High School Shootings: Community Response: In *School Violence: Assessment, Management, Prevention* (coursepack)
*Young Killer: Bad Seed or Work in Progress?* *NYTimes* (coursepack)
Costello, Toles, Speilbeger, & Wynn, Organizations that Shape Youth (coursepack)
Romer, Ch 14

April 11  
**Internalizing Behaviors and Divorce**
• Parenting Teens Conference 3
• Self-injurious behaviors
• Suicidality

Readings:
Steiner, Ch 4&5 (coursepack)
Pollack, Ch. 12,14,
Owens, Ch. 9
Romer, Ch 33-34

(Presentation: James Robert and Aaron Pollack, teachers at Pioneer High School, will speak about adolescents and the school experience)

April 18

Getting Launched: Challenges of Late Adolescence, Ideals and Ambitions

• Parenting Teens Conference 4&5

Readings:
Owen, Chs. 11, 12
Walker, Policy Climate (coursepack)

PAPER 2 DUE
Format of Course

General Overview

This course will approach adolescent behavior and development from the three following perspectives:

1. The current research – students will be asked to read about and consider the latest research about adolescence. Two of the texts, Reducing Adolescent Risk, At the Threshold and Treating Adolescents, are research-oriented and provide extensive references to other (fairly current) research into adolescence.

2. The experiential– students will be asked to explore their professional and personal experiences in working/living/interacting with adolescents. The two other texts, Reviving Ophelia and Real Boys, incorporate many case histories and the authors’ experiences of the adolescents with whom they work.

3. The personal – students will be asked to reflect on their own adolescent development to facilitate deeper understanding of the issues. This personal exploration is meant to help students integrate their personal stories with their actual experience of adolescents and with the insights delineated in the research.

Grades

Your grade for this course will be based on the following:

10% = participation and attendance at class sessions = punctual, present, respectful, active effort to participate

15% = Group presentations relating some type of media (film/video, magazine articles, MTV video, music, etc.) to the particular topic being covered in class and in the readings OR 5 minute presentation (5 minutes for questions) on the theme of your second paper.

15% = Individual E-Journal (My Adolescence), weekly reflection on readings using personal experience to illustrate. Must be posted to class website by 5pm the Sunday before the next class. Explore how your perceptions and experiences match up to (or contrast with) your understandings from the readings.

20% = Paper 1,
40% = Paper 2

Small Group Presentations

Media: During the 2nd class, you will be assigned a date for your presentation. Each presentation should be no longer than 30 minutes. Each small group will be responsible for:

1. Identifying a form of media which deals with the particular theme of the class.
2. Presenting your media example (no longer than 10 minutes)
3. Facilitating a discussion (using discussion questions) which relates your example to the in-class readings.

Your presentation should have specific learning objectives that include:

a. “terms” (actual terms from the readings);
b. “facts” (important facts you feel the class should remember); and
c. “principles of practice” actual practice principles revealed either in the video or in the readings. (example: “treatment utilizing a multi-disciplinary approach works best with Eating Disorders”)

sjoew601
At the time of your presentation, I would like to get a copy of your hand-out(s) attached to a note from the group (signed by each individual) which states clearly what each individual did in preparation for the presentation.

Grades will be based upon the following:

- 33% - Were “terms” from the readings effectively brought out in the presentation?
- 33% - Were “facts” from the readings effectively brought out in the presentation?
- 33% - Were principles of practice clearly brought out in the readings?
- 1% - Did the presenters bring something good to eat and did I like it?

Parenting Teens Conference Presentations: You are to imagine you are presenting at a conference for parents of teens. For the presentation, you can use (but should not read from) the one-page summary you have created for Paper II. Your presentation should be no longer than 5 minutes and there will be 5 minutes for questions from the class. Your fellow class members will imagine they are parents of teens and are interested in the various topics about which you are presenting.

Your grades will be based upon the following:

- 33% - was your presentation clear, understandable?
- 33% - was your presentation in terms that non-clinical, lay people could understand?
- 33% - did your presentation provide clear, practical skills that parents can use?
- 1% - Did you bring something to eat that was low in carbohydrates, high in fiber and nutritionally sound?

