Course Description:
This course will examine the biological, psychological, interpersonal, and contextual changes and behaviors that characterize normal adolescent development. Within the context of normal adolescent development, the course content will focus on: 1) the epidemiology and etiology of adolescent problem behaviors; 2) the extent to which these behaviors vary across gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status; 3) the ways in which these behaviors relate to normal adolescent development; and 4) existing programs and policies designed to prevent and, to a lesser extent, treat problem behaviors.

Course Content:
The broad content of this course will focus upon the changes, contexts, and psychosocial development and problems of adolescence. The key changes that occur during adolescence up to the transition to emerging adulthood are biological, cognitive, psychological, and social. The section of this course on biological changes will focus on the pubertal process and its physical, psychological, and social impact, as well as subgroup and generational differences in its onset and timing. The cognitive development portion of this course will examine the changes in adolescent thinking patterns and abilities that occur from pre-adolescence to late adolescence, theoretical perspectives on adolescent thinking, and within and between group differences and similarities in cognitive development. Finally, this course will examine the social (e.g., economic, legal, political, and interpersonal) changes that occur as adolescents make the transition to emerging adulthood.
The social contexts that are central to the development of most adolescents include family, peers, schools, neighborhoods, work, and leisure environments. The family issues that this course will examine include topics such as different parenting styles and their impact on a variety of adolescent outcomes, the effects of changing family patterns on adolescent development, and the relative and changing influence of the family on adolescents. The peer-related issues that this course will address include the historical origins of adolescent peer groups, the nature and structure of peer groups, and the influence of peers on both pro-social and problem behavior. Course content on schools will focus on the varied purposes of schools, the ways in which their organization influences adolescents' learning, and their direct and indirect influence on adolescents'
future life chances. The course will explore neighborhood effects on developmental
tasks, transitional outcomes, and behavioral risk and resiliency. Employment issues that
will be addressed include changes in the nature of adolescent employment, the long and
short term costs and benefits of adolescent employment, and the meaning of work for
young people who do not attend college. Content on adolescent leisure activity will
examine its role in socializing adolescents for adulthood, its influence on adolescents'
academic success and failure, and its economic importance.

The psychosocial development issues that this course will address include adolescent
identity, autonomy, achievement, and intimacy. Course material on identity will address
the topics of self-esteem, self concept, and the development of sex-role and ethnic
identity. The section of this course on adolescent autonomy will include material on the
development of various types of autonomy, moral development, and adolescents'
religious involvement and beliefs. The achievement segment of this course will explore
adolescents' achievement motives, the influence of family and peer environments on
adolescent achievement, and the various domains in which adolescents seek
achievement. The intimacy section will focus on changes in the nature of friendship
during adolescence, same sex versus opposite sex friendships, and dating and romantic
relationships.

The final section of this course will focus on adolescent psychosocial problem behaviors,
such as alcohol, tobacco, and other substance use, violence, suicide, eating disorders,
precocious sex, and delinquency. Particular attention will be given to the epidemiology,
etiology, trends, and population distributions of these problems. Considerable attention
will also be given to identification of the risk and protective factors for these problems
and to policies and programs related to their prevention and treatment, as well as
positive youth development.

Course Objectives:
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Specify the key developmental issues, tasks, and conflicts during the stages of
adolescent development and how these are influenced by social contexts.

2. Identify and describe biological, psychological, and social changes that characterize
normative development specific to the various stages pre-adolescents and adolescence
through the onset of emerging adulthood.

3. Critique and evaluate various theories of development and behavior from a
multicultural perspective and a social justice perspective.

4. Specify how risks, protective and promotive factors contribute to youth safety, mental
and physical health, security and well-being.

5. Describe the transactional relationship between a child or youth's development, their
environment, and any influencing historical or cultural inequities that may be at work.

6. Specify how history, culture, group memberships and social positions within society
(ascribed and earned) shape youths' and families' perceptions, attitudes, cognitive
processes and actions. Recognize the roles in development and family relationships
played by the diverse dimensions: ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family
structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation.

7. Critically examine the influences of interpersonal, community, governmental, societal, and cultural forces from the perspective of how these forces promote or disrupt privilege, oppression, diversity and social justice for children, youth and their families.

8. Discuss ethical dilemmas that may arise for social workers engaged in working with children and youth and their families at the various levels of practice and across the various stages of development.

Course Design:
This course will use a variety of strategies to promote student understanding of the course material, including lectures, guest speakers, weekly reflective papers, small group discussions, group inquiry, debates, and written assignments. Assignments may include observations of youth, developing learning portfolios, critical analyses of empirical research, empirical based interventions, and applications of research findings to youth-focused interventions.

Theme Relation to Multiculturalism & Diversity:
Multiculturalism and Diversity will be addressed throughout this course. Racial, ethnic, gender, and social class differences in the timing, sequencing, nature, and outcome of adolescent developmental experiences will be central to every facet of this course.

Theme Relation to Social Justice:
Social Justice and Social Change will be addressed through information and discussion on the ways in which social status mediates the experiences of adolescents and the ways in which various programs, practices, and policies help or hinder the successful development of all young people.

