**Course Info:**

SW 601- Adolescent Development:  
Sections 002 and 003  
Winter 2014

**Instructor:**  
Reuben Jonathan Miller, PhD  
SSWB 2272  
(734) 763-5951 (office)  
(312) 208-0698 (cell)  
mreuben@umich.edu

**Meeting time:**  
Tuesdays, from 2:00 to 5:00 pm

**Office Hours:**  
Tuesdays, 9:00 am to 12noon or by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will examine the biological, psychological, interpersonal, and contextual changes and behaviors that characterize adolescent development. Within the context of adolescent development, the course content will focus on: 1) theories of adolescent development; 2) the interactional and discursive engagements of youth; 3) adolescent civic and social engagement; 4) the epidemiology and etiology of adolescent “problem” behaviors; 5) variation in the adolescent experience across race, ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, socioeconomic status, and other salient categories of difference; 6) the ways in which these behaviors relate to “normal” adolescent development; and 7) critical and systematic examination of existing programs and policies designed to prevent and, to a lesser extent, treat “problem behaviors.”

**COURSE CONTENT**

The course will give a broad overview of biological, psychological, social and cultural theories of adolescent development, paying careful attention to the social contexts in which development takes place. Over the course of the semester we will examine three qualitative case studies selected to highlight variation in the processes and experiences associated with adolescence across categories of difference. In addition to our readings and lectures, the course will draw on your experiences in the field to contextualize accounts of adolescent development. Over the course of the semester you will be expected to spend several hours conducting naturalistic observation of youth interactions and to interview youth and/or youth workers. You will be expected to critically assess weekly readings, identify and contextualize your assumptions about adolescence and draw on lessons from the extant literature and your field work to problematize our understanding of adolescence, adolescent development, and the most appropriate strategies to identify and address the service needs of “at risk youth.”
COURSE OBJECTIVES
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and describe the biological, psychological, and social changes that characterize normal adolescence.
2. Identify and describe the primary interpersonal and contextual influences on adolescent behavior.
3. Identify and describe the ways in which the individual, interpersonal, and contextual factors common to adolescence intersect and relate to adolescent problem behaviors.
4. Identify what social workers and other professionals can do to promote adolescent health and well-being and prevent and treat adolescent problem behaviors.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO FOUR CURRICULAR THEMES:
Multiculturalism and Diversity will be addressed throughout this course. Racial, ethnic, gender, and social class differences in the timing, sequencing, nature, experience and outcome of adolescent development are central to every facet of this course.

Social Justice and Social Change will be addressed through course readings, lectures 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.

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.

Behavioral and Social Science Research will provide the substantive foundation for this course. Students will be actively involved in qualitative research on youth experiences and interactions. In addition, 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 SOCIAL WORK VALUES AND ETHICS
Values and ethics will be addressed as they relate to working with young people. 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. 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.
FOCUS ON PRIVILEGE, OPPRESSION, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE
The course will use an integrative learning approach. Students will conduct field observations, in-depth interviews and participate in a youth work group project. In consultation with the instructor, students will be divided into youth work groups. Youth work teams will consist of 4-5 students that are established before the third class sessions. The youth work teams’ projects will be identified by the instructors and the students. Each team will be assigned a specific developmental challenge and conduct a thorough review of the scientific literature on the topic include the risk and protective factors, studies on the treatments that work to address the problem, and presenting the summary in a 12-minute PowerPoint presentation.

COURSE DESIGN
This course is critical in its orientation, discussion based, heavily experiential, and collaborative in nature. My intention is to facilitate an open and democratic learning environment. While I will lead the learning experience, setting the tone for the course, grading your assignments, and holding your accountable to ensure your produce quality work, we will learn the most if we learn from each other. Therefore, your willingness to participate in discussions, critically engage classroom texts, and commitment to your colleagues is essential to the “success” of this course.

Class Structure
On most days, class time will be divided into three 45 minute periods: 1) Lecture and classroom discussion; 2) Work group discussion and classroom exercises; and 3) Notes from the field. Each of these periods is detailed below:

**Lecture and classroom discussion**
- I will present a weekly lecture as a catalyst for class discussion lasting between 45 minutes and 1 hour.
- You are expected to read course materials before class and come prepared to engage in small group and classroom discussions each week.
- By week 2, you will be divided into work groups.
- Beginning in week 3, your working groups will take turns leading class discussions.

