SW 601 Adolescent Development and Behavior

Winter 2003
Jan. 6 to April 14, 2002
Monday 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
3003 School of Education Building

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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.

Course Requirements
Throughout the course, we will approach adolescent development and behavior from the following perspectives:

- **The current research** – We will be read and discuss recent research concerning adolescence. Some of the required and recommended texts are research based and provide extensive references to other current research into adolescence. Updated literature is included in the course pack.
- **The experiential** – We will explore our professional and personal experiences in working/living/interacting with adolescents. Our readings and class activities include case histories, experiences & and voice of adolescents.
- **The personal** – We 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.
• **An historical/critical perspective** – What we think of as adolescence is a social construction that shifts and changes over time. We will examine the course content in order to recognize and understand ways in which our “knowledge” of adolescence is a product of our historical period and our situated identities.

My approach to education is heavily influenced by my experiences as a trainer, particularly my experience training adults who work with youth. I train adults to use a youth-centered approach to interacting with youth, rooted in experiential and cooperative pedagogies. I believe that these approaches parallel good training practice, support adult learning, and model best practices with youth, as well. I hope that we can establish a classroom climate that facilitates everyone’s active participation in activities and discussions so that we can all learn from each throughout the semester.

We will spend some time at the beginning considering how the class will operate, developing ground rules and norms for ourselves, and getting to know each other’s backgrounds and interests. We may revisit our procedures periodically to ensure they are working well and to revise them if they aren’t. We are likely to differ in our views and understandings of adolescence. We need to be able to challenge ourselves and assist each other to have an optimal learning experience. Class time will vary from week to week, including different activities, large & small group discussions, guest presenters, etc…

However we use class time, the readings for the week will lay the foundation for what we do. This course requires a lot of reading; please come prepared to discuss and apply the readings each week in order to maximize not only your learning, but also the learning of the class. (Please note that some weeks we will be dividing up the readings and sharing them in class.)

**Required Texts**
Other professors have used most of these texts for this course in past semesters. I have added the Thomas Hine text in order to provide a critical and historical context for understanding of adolescents. I have also prepared a course pack in order to supplement the other readings. Each week we will look ahead to the upcoming readings so that I can provide some context to the selections.

- Hine, Thomas. *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager*
- Feldman, S. Shirley and Elliot, Glen R. *At the Threshold: The Developing Adolescent*
- Pipher, Mary. *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls*
- Pollack, William. *Real Boys*
- Owens, Robert E. *Queer Kids: The Challenges and Promise for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth*
- Steiner, Hans. *Treating Adolescents*
- A course pack will supplement the texts. It will be available at Excel on S. University.

All readings for the course will be on reserve in the SSW Library. Please note that there are two other sections of SW 601 and be aware that we are sharing many of the texts on reserve with students in those sections.
**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

**Course Assignments**

There will be four assignments intended to assess your understanding, application, and integration of the material presented in the course, as well as material outside the course. You will receive more detailed criteria and an assessment rubric to help you prepare each of the assignments.

**Reminiscing Adolescence – 15% of grade**
This essay is an opportunity for you to explore and share your own experiences as an adolescent and your understanding of adolescence, particularly as it relates to the themes that frame this course – “changes, contexts, and psychosocial development & problem behaviors”. This paper should be 5-6 pages and is due 1/27/02.

**Encountering Adolescence – 30% of grade**
This paper will involve a literature review on youth who are members of a targeted social identity group and interviews with youth from this identity group. This paper should be 8-10 pages and is due 3/10/02.

**Researching Adolescence – 30% of grade**
Small groups of students will prepare a presentation on an adolescent “problem behavior” discussed in our texts and deliver it to the class. After the presentation, students will facilitate a discussion with the full class on the topic. Presentations should be 30-45 minutes and will begin 3/24/02.

**Reflecting on Adolescence – 10% of grade**
This essay is a final reflection on the course and the learning that has occurred for you throughout it. It should be 3-4 pages and is due 4/14/02.

