

Syllabus
Psychology 471: Adolescent Development

Course Description:

Overview:

What are the defining features of “adolescence,” and how have views of this unique developmental period changed over historical time and cultural context? How are adolescents and toddlers alike? Is adolescence inevitably a period of stress and angst? Why do adolescents get jokes that younger children don’t? What are some of the consequences of the fact that girls tend to physically mature about 2 years earlier than boys? What are the different ways families tend to adapt to the changes that adolescence brings? Why do many adolescents in our culture and current historical era find it easier to be closer emotionally to their peers than to their parents? Why do ethnic boundaries in friendships seem to become sharper in adolescence? Why do adolescents tend to resist identifying themselves as part of a particular crowd, even though they routinely apply crowd labels to others? What is the most important determinant of popularity and unpopularity in adolescence? What are the 10 most common reasons given by adolescents when asked to explain breaking-up? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the secondary school system (middle and high school) in the US, and how might it be improved? What are the advantages and disadvantages of smaller school size? Why is parents’ social class so strongly related to adolescents’ academic performance? How does the media influence adolescents’ identity development? Which developed countries have the highest and lowest rates of substance use, and what factors might contribute to this variation? Might taking a course in adolescent development change how you look back on your own adolescence, how you might parent your own children one day, and/or your perspectives on laws that apply to this age group? In this course, we will ponder these questions and more. We will examine adolescent development, typical developmental trajectories and variability, as well as several of the factors that influence this development. By the end of this course, you will become familiar with the defining aspects of adolescent developmental, exploring specific topics related to the cognitive, social-emotional, and physical changes that take place during this period.

Specific goals for this course include:

- Examine cognitive, social/emotional, and physical developmental changes that take place during adolescence
- Consider how various factors influence this development (e.g., culture, family factors, peers, media)
- Gain an appreciation of the research methods used in this field
- Develop critical thinking skills in evaluating developmental research
- Achieve an understanding of the practical implications of research and theory concerning adolescent development

Text and Materials:

Textbook: “Adolescence and Emerging adulthood: A Cultural Approach”, Fifth Edition, by Jeffery Jensen Arnett, Ph.D.

Sakai site: The syllabus, course schedule, details concerning the paper assignments and power-points from lectures will be posted here. Please check for announcements, postings, and updates. This is also where you will submit your turn paper via the drop box. <https://sakai.unc.edu/portal/site/psyc471.001.f14>

Students with Special Needs:

I encourage any students with a learning disability or difference or other special need to contact me at the beginning of the semester so that we can make any necessary arrangements for your success in this course. ☺

Course Requirements:

Prerequisites:

Psyc 101 (General Psychology); Psyc 250 (Child Development).

Academic Integrity / Honor Code:

This is a big deal to me! As in all Carolina courses, the Honor Code is in effect. *The Instrument of Student Judicial Governance* requires that you sign a pledge on all written work that affirms: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment.” This Code applies to all exams and the paper. Although you may study together for exams, all exams are to be taken without the assistance of other people, books, or notes. Ideas or information in your written work must be appropriately referenced, whether the original source is written or verbal. Five or more words taken verbatim from any source must be placed in quotation marks with the source appropriately referenced. Any violation of the Honor Code will need to be reported, so please don’t commit any violations so I won’t have to report any. ☺ If you have questions about any of these matters, ASK.

Class Participation:

Students are expected to read the required chapters *prior to class*, attend all class sessions, and participate in class discussions. Class will be a combination of lectures, discussions, and class activities. All of these will be much more interesting if you have completed the required reading *prior to the class*. Although I will not be taking attendance, many of the questions on the exams are based on information from class, so students with perfect attendance usually receive the highest grades. If you do miss a class, be sure to *check with a classmate* to find out what we did and to get the notes.

It is very important that in our discussions, we demonstrate *open-mindedness and a high degree of respect for the opinions and experiences of others*. Please display this respect in all interactions in this class. Also, along the lines of respect, please be punctual, as lateness is a distraction to everyone, and please remember to *turn off your cell phone before class*.