**Workgroup and classroom exercises**
- You will meet with your working groups each week after lecture.
- You will discuss key themes from the lecture and course materials, working through a set of discussion questions and/or small group exercises.
- Your groups will convene at the end of this discussion/exercise to report back to the larger group.

**Notes from the field**
- I will provide brief training on qualitative interviewing and field observations during the first five weeks of class during this period.
- Beginning in week 2, you will meet in your working groups to discuss key findings from your fieldwork.
- After week 4, your working groups will use this time to share and code data and
discuss next steps in the research and writing process.

**Classroom Activities**
You will engage in the following activities.

**Critical Assessment of Theory and Practice**
We will critically examine dominant theories of adolescent development but we will not take them for granted. Instead, students are expected to problematize these theories, seeking to fill gaps in what we understand about adolescence and the lived experiences of the people who are so often the subject of study, debate, and oftentimes fear, shame and scorn.

**Fieldwork**
To better understand youth experiences across categories of difference, students will be required to “get their bodies” into spaces of youth interaction, conducting observations by week 3 and *semi-structured interviews* by week 9. Data generated from your fieldwork will be used to write two brief “reports from the field” and a final, collaborative research paper.

**Presentations**
Students will work in groups to lead in class discussions and present their final collaborative papers.

**Group work**
You will be divided into workgroups of 4-5 students.

**Group Discussion and Exercises:** Each week you will reflect on your fieldwork, relevant experiences and assumptions about adolescence, bringing them into discussion with course readings and salient current events.

You will also, as a group, lead discussion for one week’s readings.

**Final Assignment:** You will work collaboratively in your small work group to design your interview guide, share your field notes, analyze data, and write the final research paper for this course. You will integrate your findings, bringing them into discussion with class lectures and discussions, course readings, and relevant outside sources.

**RELEVANT POLICIES**
1. **Religious Holidays:** Students who observe a religious holiday on the same day as class will have access to the class materials covered that day. Students are expected to notify the instructor if they plan to miss class. The official UM policy on religious holidays and a list of possible conflicts with classes can be found at: [http://www.provost.umich.edu/calendar/religious_holidays.html](http://www.provost.umich.edu/calendar/religious_holidays.html)

2. **Learning Needs and Disabilities:** Students with specialized learning needs are requested to make an appointment with the instructor to discuss the necessary arrangements. If you have a disability or condition that may interfere with your participation in this course,
please schedule a private appointment with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss accommodations for your specific needs. This information will be kept strictly confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities office at G664 Haven Hall, (734) 763-3000.

3. **Attendance:** The School of Social Work attendance policy can be found in the Student Guide. Attendance is included in the grading rubric for this course. Students are expected to participate in lectures, workgroup meetings and consultation appointments with the instructor. Your classmates depend on your attendance and active participation in class. Successful learning requires your personal investment in attendance and careful engagement with the readings. Missed classes, even for legitimate and unavoidable reasons, tend to decrease participation grades, as well.

4. **Deadline Expectations:** Barring death or hospitalization, I do not accept late papers.

5. **Grading System:** Each assignment is graded on a 10-point scale. Both content and form will be considered in assigning grades. Though content is more heavily weighted in grade assignments, form and presentation are also important. Failure to follow APA guidelines for referencing and for headings will result in a grade reduction.

I will use this scale to assess each assignment, using the weights outlined in the assignment instructions to calculate your final grade.

The grading scale is as follows:

- **10** Demonstrates mastery of subject content, critical analysis, creativity, and form
- **9** Demonstrates mastery of subject content beyond expected competency. Evidence of critical analysis, originality, or form in the completion of the assignment is less evident
- **8** Demonstrates mastery of subject content at level of expected competency – meets course expectations
- **7** Demonstrates familiarity with subject content, student learning, and potential for mastery of subject content. Significant improvement needed to meet course requirements and standards for professionalism.
- **6** Demonstrates minimal understanding of subject content but not adequate to meet course requirements or standards for professionalism

Points are weighted based on the importance of each component of an assignment and the overall percentage of the final grade. For example, an assignment may have two sections (form and content and Mechanics and organization, each worth 50% of the assignment grade). If you got 9 points for each section, you will have received 9 points for the assignment. If the assignment is worth 15% of the total course grade, your overall points will be converted into a grade of 13.5 points.

