

**PSYC 314 Adolescent Psychology**  
Spring 2012  
Section 001: MW 1:30-2:45 pm  
Science and Technology I 124

**Instructor:** Grace Howarth

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**Office:** David King Hall 1029 (must ring bell at 1021)

**Office Phone:** 703-993-4050

**Office Hours:** Mondays 3:00-4:00pm and 6:00-7:00 pm, or by appointment

**Required Text:** Arnett, J. J. (2010). *Adolescence and emerging adulthood: A cultural approach* (4th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

### **Course Objectives**

This course explores the central concepts, issues, and theories related to the study of adolescent development. Topics will include physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development in adolescence. At times, this course will explore these issues from a multicultural perspective. We will also delve into the problems adolescents face in contemporary culture. As a cumulative project, students will have the opportunity to further examine the issues of adolescence that are of particular interest to them.

### **Technology**

Students are expected to regularly check the course link on Blackboard (found at <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/>). This is where important class information including lecture notes, assignment details, and grades will be posted. To access Blackboard, students must use their George Mason email ID and password. Additionally, students should check their GMU email accounts regularly. Please make certain that new messages can be received and your account is not over the message limit.

### **Course Requirements and Grading**

**Exams (60%):** Three non-cumulative exams will assess the information you have learned from class lectures, readings, and discussions. The exams will be comprised of multiple choice questions. Each exam will be weighted equally and account for 20% of the overall course grade. See the schedule below for exam dates.

**Specialized Project (25%):** Bullying, teen pregnancy, and juvenile justice are a few of the real issues faced by many of today's adolescents. For the specialized project, pick any topic related to adolescence or emerging adulthood interests you, research the topic, and present it in the medium you feel is most appropriate. You may work alone or in groups of up to five students. You have the freedom to be as creative as you like, but all projects *must* be planned ahead of time. High quality products students have submitted in the past have included (but are certainly not limited to): a short film featuring interviews of adolescents, a 10-page magazine or paper, a paper and petition to amend a law relating to juveniles, a course with lesson plans designed for adolescents, and a 15-minute presentation with one of the following: a 5-page paper, an annotated bibliography with a minimum of 8 sources, or an educational pamphlet.

**The Plan.** For the specialized project plan, please submit a 2-3 page outline describing, in detail, your topic and your plan for presentation. If you are working in a group, please indicate that in your plan and include all group members' names on the submission. You may choose any topic related to adolescent development that interests you—it does not need to be something we've covered or will cover in class.

If you wish to give a presentation on your topic, please indicate that in your submission as well. During the class period after I hand back the project plans, I will pass around a sign up sheet for presentations in April and May (see schedule below).

In the plan, please also include a short annotated bibliography with a minimum of four empirical sources that you've found that will support your topic. List your citations in APA style with a few sentences summarizing each source and how you will use it in your project.

Please submit a plan no later than **Wednesday, February 29**. The plan will account for 15% of the total project grade and I will provide individualized feedback for all project plans.

**The Final Project.** The final project will require a moderate level of research and a minimum of 8 sources. For students who choose to present, all components of the project will be due on their chosen presentation day. For all other students, final projects are due no later than **Wednesday, May 2**. Late projects will not be accepted.

*Discussion Leading/Participation (15%):* Students are expected to attend as many classes as they are able, ask questions, and participate in discussions. On occasion, an assignment may be given in class and due before the period ends. These assignments cannot be made up. You will be required to sign up (in small groups) to lead one class discussion during the course of the semester. Thus, a portion of this grade will be determined by how well prepared you are in leading discussion on your chosen day. Before you lead, you should touch base with your fellow leaders and develop a plan for the discussion (the list of discussion leaders and their email addresses will be posted on Blackboard after the sign-up day). Discussion leaders have the freedom to choose the format of class involvement, which may range from small group discussion to a whole-class game. Please plan for approximately 40 minutes of discussion. **A one-page written plan should be emailed to me no later than 4 pm the day before you lead.**

*Extra Credit:* A maximum of 4 extra credit points may be earned and added to your total course percentage. You may earn extra credit via two different methods:

1. Participating in research studies sponsored by the GMU Psychology Department (<http://gmu.sona-systems.com/>). I will award you 1 point extra credit for each 1 hour that you participate in a research study.
2. Reading and writing a 1 1/2-2 page reflection on a peer-reviewed journal article relating to adolescent development. I have posted some relevant articles on Blackboard and will continue to do so throughout the semester. You may choose any of the articles I post or find articles on your own. Please email me any articles you find on your own for approval. I will award 2 points for each article reviewed.