Exams: 75% of your grade for the course

There are 3 non-cumulative exams (2 given during the term; 1 during final exam period), each worth 25% of your total grade (for a total of 75% for all the exams):

Exam I:	Thursday, September 18	in class	chapters 1, 2, 3, 4
Exam II:	Thursday, October 23	in class	chapters 5, 6, 7, 8
Exam III:	Thursday, December 11	4:00pm	chapters 9, 10, 11, 12, 13

Material from the textbook, lectures, and in-class discussion and activities will be included on the exams. The format for the exams will be a combination of multiple-choice and fill-in the blank / short-answer questions.

During the term, make-up examinations will not be allowed unless you are seriously ill, have an extreme personal emergency, or are participating in a university-sanctioned activity (e.g., player in athletic competition). In those cases, please contact me before the exam if possible, but no later than 2 days after the exam. ***Written documentation will be required to validate the reason for needing to take a make-up exam (e.g., note from a doctor or your academic dean). In the case of the final exam, you need to discuss the situation with the dean, as per University policy.***

Term Paper: 25% of your grade for the course

The goal of the term paper is to gain greater understanding of research methods used in this field and to delve deeper into a topic in adolescent development of interest to you, using original source research on the topic. For this assignment, you will select a research article in the field of adolescent development, review the study presented in the paper (introduction, methods, results, discussion) and critique it (considering strengths, weaknesses, and possible directions for future work in the area). **More specific information concerning requirements for the paper is provided at the end of the syllabus.**

Paper due dates:

September 16: By 3:30 pm (start of class) on this date you must email me a PDF of the article you want to review (NOT a link; attach a PDF of the article to your email). I will review it and email you back to let you know if it's appropriate or if you need to select a different article.

October 2: By 3:30 pm (start of class) on this date you must submit a word document of the outline of your paper (*use the paper outline provided below*) via the drop box on the Sakai website.

October 16: Optional draft. I will be happy to read a draft of your paper and provide comments. If you choose to do submit a draft:

1. Submit a word document of the draft via the drop box on the Sakai website by 3:30 pm (start of class) on this date, and
2. email me letting me know you've submitted a draft; attaching a PDF of the article you reviewed.

November 6: By 3:30 pm (start of class) on this date, you must:

1. Submit a word document of your paper via the drop box on the Sakai website
2. Send me an email with a PDF of the article you reviewed attached, and letting me know you have submitted your paper (if you submitted an optional draft, remind me of this in the email as well)
3. In class, turn in hard copy of title page only that also includes your signature indicating your compliance with the honor code in completing the assignment

A note about late papers: Your paper will not be considered submitted until all 3 of these tasks are done. If all three are not done by 3:30 pm of this date, you will lose 10 points every 24 hours until all 3 are completed (i.e., if your submission is complete by 3:30 on the due date, the highest grade possible is the full 100%; if your submission is completed after 3:30 pm on November 6th and before 3:30 pm on November 7th, you will lose 10 points (thus the highest possible grade will be 90%); if your submission is completed after 3:30 pm on November 7th and before 3:30 on November 8th, you will lose 20 points (thus highest possible grade will be 80%); and so on).

The only way this consequence can be waived is with a note from the Dean stating special circumstances exist and asking your professors to provide special accommodations. So, make sure you allow enough time to get your paper done, leaving enough time for computer break-downs, printer problems, your absolute best friend in the world going through the absolute worst break-up of his/her life and needing you to listen to them and comfort them all night long, dogs eating your homework, etc.