Final course grades will be assigned using the following points scale:
A+ = 99 – 100  
B+ = 88 – 90  
C+ = 78 – 80  
D = 65 – 70  

A = 95 -98  
B = 85-87  
C = 75–77  

A− = 91 - 94  
B− = 81 - 84  

I will explain the course weighting in greater detail in the assignments section.

General Expectations and Format for Written Work
You must use scholarly literature to support your presentation of material. You need to use multiple sources and synthesize them. Do not rely on direct quotations from your sources; instead summarize them in your own words.

All papers must be typewritten and double-spaced using a 12-point font and one inch margins. Use APA style for your papers, including proper headings and citations. See Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Sixth edition.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. An unexcused absence on the day of a group presentation will be awarded zero points for the group assignment. In addition, you must contribute to your groups overall process or you will not receive points for the final research paper.

You may find it useful to have someone who is unfamiliar with your subject read your paper before you turn it in. An outside reader can tell you if your writing is not clear, if you omitted a word or phrase, or if you used the wrong word. Spell checkers and grammar checkers are useful tools, but not as reliable as a human reader. For personal assistance with writing, contact Michelle Woods in the School of Social Work, Office of Student Services, or the University of Michigan’s Sweetland Writing Center, 1139 Angell Hall, (734) 764-0429; http://www.lsa.umich.edu/swc/contact.html

Academic Conduct and Integrity:
Please see the Student Code of Academic and Professional Conduct in the Student Guide to the Master's in Social Work Degree Program (http://www.ssw.umich.edu/studentGuide/2008/) for a discussion of student responsibilities for academic conduct and integrity. Students who are found responsible for academic misconduct are subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the School of Social Work, revocation of degree, or any other sanction deemed appropriate to address the violation.

Plagiarism is taken very seriously at the University of Michigan and is grounds for expulsion. Plagiarism is defined as representing someone else’s ideas, words, statements, or works as one’s own without proper acknowledgement or citation. Plagiarism includes self-plagiarism, which is reusing one’s own work without acknowledging that the text appears elsewhere (e.g., in a paper...
Incompletes are not granted unless it can be demonstrated that it would be unfair to hold the student to the normal expectations of the course. The student must formally request an incomplete with the instructor prior to the final weeks of class. Please review the Student Guide section on Ethical Conduct in the University Environment. This section addresses plagiarism, harassment and discrimination policies.

REQUIRED READINGS:


COURSE ASSIGNMENTS
All assignments are due at the beginning class on the designated date. Please turn each assignment in both online and hard copy formats.

Each assignment is detailed below:

1. PEERS Certification: 5% of final grade
2. Attendance and Class Participation: 10% of final grade
3. Report from the Field 1: Field Observations: 15% of final grade
4. Book Review: 15% of final grade
5. Report from the Field 2: Interviews: 20% of final grade
6. Final Collaborative Project: 25% of final grade
   a. Group Presentation: 10%

Assignment Total: 100% of final grade

ASSIGNMENT 1:
PEERS Certification (5% of final grade)
PEERRS is the University of Michigan's online Program for Education and Evaluation in Responsible Research and Scholarship. PEERRS courses provide training required per university, state, and federal regulations regarding responsible conduct of research (RCR). PEERRS certifications are valid for three (3) years from the last completion date.
Students must complete PEERRS certification before they begin field work and provide the instructor with proof of completion. At which point, you will be awarded full points for this assignment. Due January 21, 2014

Certification is estimated to take 45 minutes and can be accessed through the following website: http://hrpp.umich.edu/education/

ASSIGNMENT 2:
Attendance and Class Participation (10% of final grade)
You are expected to attend class, participate in discussion, and contribute to group work processes. Your grade will be based on the following:

1. Attendance and in class participation: 50% of assignment grade
2. Your group contribution: 50% of assignment grade

ASSIGNMENT 3:
Report from the Field I: Field Observations (15% of final grade)
Purpose of the assignment: to observe adolescent behavior within the context of their everyday lives, and to link your observations to theories of adolescent development discussed in class and in course readings. Due February 11, 2014

Directions: Arrange to conduct two one-hour observations at sites of youth activity including but not limited to: a high school classroom or club, a recreational center, a youth shelter, a residential living facility, a teen night club (e.g., Chrome Club, Whitmore Lake), an adolescent medical clinic, a juvenile detention facility, others? Students should go to the same space for both observations.

Before your observation, select 3-4 course readings and use them to prepare for your observation. You will write field notes at the end of each observation, use those notes, code them, use them to construct memos and use those memos to write a 4-5 page double-spaced paper. You will turn in your notes, memos, and coding scheme with your final paper. Each paper will carefully attend to the following:

1. Physical and social environment
2. Youth interactions and behaviors
3. The assumptions you brought with you into the field
4. The extent to which the readings you selected captured or failed to capture the interactions you observed.

Your paper should be no more than 5, double spaced pages, excluding references. Please use appropriate APA references and citations in your paper. Papers will be graded based on the following key areas:
1. **Content and Synthesis of Course Themes**: Are main topics from the selected readings summarized and evaluated? Did you link your observations to the reading topics? Did you identify and discuss observations as they related to some category of difference (i.e. race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class position? (50% of assignment grade)

2. **Organization of the paper**: Is the paper well organized with appropriate use of headings and sub-headings? Is information presented in a way that is systematic and readable? Are the ideas in the paper clear? (20% of assignment grade)

3. **Mechanical issues and adherence to format guidelines**: Is the paper free from spelling and grammatical errors? Is it written in APA format? (15% of assignment grade)

4. **Quality of field notes, memos, and coding strategy**: Did you take careful field notes? Do the codes and findings match the data? (15% of assignment grade)

**ASSIGNMENT 4:**

**Book Review (15% of final grade)**

You will write a 5 page review and critical assessment of *Deep Secrets* by Niobe Way (2011).

This assignment is due February 25, 2014.

While your review should summarize the key findings from Way’s book, be sure to answer the following questions in your review:

1. What are the major arguments made in the text?
2. What were the major findings?
3. What methods were used to make the arguments from the book?
4. What were the strengths and weaknesses of the research methodology?
5. What theories were used to make sense of the findings?
6. What were the strengths and weaknesses of the book’s theoretical approach?
7. What major contributions did the book make?
8. What lessons can social workers draw from this book?
9. What did you learn about adolescent development as a result of reading this text?

Be sure to read reviews of this book and other books like it before you complete this assignment. Seeing how others write reviews may help you think about how you may want to approach this assignment.

I will assess this paper using the grading guide from the course and apply it to the following criteria:

1. **Content and Synthesis of Course Themes**: Are main topics from the book summarized and evaluated? Did you link the books key findings to themes covered in the course? Did you explicitly draw on the literature on adolescent development to assess the contributions the book makes? (50% of assignment grade)

2. **Organization of the paper**: Is the paper well organized with appropriate use of headings
ASSIGNMENT 5:
Report from the field 2: Semi Structured Interviews (20% of final grade):
You will develop an interview guide and conduct interviews with 1 youth worker and 2 adolescent youth between weeks 5 and 8. Before your observation, select 3-4 course readings and use them to prepare for your observation. You are responsible for conducting and transcribing your interviews and turning in your interview transcripts. Lastly, you will summarize your findings in a brief report (4-5 pages), comparing and contrasting the perspectives of adolescent youth and youth workers.

This report from the field along with all interview transcripts is due by March 11, 2014.