**Discussing Adolescence – 15% of grade**
The final 10% of the final grade is determined by your class participation. Class participation includes attendance, punctuality, active participation in class activities, contributions to discussions, and consultation & collaboration with colleagues in small groups. This will be assessed, in part, by your colleagues in the class.

Final grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>F</td>
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4.
**Course Schedule**
Readings are listed on the date they will be discussed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Please Read</th>
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| 1/6  | Introductions and Course Overview | Threshold – ch. 1  
Real Boys – ch. 1  
Ophelia – ch. 1  
Ophelia – ch. 2  
Queer Kids – ch 1  
Queer Kids – ch 2 |
| 1/13 | Introductions to Adolescence | Threshold – ch. 1  
Real Boys – ch. 1  
Ophelia – ch. 1  
Ophelia – ch. 2  
Queer Kids – ch 1  
Queer Kids – ch 2 |
| 1/20 | MLK Day – No Class | |
| 1/27 | Historical Perspectives (Reminiscing Papers Due) | Threshold – ch. 4  
Rise & Fall – Intro & ch 1  
Framing – Intro  
Bremner, R. 1971.  
Mead, M. 1928.  
Hollingshead, A. B. 1949.  
Gottlieb & Ramsey 1964.  
| 2/3  | Developmental Tasks of Adolescence | Threshold – ch. 2, 3  
Ophelia – ch. 3  
Adolescent Development – National Academy of Sciences, 2002  
Adolescent Development – Steinberg & Morris, 2001  
Rise & Fall – ch 2, 3 |
| 2/10 | Identity Development | Threshold – ch. 14, 5  
Erikson, E. H. 1950. Chapter 7 & 8  
Queer Kids – ch 3  
Goodman, D. J. 2001. Perspectives on Individual Change and Development  
Tatum, B. 1997. Identity Development in Adolescents…  
Males, M. & Macallair, D. N.D. The Color of Justice…  
Real Boys – ch. 4 Action Love  
Boyd-Franklin & Franklin – ch 1 Raising African-American Teen Boys |
| 2/17 | Family | Threshold – ch. 6, 10  
Real Boys – ch. 5, 6, 14  
Ophelia – ch. 4, 5, 6, 7  
Queer Kids – ch 10 |
| 2/24 | Spring Break! | |
| 3/3  | Leisure & Work | Threshold – ch. 9  
Rise & Fall – ch 5, 6, 7  
Cool – ch 14 Workplace |
| 3/10 | Schools (Encounter Papers Due) | Threshold – ch. 8  
Real Boys – ch. 10  
Ophelia – ch. 14  
Queer Kids – ch 5  
Rise & Fall – ch 8, 9 |
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Please Read</th>
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<tr>
<td>3/17</td>
<td>Sexuality</td>
<td>Threshold – ch. 13</td>
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<td>Real Boys – ch. 7, 9</td>
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<td>Queer Kids – ch 4, 6</td>
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<td>Rise &amp; Fall – ch 10</td>
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<td>3/24</td>
<td>Youth Culture &amp; Media</td>
<td>Rise &amp; Fall – ch 11, 12, 13, 14</td>
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<td>(Presentations)</td>
<td>Threshold – ch 7, 11</td>
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<td>Real Boys – ch 8</td>
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<td>Framing – ch 8</td>
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<td>Cool – ch 2</td>
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<td>3/31</td>
<td>Stress &amp; Problems</td>
<td>All Read:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Presentations)</td>
<td>Threshold – ch 15, 16, 17</td>
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<td>Treating – Intro, ch 1</td>
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<td>Also Read – cluster of readings for your presentation</td>
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<td>Cervone, B. 2002.</td>
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<td>Cool – ch 18 – Dana’s Mystical Tunnel</td>
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<td>4/14</td>
<td>Needs &amp; Next Steps</td>
<td>Rise &amp; Fall – ch 15</td>
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<td>(Final Reflection Papers Due)</td>
<td>Real Boys – epilogue</td>
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<td>Ophelia – ch. 15</td>
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<td>Queer Kids – ch 7, 8, 9, 11</td>
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