Theme Relation to Promotion, Prevention, Treatment & Rehabilitation:
Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation will be central to this course, particularly in the section that focuses on adolescent problem behaviors. General principles of program design, implementation, and evaluation will be presented and examples of successful programs and policies will be discussed.

Theme Relation to Behavioral and Social Science Research:
Behavioral and Social Science Research will provide the substantive foundation for this course. Emphasis will be placed on the review, critique, and synthesis of the existing scientific knowledge base as prerequisite to interventions that promote health and well-being, and prevent or treat adolescent problems.

Relationship to SW Ethics and Values:
Human development and behavior throughout the life-course is so profoundly impacted by environmental and social conditions, this course will emphasize the importance of understanding the range of "normal" adolescent development, working with disadvantaged populations, and sensitivity to the possibility of unintended negative consequences of interventions such as promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation. Additional emphasis will be on the critique and evaluation of various developmental and behavioral theories from a multicultural perspective and a social justice perspective. This course will also consider potential ethical dilemmas may arise for social workers working with adolescents and families. The impact of social conditions and social policy and the need for macro and micro intervention to improve the lives of adolescents will also be addressed.
Intensive Focus on PODS:
This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self knowledge and self awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

Course Philosophy and Format:

It is my belief that thorough knowledge of adolescent development is imperative, regardless of social work methodology, when working with or on behalf of this cohort. Key changes in biopsychosocial development during this phase of life are unduplicated in the human lifespan and provide unique adaptive cognitive, behavioral, and emotional manifestations that are easily misperceived and misunderstood by many helping professionals, and society as a whole. Intersections with family and community systems at this stage of development are complex with life long consequences for all. The roles of adolescents have followed a progression from modernism to post modernism in the past decades. With electronic accessibility, adolescent identity formation occurs within a broad, international context. However, the interpersonal and intrapersonal complexity of this stage of development warrants specific knowledge and helping techniques.

The current Council on Social Work Education standards state that the signature pedagogy of our profession is field instruction. In accordance with this policy, this course is designed to enhance the skills necessary to perform the role of social work practitioner with or on behalf of adolescents.

Course Design and Attendance Expectations

This course will use a combination of lecture, class discussion, case material, role-plays, group discussion and video material as appropriate. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. The instructor must be notified in the event of a possible absence due to illness or emergency.

- More than 2 absences will result in a reduction in the final grade.
- Assignments are expected to be on time. Assignments that are turned in late will result in an automatic reduction in the grade for the assignment.
- Class participation is strongly encouraged and is worth 10% of your final grade. If for personal reasons you find class participation to be difficult, please see me.

Grading:
The requirements listed below are the minimal expectations for class assignments, and if followed precisely will result in a “B+” grade for the assignment. Grades higher than “B+” will be given to work that has gone above and beyond the minimal qualifications. This would reflect more thorough, thoughtful and thought provoking work on your part. This will be discussed in detail in class. Feel free to ask questions about this policy!

Class Requirements
Progress in this course will be assessed by three assignments. The aim of the assignments is to give you an opportunity to focus on the history and current trends in practice with adolescents in order to develop your own personal interventive style and philosophy. My hope is that you will draw from your personal experience and enhance your own knowledge, self awareness and skill levels through the in-class experiences and required assignments.

The assignments for this class reflect the above philosophy. All papers are to be typed with page numbers, double spaced, and written in professional, clinical style.

Assignment 1: Role Play
The purpose of this assignment is for you to experience the developmental stage of adolescence through your adult lenses in order to give you a deeper and more complex understanding of this period as it relates to the community at large, and particularly helping professionals. This assignment will transpire over the entire semester, with specific requirements at various stages, as listed below:

- Pick your role: weeks 1 and 2
- In role, introduce yourself to the class: Week 3, January 25, 2011
- Research: please bring a citation of an article or book chapter that relates to you in your role—something you would want the class to know when they work with adolescents. Please include an introductory paragraph with your rationale for choosing this material. This will be shared with the class, March 22, 2011.
- Personal journal: please write 4 journal entries for the semester. Each one should be a response to a particular class session, including the assigned readings. The entries should state your personal reactions, including:
  - what it meant to you as a teen
  - what it signifies to you about the outside world
  - your suggestions for change (policy, intervention techniques, etc.)

This assignment is worth 20% of your grade and is ungraded. Successful completion of the required elements will result in an A grade for the assignment. The journal entries are due by April 19 and are to be submitted on C-Tools Assignment tab throughout the semester.

Assignment 2: Literature Review
The goal of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to explore the current research on a topic of your choice related to Adolescent Development and Behavior. There is obviously a wide range of information and topics of interest regarding this stage of development, much of which will not be covered in class. Given that, this paper is an opportunity for you to do some reading and thinking in an area of interest to you. You may pick any topic as long as it relates to this developmental period. You may also examine treatment approaches or public policy as related to this age group. My main hope is that you pick a topic in which you are interested.

