

PSYC 314 Adolescent Psychology

Fall 2012

Section 002: MW 3:00-4:15 pm

Robinson Hall B203

Instructor: Hilary Weingarden • **Contact:** hweingar@masonlive.gmu.edu
Office Hours: Tues 10:30 am – 12:30 pm or by appt., Aquia Hall 337 (703) 993-5212
Grading TA: Lauren Vernamonti

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.

Course Requirements and Grading

Final Grades will be calculated accordingly:		
2/3 Non-Cumulative Exams	60% (30% each)	A+ (98-100) B- (82-80%)
Specialized Project	35%	A (97-93%) C+ (79-77%)
Random attendance checks	5%	A- (92-90%) C (76-70%)
Optional extra credit	Up to 3% additional	B+ (89-87%) D (69-60%); B (86-83%) F (59% & below)

Exams (60%): Three non-cumulative midterm exams (of which 2 will count toward your grade) will assess the information you have learned from class lectures, readings, and discussions. The exams will be comprised of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions. There will be no make-up exams offered. **Students may choose to either take all 3 of the exams and drop their lowest exam grade (recommended), OR take only 2 of the 3 exams.** Either way, students must take at least 2 midterm exams. Failing to do so will result in a maximum final grade of “D.” If a student misses an exam for any reason, that will count as his or her dropped exam. If there are prominent, unavoidable, extenuating circumstances for missing a second exam, discuss them with me ahead of time and provide documentation. You will need Scantrons and a pencil for each exam. See the schedule below for exam dates.

Specialized Project (35%): 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 that interests you, get approval for this topic from Hilary, and then research the topic to present it to the class on your assigned day. You have the freedom to be as creative as you like, but all projects *must* be planned ahead of time. The goal of this project is for you to become an expert on one particular topic in adolescent psychology that interests you, and to share your new expertise with the class. Your project will include 3 stages:

1. **The Topic** (5 points)

At the beginning of class on the day indicated in the schedule, you will turn in a brief paragraph describing the topic that you are going to cover in-depth for your final presentation, as well as a second choice topic (in case many students happen to choose the same topic). This can be informal and short. The goal is for you to have a few sentences on paper explaining the content areas of your topic that you will be researching and, later, teaching us, so that I can make sure it is on track.

2. **The Plan** (10 points)

On the day of the in-class project workshops, you will each meet with me to discuss your project plan. At the beginning of class that day, you will turn in a 2-3 page outline describing, in detail, your topic and plan for presentation, as well as an annotated bibliography with a minimum of four academic/peer-reviewed resources that have helped you plan your project so far. The goal for this portion of the project grade is to give you an opportunity to discuss your ideas with me, to get feedback, and to encourage you to work ahead on your project, rather than saving it for the last minute.

3. **The Final Presentation** (20 points)

The final project will include your presentation and a final annotated bibliography, with a minimum of 8 academic resources. You will present your topic to the class (20 minutes) on your assigned day and turn in your annotated bibliography along with your presentation. Your presentation may include Powerpoint and/or video, but it should include some visual aids. Be creative! Powerpoint slides and videos must be sent to me 24 hours prior to your presentation, so that we can avoid technology issues and efficiently transition from one student's presentation to the next.

*Note – an annotated bibliography means that you list your citations in APA style with a few sentences summarizing each source and how you will use it in your project.

Attendance (5%): This is a relatively small class that is dependent on good discussion! Your performance on exams will also heavily rely on your attending every class and paying attention. Therefore, on randomly chosen days throughout the semester, I will take attendance at the beginning of class. Attending class on time will result in gaining points toward this portion of your grade. Of note, I will always take attendance on days where students are giving Specialized Project Presentations!

Students who must miss class for religious observances or university activities must notify me (and provide appropriate documentation) ahead of time 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.

Extra Credit: A maximum of 3 extra credit points may be earned and added to your total course percentage. The extra credit project is optional:

In February, the New Yorker published an excellent article describing the suicide of Rutgers college freshman Tyler Clementi and the subsequent trial of his roommate, Dharun Ravi. The case is complicated and very interesting. It involves the topics of sexuality, bullying, peer influence, popularity, and many other themes that are covered in this course. As extra credit, you can choose to read this article in its entirety (will be posted on Blackboard) and write short-answer responses to guiding questions that I will also post on Blackboard. The goal of the assignment is to apply the knowledge you have learned in this course to this real-life current event. The assignment will be due at the beginning of class. Please see schedule for due date.

Class Schedule - *Any changes to schedule will be announced in class and on Blackboard

Date	Topic	Reading/Assignment
M Aug 27	Syllabus and Introduction Part 1	Chapter 1
W Aug 29	Introduction Part II	Chapter 1
M Sep 3	No Class – Labor Day	
W Sep 5	Biological Foundations	Chapter 2
M Sep 10	<i>Inside the Teenage Brain</i> film	Chapter 2
W Sept 12	Cognitive Foundations, Part I	Chapter 3
M Sept 17	Cognitive Foundations, Part II	Chapter 3; Specialized Project Topic due
W Sept 19	Gender	Chapter 5
M Sept 24	Cultural Beliefs	Chapter 4
W Sept 26	<i>God Grew Tired of Us</i> film	Chapter 4
M Oct 1	Exam 1	Chapters 1-5
W Oct 3	In-class workshop and check-ins with Hilary for Specialized Projects	Specialized Project Plan due
TUES Oct 9	The Self	Chapter 6
W Oct 10	Family Relationships	Chapter 7
M Oct 15	Friends and Peers	Chapter 8
W Oct 17	<i>The Bully</i> film	Chapter 8
M Oct 22	Love and Sexuality	Chapter 9 NYTimes and Huffington Post articles on Blackboard
W Oct 24	EXAM 2	Chapters 6-9
M Oct 29	Specialized Project Presentations day 1	**Optional extra credit due
W Oct 31	School	Chapter 10
M Nov 5	Specialized Project Presentations day 2	
W Nov 7	Media	Chapter 12

M Nov 12	Specialized Project Presentations day 3	
W Nov 14	Problems and Resilience	Chapter 13
M Nov 19	Specialized Project Presentations day 4	
W Nov 21	No Class – Thanksgiving Break ☺	
M Nov 26	Specialized Project Presentations day 5	
W Nov 28	Specialized Project Presentations day 6	
M Dec 3	Specialized Project Presentations day 7	
W Dec 5	EXAM 3	Chapters 10, 12, 13

OTHER POLICIES

- Use of Technology and Official Communications via GMU E-mail:** Mason uses e-mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason email account, and are required to active that account and check it regularly.

The course Blackboard page will also be used to communicate announcements and distribute course materials.
- Honor Code:** All students are expected to abide by the GMU honor code. GMU students pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work. Failure to abide by the honor code will result in an “F” grade. Further information can be found at:
<http://www.gmu.edu/departments/unilife/honorcode.html>.
- Accommodation of Disabilities:** 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.
- Office Hours:** Students are welcome and encouraged to attend office hours. Whenever possible, please email the instructor prior to office hours that you plan to attend.
- Add/Drop:** Last day to add: September 4; Last day to drop: September 28