Please note: You may earn extra credit through any combination of these two methods. Keep in mind that the maximum number of extra credit points you may earn is 4. All extra credit work is due to me no later than the last day of class, **Wednesday, May 2**.

Final grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A+ = 97-100%    B+ = 87-89%    C+ = 77-79%    D = 60-69%    F < 60%

A = 93-96%    B = 83-86%    C = 73-76%

A- = 90-92    B- = 80-82%    C- = 70-72%

### Absences

Students who must miss class for religious observances or university activities must notify me (and provide appropriate documentation) by February 1 in order to be excused on those dates.

*Students requesting an excused absence for participation in a university-sponsored activity must provide their instructor with a letter from the university stating the dates and times that*

*participation in the activity would result in the student missing class.* Absences for illness or emergency will also be excused if appropriate documentation is provided. Students who miss an exam for any of the aforementioned reasons are responsible for arranging a make up exam within one week of the originally scheduled exam (except in the case of prolonged illness).

### Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading/Assignment
M Jan 23	Syllabus	
W Jan 25	Introduction	Chapter 1
M Jan 30	Biological Foundations Lecture	Chapter 2
W Feb 1	Cognitive Foundations Lecture	Chapter 2
M Feb 6	Cultural Beliefs	Chapter 4
W Feb 8	Culture in Perspective: <i>God Grew Tired of Us</i>	
M Feb 13	Cultural Beliefs Discussion	Chapter 4
W Feb 15	Gender Lecture	Chapter 5
M Feb 20	Gender Discussion	Chapter 5
<b>M Feb 20</b>	<b>EXAM 1</b>	<b>Chapters 1-5</b>
M Feb 27	The Self Lecture	Chapter 6
<b>W Feb 29</b>	The Self Discussion	Chapter 6 <b>Specialized Project Plan due</b>
M March 5	Family Relationships Lecture	Chapter 7
W March 7	Family Relationships Discussion	Chapter 7
<b>March 12-18: SPRING BREAK!</b>		
M March 19	Friends and Peers Lecture	Chapter 8
W March 21	Friends and Peers Discussion	Chapter 8
M March 26	Love and Sexuality Lecture	Chapter 9
W March 28	Love and Sexuality Discussion	Chapter 9

<b>M April 2</b>	<b>EXAM 2</b>	<b>Chapters 6-9</b>
W April 4	School Lecture	Chapter 10
M April 9	School in Perspective: <i>Freakonomics</i> Incentives Specialized Project Presentations	
W April 11	School Discussion Specialized Project Presentations	Chapter 10
M April 16	Work Lecture Specialized Project Presentations	Chapter 11
W April 18	Work Discussion Specialized Project Presentations	Chapter 11
M April 23	Media Lecture Specialized Project Presentations	Chapter 12
W April 25	Media Discussion Specialized Project Presentations	Chapter 12
M April 30	Problems and Resilience Lecture Specialized Project Presentations	Chapter 13
W May 2	Problems and Resilience Discussion Specialized Project Presentations	Chapter 13
<b>W May 9</b>	<b>EXAM 3</b>	<b>Chapters 10-13</b>

\*Any changes to this schedule will be announced in class and updated on Blackboard

### **George Mason Honor Code**

Working with others to discuss course material is encouraged, but all assignments submitted for class and all exam performances must represent your own work. For all work, the person whose name appears on the paper must be the author. Provisions of the GMU Honor Code will be followed in this class and are detailed in your university catalog (<http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>). The instructor of this course reserves the right to enter a failing grade to any student found guilty of an honor violation.

### **Disability Help**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

**Last Day to Add:** January 31, 2012 **Final Drop Deadline:** February 24, 2012