Please address the following elements in a 4 to 5 page paper:

- Read and cite at least 6 scholarly articles on your topic of choice
• Discuss the conceptualization of this topic from a historical perspective
• Discuss the multilevel manifestations and effects on this issue:
  o Individual psychology perspective
  o Family systems perspective
  o Community and larger social systems perspective
• Discuss current best practices for this issue
• Discuss your recommendations for intervention
  o Micro
  o Mezzo
  o Macro

This assignment is worth 30% of your grade and is due on February 22, 2011.

Assignment 3: Case Study
The purpose of this assignment is for you to have a real interview with an adolescent. This may be someone you work with, someone you know personally, or another adolescent that is willing to be interviewed. Please assure the teen that all information will be protected for confidentiality, and please do not reveal any identifying information in the paper. Please address the following elements in a 6 to 7 page paper:

Interview requirements:
• Family history and current dynamics
• Social relationships
• Cultural and ethnic background and practices
• Spiritual beliefs and practices
• Educational attainment and goals
• Financial history (how does this person get money?)
• Employment history
• Leisure/recreational
• Medical/physical/nutritional
• Sexual and gender history: identity, expression
• Coping mechanisms
  o Acting out behaviors
  o Acting in behaviors
• Hopes and dreams

Personal reflection:
• What did you learn, personally, from this interaction?
• What are the multilevel influences on this teen?
• Did this assignment change your perspective of being a helping professional for adolescents?

This assignment is worth 40% of your grade and due on April 19, 2011.

Required Texts:


**Recommended Texts:**


Real, Terrence (1997) *I Don't Want to Talk About It: Overcoming the Secret Legacy of Male Depression*, Scribners, New York, NY


**Class Schedule:**

**January 11, 2011**

*Introduction:*

Syllabus

Expectations

Changes in adolescence

**January 18, 2011**

*Adolescent development: Gender*

Pipher: Ch. 1, 2

Brown, Gilligan: Chapters 1,2
Pollack, W. “Introduction: Listening to Boys’ Voices: Rescuing Ophelia’s Brothers.”
Pollack, W. “Chapter 1: Inside the World of Boys: Behind the Mask of Masculinity.”

January 25, 2011: Introduction of Roles

Adolescent development: physiology and brain development

Arnett, J. “Learning to Stand Alone: The Contemporary American Transition to Adulthood in Cultural and Historical Context.”

Belkin, L. “The Making of a 8-Year Old Woman: How Do We Understand Early Puberty? Through the Prism of Our Times.”

Brooks-Gunn, J. and Reiter, E. “Chapter 2: The Role of the Pubertal Processes.” In Feldman, S. & Elliot, G. (Eds.)

Brownlee, S. “Article 4: Inside the Teen Brain: Behavior Can be Baffling When Young Minds are Taking Shape.”

Brumberg: Chapters 1,2

February 1, 2011

Adolescents and families


Owens, Queer Kids, Ch. 10, “Parental Acceptance”
Pollack, W. “Chapter 5: The Power of Mothers.”
Pollack, W. “Chapter 6: Real Fathers/Real Men: The Empathic Relationships of Fathers and Sons.”


Cornell University, Facts and Findings: Adolescent Brain Development, 2002


February 8, 2011
**Culture and diversity**

Simmons: Chapter 7


Tatum, B. “Chapter 4: Identity Development in Adolescence ‘Why Are the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?’"


**February 15, 2011**

**LGBT, oppression and development**

Owens Chaps 1-4 (Becoming Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual)


Kort: Chapters 3, 4, 5

**February 22, 2011: Assignment 2 Due.**

**Psychosocial stressors: poverty, trauma, character**

Pipher, Ch. 9

Steiner and Matthews, “Psychiatric Trauma...” in Treating Adolescents.

Carter, Fortson, Hollist, Altheimer, Schaible. Compounded Risk: The Implications for Delinquency of Coming from a Poor Family that Lives in a Poor Community, in Journal of Youth and Adolescence, pp.593-605


Reserves:

March 1, 2011: No class

March 8, 2011

Adolescent behaviors: acting in


Pollack, Chapter 12: Hamlet’s Curse: Depression and Suicide in Boys.

Pipher, Ch 8

Owens, Ch. 9

March 15, 2011
Adolescent behaviors: acting out


Sluzki, Carlos, “Migration and Disruption of Social Networks,” in Revisioning Family Therapy. (Referred to as “Acculturation PDF”)

URL: http://proquest.umi.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/pqdweb?did=688524951&Fmt=3 &clientId=17822&RQT=309&VName=PQD

March 22, 2011: Citation due for assignment 1

Adolescent behaviors: risk taking

Pipher: Chapter 10


Powers and Mattano, “Substance Abuse” in Treating Adolescents


March 29, 2011

Sexuality and relationships


Real: Chapter 6

Pollack: Chapters 7,8

April 5, 2011

Empowerment


April 12, 2011

Schools

Owens Chapter 5, Queer Kids, The special problems of Schools

Pollack, W. Chapter 10: Schools: The Blackboard Jumble


April 19, 2011: Assignment 3 due.

Conclusion