The study of the life course with the increasing recognition of adulthood and aging as dynamic developmental phases promises to enrich our understanding of lives through time. While the role of the past in human development has often dominated the clinical imagination, the fact of ongoing maturational processes, the complex range of psychosocial experience, and the certainty of existential challenges inevitably shapes the meanings given to life narratives. This course seeks to enhance our recognition of the transformations of adulthood and thus our understanding of the life course.

Goals

1. To appreciate the complex interaction between psychological, socio-cultural, historical, and biological influences over the life course
2. To appreciate the general cultural bias against the recognition of development beyond adolescence.
3. To develop an understanding of life course theory and its clinical relevance
4. To integrate psychoanalytic and social science perspectives on adulthood and aging

Assignment
Five page paper that reflects on some aspect of adulthood and aging in light of the course materials. The object of this reflection can be an imaginative work (novel, film etc.) or one’s own experience. This paper is due the last day of class.

**Grades**

Class participation 50%
Reflection paper 50%

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**February 2nd: Perspectives on the life course**


**February 16th: Tasks of adult life**


**March 1st: Partnering, parenthood, work and the landscape of adult life**


**March 15th: Is there a mid-life crisis?**


**March 29th: More perspectives on mid-life**


**April 12th: Perspectives on late adulthood**


April 26th: More perspectives on late adulthood


May 10th: Death and dying


Film: *Starting out in the evening.* (2007)

Contents Copyright, Institute for Clinical Social Work