As noted, your paper should be no more than 5, double spaced pages, excluding references. Please use appropriate APA references and citations in your paper. Papers will be graded based on the following key areas:

1. **Content and Synthesis of Course Themes**: Are main topics from the selected readings summarized and evaluated? Did you link your observations to the reading topics? Did you identify and discuss observations as they related to some category of difference (i.e. race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class position? (50% of assignment grade)
2. **Organization of the paper**: Is the paper well organized with appropriate use of headings and sub-headings? Is information presented in a way that is systematic and readable? Are the ideas in the paper clear? (20% of assignment grade)
3. **Mechanical issues and adherence to format guidelines**: Is the paper free from spelling and grammatical errors? Is it written in APA format? (25% of assignment grade)

ASSIGNMENT 6:
Collaborative Research Project
You will collaborate with your colleagues, sharing data generated from your fieldwork to write a final, 15-page, double spaced collaborative research paper due on April 22, 2014 written in APA format.

Your paper will use the data you collected during your field work, integrating your findings to make a clear argument about adolescent development or some aspect of the experience of adolescence.
This is a formal research paper and must include the following sections:

1. Introduction
2. Literature Review
3. Research Methodology
   a. Sampling Strategy
   b. Data collection methods
   c. Data analysis plan
4. Presentation of Findings
5. Discussion
6. Conclusions

You must draw on relevant literature from the course, as it fits, and/or from outside sources. To this end, you must draw on at least 20 relevant scholarly articles on some aspect of adolescent development to justify your findings an analysis.

Final Presentation: Groups will present their work in the final weeks of class. Presentations must be no more than 15 minutes. There will be a question and answer section following each presentation.

Final papers and your presentations grades will be based on the following criteria:

1. **Content and Synthesis of Course Themes**: Do you make a clear, concise and well supported argument? To this end, are the claims you make justified in the data and the literature you cite? Do your key findings and data from your field work match? Do you explore variation in youth experiences? (50% of assignment grade)
2. **Organization of the paper**: Is the paper well organized with appropriate use of headings and sub-headings? Is information presented in a way that is systematic and readable? Are the ideas in the paper clear? (20% of assignment grade)
3. **Mechanical issues and adherence to format guidelines**: Is the paper free from spelling and grammatical errors? Is it written in APA format? (15% of assignment grade)
COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: January 14, 2014
Introductions: No Readings

Week 2: January 21, 2014
Theories of Adolescent Development
Introduction and Chapter 1. Accessible via:
http://www.gutenberg.org/files/16221/16221-h/16221-h.htm

Week 3: January 28, 2014
Thinking about Development in Context
Brownlee, S. “Article 4: Inside the Teen Brain: Behavior Can be Baffling When Young Minds are Taking Shape.” US News and World Report. Accessible via:
http://www.usnews.com/usnews/culture/articles/990809/archive_001644.htm
Princeton: Princeton University Press. Read: Introduction, Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 (Skim Chapter 1)

Week 4: February 4, 2013
Gender and Identity Constructions
Princeton University Press. Read: Chapter 4, (and rapidly) 5 through Conclusions

Week 5, February 11, 2014
Adolescent Development and Familial Tasks
Week 6, February 18, 2014
Adolescent Sexuality


Week 7, February 25, 2014
Adolescent Development and Peers Relationships


Week 8: March. 4, 2014 ***NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK***

Week 9: March 11, 2014
Adolescent Development in Schools and Neighborhoods

Week 10, March 18, 2014
Behavioral Theories
Rew, Lynn (2005), Chapter 7, “Conceptualization of Resilience and Protection.” Adolescent Health: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Theory, Research, and Intervention. (PDF to be posted on CTOOLS)


Week 11: March 25, 2014
Externalizing Risk Behaviors: Substance Use and HIV Risk


Week 12, April 1, 2014
Externalizing Risk Behaviors: Youth Violence & Delinquency


Week 13, April 8, 2014
Internalizing Risk Behaviors: Depression, Eating Disorders and Suicide


***PRESENTATIONS OF GROUP PROJECTS***

Week 14, April 15, 2014
Thinking about Prevention and Interventions

Counseling, 24, 177-187.


***PRESENTATIONS OF GROUP PROJECTS***

**Week 15, April 22, 2014**

**Youth Resistance and Identity Movements**


***FINAL PRESENTATIONS OF GROUP PROJECTS***

**COURSE WRAP UP**

**ASSIGNMENT 6: FINAL PROJECTS DUE**

***PLEASE NOTE: SYLLABUS SUBJECT TO CHANGE***