Grading:

As indicated above, each exam and the term paper are worth 25% each of your total grade each. In addition, I reserve the right to raise (but not lower) *borderline* grades when students have demonstrated high levels of involvement, have made marked improvement over the semester, or have accomplished a notable achievement (e.g., perfect score on an exam; superior paper). For each individual grade (each exam and the paper), as well as for your final grade, grades will be assigned based on the following distribution:

Percentage	Grade
93-100%	A
90-92%	A-
87-89%	B+
83-86%	B
80-82%	B-
77-79%	C+
73-76%	C
70-72%	C-
67-69%	D+
60-66%	D
< 60%	F

Psych 471, Course Calendar (*subject to
change as semester progresses*)

date	chapter	topic
T 8/19		First Class
Th 8/21	1	Introduction
T 8/26		NO CLASS
Th 8/28	2	Biological Foundations
T 9/2	3	Cognitive Foundations
Th 9/4	3	Cognitive Foundations (cont.)
T 9/9	4	Cultural Beliefs
Th 9/11	4	Cultural Beliefs (cont.)
T 9/16		Catch-up & Review / PDF of article due
Th 9/18		Exam 1
T 9/23	5	Gender
Th 9/25	5	Gender (cont.)
T 9/30	6	The Self
Th 10/2	6	The Self (cont.) / Paper Outline due
T 10/7	7	Family Relationships
Th 10/9	7	Family Relationships (cont.)
T 10/14	8	Friends and Peers
Th 10/16	8	Friends and Peers (cont.) / Optional Draft due
T 10/21		Catch-up & Review
Th 10/23		Exam 2
T 10/28	9	Love and Sexuality
Th 10/30	9	Love and Sexuality (cont.)
T 11/4	10	School
Th 11/6	10	School (cont.) / Term Paper due
T 11/11	11	Work
Th 11/13	11	Work (cont.)
T 11/18	12	Media
Th 11/20	12	Media (cont.)
T 11/25	13	Problems and Resilience
Th 11/27		NO CLASS Thanksgiving Break
T 12/2		Catch-up & Review
Th 12/11		Exam 3 (4:00 pm)

TERM PAPER INSTRUCTIONS

- **Topic:** Critique of a research article in the field of adolescent development; specific topic within this area is up to you. Any main topic covered in our textbook is acceptable.
- **Formatting:** The paper must be 10-15 pages, typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, with no greater than 1" margins all around.
- **Title Page:** Include a title page with your name, the full citation of the article (in APA format), and date your paper is turned in.
- **Turning in: You must do the following 3 tasks by the due date/time to turn in your paper:**
 1. Submit a word document of your paper via the *drop box on the Sakai website*
 2. Send me an email (liz.pungello@unc.edu) with a *PDF of the article you reviewed attached*, letting me know you have submitted your paper
 3. In class, turn in *hard copy of title page only* that also includes your signature indicating your compliance with the honor code in completing the assignment.

See syllabus above for important information about due date/time and consequences for late papers.
- **Criteria for selected article:** The article you choose **must** be:
 - Published in the year *2000 or later*
 - About some aspect of adolescent development (i.e., any topic covered in the text book)
 - About a research study (i.e., *not* a review article, *not* a chapter, *not* a brief report, etc.)
 - The study should have clear independent variable(s) (IV) and dependent variable(s) (DV) (may also have moderators and/or mediators as well)
 - It may either be an experiment (manipulation of IV(s) with effects on DV(s) measured) or a correlational study (IV(s) not manipulated, rather natural variability in IV(s) statistical associated with variability in DV(s)).
 - The article may be about multiple studies. If this is the case, follow the outline below, with sub-sections in the Methods and Results sections for each study.
 - In the APA format of: Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion
 - The following journals are good sources for empirical articles: *American Education Research Journal, Applied Cognitive Psychology, Applied Developmental Science, British Journal of Developmental Psychology, Child Development, Child Development Perspectives, Developmental Psychology, Developmental Science, Early Childhood Research Quarterly, International Journal of Educational Research, Journal of Adolescence, Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, Journal of Early Adolescence, Journal of Educational Psychology, Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, Journal of Family Issues, Journal of School Psychology, Journal of Marriage and Family, Journal of Youth and Adolescence, Research in Developmental Disabilities*
 - *If you find an article you want to review but it's in a journal not on this list, be sure it meets criteria above, and I will let you know if it's acceptable when articles are turned in to me for approval*
- **Grading Criteria:** using a 100 point scale, points will be allocated as follows:
 - Review: 60 points
 - Introduction: 15
 - Methods: 15
 - Results: 15
 - Discussion: 15
 - Critique: 40 points
 - Strengths: 15
 - Weaknesses: 15
 - Next Steps: 10
 - **5 POINTS WILL BE DEDUCTED FOR NOT FOLLOWING FORMATTING AND TITLE PAGE INSTRUCTIONS ABOVE!**
- **USE THE OUTLINE ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE TO WRITE YOUR PAPER!!!!**

