CF 653: *Development III: Adolescence*

Ph.D. Program: Fall 2014-15

---

**Kevin McMahon, LCSW**

- Instructor: Kevin McMahon
- 3139 N Lincoln Ave., suite #222, Chicago, IL 60657
- 312-545-2179
- email: kevinj.mcmahon@yahoo.com

---

**Description**

This course addresses adolescent psychological, social, and cognitive growth and change as these occur in the context of family, community and culture. Psychodynamic and systems approaches to development are incorporated. Wide variations within the range of normal development and multiple pathways toward outcomes are considered.

---

**Goals**

1. To appreciate the complex interaction between the psychological, socio-cultural, historical, and biological influences in human development
2. To acquire an understanding of psychodynamic theories of adolescence
3. To develop an awareness of empirical biological and social science contributions to the study of adolescence
4. To attempt an understanding of what normal adolescent development may look like for teenagers who grow up with biological differences or who live within a variety of alternative cultural environments.
Students with Special Needs

Students having any form of special learning or writing needs should notify the instructor immediately so that accommodations can be discussed. Do not be “shy,” or you could affect your grade.

Assignments

Midterm paper – due week four (4-5 page paper)

Choose an adolescent figure from your caseload, your family, yourself, a movie, a book, etc. and apply two of the developmental theories discussed thus far to your understanding of this person’s development. Many of these older theories utilized metaphorical descriptions of the adolescent period rather than knowledge of the interaction between brain and environment. Try to define the primary metaphor and its relation to adolescent development and how you see this play out in the actions of the individual you’ve elected to discuss. I’m looking for your ability to accurately apply the class material to an adolescent figure.

****Please bring your paper to class 4 and be prepared to discuss it with your classmates.

Final paper – due week eight (5-7 page paper)

Watch the movie “The Breakfast Club.” Choose one character to discuss in detail, applying developmental concepts explored during the semester to articulate your understanding of this character’s developmental trajectory and adolescent challenges. Additionally, you should discuss the group as a whole. What concepts from class are reflected in their collective behaviors and interactions with each other and the adults in their life?

****Please bring your paper to class 8 and be prepared to discuss it with your classmates.

Attendance

The seminar format makes it important that students attend all classes. One absence is acceptable. Two must be cleared with instructor and agreed upon make-up work completed promptly. Please advise instructor in advance of absence if at all possible. (See email address and cell phone number at top of syllabus).
Evaluation

This class is a seminar where preparation for presentations and class discussion are significant factors.

Grades

1. Participation: (attendance, discussion, leadership) - approximately 30%
2. Midterm paper – 35%
3. Final paper - 35%

Course Outline and Readings

*Psychodynamic theories of adolescent emotional development (Weeks 1-4)*

**Week 1:**

**Readings**


**Week 2:**

**Readings**


**Week 3:**

**Readings**


**Week 4:**

This class will be devoted to discussing your midterm papers. Students are expected to come to class with their paper completed and ready to present their thinking to classmates in a coherent and engaging manner.

**Adolescent Brain Development**

**Week 5:**

**Readings**


*Note: about 20 pp. of large print; for general public; very readable (Blackbaud)*


*Look at upper right part of page and click on pdf format for a copy you download (no charge). Note: This is a technical article but it is only 15-16 pp. long and technical parts can be skimmed. I am looking for familiarity with their main points. (Blackbaud)*


**Aspects of adolescent emotional and social development.**

**Week 6:**

**Readings**


Week 7:

Readings


Emerging adulthood

Week 8:

** This class will be devoted to discussing your final papers. Students are expected to come to class with their paper completed and ready to present their thinking to classmates in a coherent and engaging manner.

Also, please complete the assigned readings, as they will prepare you for the next semester on adulthood.

Readings