E-Journal/My Adolescence: During the 1st day of class you will select 4 of 12 opportunities during this semester to submit weekly case descriptions that are reflections on your own adolescent development and behaviors and the readings for the week. The weekly reflection should be of no more than 2 pages (doubles spaced) on class readings using personal experience to illustrate your understanding. It is important to explore pre-existing attitudes about adolescent development and behavior, as well as America’s normative attitude/value towards youth. Explore how your perceptions and experiences match up to (or contrast with) your understandings from the readings. Case reflections must be posted to class website or emailed to Dr. Joe by 5pm the Sunday before the next class.

Grades will be based upon the following:

- 33% - Were “terms” from the readings effectively brought out in the case description?
- 33% - Were “facts” from the readings effectively brought out in the presentation?
- 33% - Were principles of practice clearly brought out in the readings?
- 1% - Did the presenters bring something good to eat and did I like it?

The Papers

Late Papers: ALL papers will be marked down by 5% for every day late. In order to be fair to all class members, this policy needs to be uniform.

Revisions/Feedback: If you are unhappy with your feedback and/or grade on a paper, the paper may be rewritten and turned in no later than 1 week after it has been returned to you. The average of the two grades will then be your grade for the actual paper. The second paper should be turned in with the changes highlighted.

Format: All paper should have 1 inch margins and when appropriate, referenced using APA 5th.

Paper # 1 (personal perspective): Due on Feb. 14. No more than 8 typed double spaced pages, 20% of total grade
This paper should be a personal exploration of your own experiences as an adolescent. Since this is a personal paper, creativity is welcome. The paper should include sharing your experiences of both the different domains of adolescent development as well as the psychosocial issues with which you struggled.

This paper will be assessed on the following criteria:
1. **Content**: Did the writer touch on both psychosocial issues and contexts of adolescence? Did the writer share openly about her/his own adolescence? Were there specific examples given? Did the writer translate the abstract to the concrete – 60%.
2. **Organization**: Did the writer establish some kind of structure to the paper? Did the structure allow for pertinent conclusions to be drawn – 30%
3. **Form**: Is the writing professional? Is the grammar correct? Are the sentences clear? Are there typographical errors – 10%

**Paper # 2 (research-based perspective)**: Due on April 18, no more than 15 typed double spaced pages (not including the synthesis), 40% of total grade

This paper will consist of choosing a teen population with whom you are unfamiliar, discuss what barriers there have been to you becoming familiar with this population, the stereotypical misunderstandings of this population, and 3-5 areas of concern that the research-literature emphasizes for this population. Then select a particular adolescent psychosocial issue of interest, and relevance to this population and your chosen concentration where there has been some empirical research on treatments (i.e. eating disorders, HIV/AIDS risk, teen pregnancy, adolescent depression and suicide). Set up this paper by grouping research that seems to articulate a particular direction or outcome in the area you have chosen. In other words, if there are 4 studies which describe improved school outcome for depressed adolescents for a specific treatment model or program, grouping them should give you a sense of where the field is headed with a possible best-evidence practice. Alternatively, if there is no cogent group of studies in the area you have chosen, or if there are studies showing that particular treatments do not seem particularly valid, then briefly describe the variety of directions you have found in this area. Finally, you will create a two-page (single-spaced) summary of what you have learned on this topic that you could translate into a lay language summary suitable for parents of teens. You should include in this summary (as well as in the paper) the PRACTICAL implications of your research. Also explore how your perceptions and experiences of this population match up to (or contrast with) your understandings from your research.

This paper will be assessed on the following criteria:
1. **Content**: Did the writer clearly meet the objectives of the assignment – is there a central question, is there a review of the relevant literature, is there a logical summary and conclusion?- Did the writer include each the paper’s required steps as listed above-50%
2. **Organization**: Is the paper logically organized? Is information presented in a systematic and readable manner? - 20%
3. **Form**: Is the grammar correct? Are there typographical errors – 10%

**Synthesis**: Was student able to synthesize the paper into a one-page informational sheet that is appropriate for parents? Did the writer draw conclusions from comparing/contrasting her/his interviews with the findings in the research– 20%