Paper Outline

I. Article Review

A. Introduction

1. What is the general topic? In a few sentences state generally what is being investigated and provide definitions of main construct(s) under study (may need to reference text book for this)
2. Why is the study important? In a few sentences, what's the rationale for doing it? (may be applied and/or theoretical)
3. Briefly state the theoretical idea(s) the study is testing; the theoretical assumptions underlying the study (may not be directly stated by the authors, thus you may need to consider general theories of developmental psychology)
4. Briefly summarize the studies reviewed that support doing this study (need to provide only a few sentences summarizing the prior research the authors are building upon, main points).
5. Clearly state the independent and dependent variables, and any moderator or mediator variables if included (if not clearly stated by the authors, state what you believe them to be based on the analyses conducted)
6. State the hypotheses of the study (if not clearly stated by the authors, state what you believe them to be based on the analyses that were conducted)

B. Method

1. Describe the participants:
 - a. sample sizes (total for whole sample, also sizes of any sub-groups if present)
 - b. ages
 - c. any other demographic information such gender, ethnicity, income important for generalizability of the study (if not provided, clearly say so)
2. Describe the procedures – briefly, what they did
3. Describe any instruments/measures
 - a. state what instruments/measures were used to measure each construct / variable, and for each:
 - i. report information given concerning its validity (if none given, clearly say so)
 - ii. report information given concerning its reliability (if none given, clearly say so)

C. Results

1. Briefly describe any descriptive or preliminary analyses conducted
2. For each hypothesis:
 - a. state what statistical analyses were conducted
 - b. briefly describe the findings (do not need to provide exact statistics)

D. Discussion

1. Summarize major findings
2. Briefly describe each of the main points the authors make in the discussion, including how the study is consistent and/or inconsistent with prior work, and the unique contribution this study makes to the field

II. Article Critique

A. Strengths – describe **3** strengths of the study (one separate paragraph for each strength considered)

- strengths might include importance of the topic, aspects of the methods (e.g., design, psychometrics of measures), generalizability of the results, etc.
- for each strength you've identified, describe the strength (stating specifically what was done in the study) and say *why* it is a strength (e.g., you may say the sample included families from all income levels; this is a strength because the result thus generalize to families in all income levels)

B. Weaknesses – describe **3** weaknesses of the study (one separate paragraph for each weakness considered)

- weaknesses might include importance of the topic, aspects of the methods, generalizability of the results, etc.
- for each weakness you've identified, describe the weakness (stating specifically what was done in the study) and say *why* it is a weakness (e.g., you may say the sample size was very small; this is a weakness because it means less power to find significant associations and thus any non-significant findings should be interpreted with greater caution)

C. Next steps for this line of research

1. Describe what studies need to be done next that would examine the *same hypotheses* tested in this study but address the weaknesses of this study (e.g., a study that tests the same variables but with better measures, a bigger sample, a more representative sample, a better research design that would allow for testing cause/effect, etc.)
2. Assuming the hypotheses found in this study are true despite the weaknesses, what studies should be done next in this line of research? Thinking conceptually, what hypotheses should be investigated next? (e.g., if the study examined a main effects question, are there moderators or mediators that could be tested next?).