PSY432
Crisis in Adolescence

Session: Winter, 2009  Class Dates: January 6 – March 25 2009
Instructor: April Dinges, LMSW  Classroom:  Day/Time:  Tuesday 6-9 pm
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“REQUIRED FOR ALL SIENA HEIGHTS CLASSES”


University Mission

The mission of Siena Heights, a Catholic university
founded and sponsored by the Adrian Dominican
Sisters, is to assist people to become more competent,
purposeful, and ethical through a teaching and learning
environment which respects the dignity of all.

General Education Outcomes

The goal of the General Education Curriculum is to give all Siena Heights University students opportunities to
explore, develop and apply values, knowledge and skills derived from academic study, cultural heritages and
life experience. The General Education Curriculum will enable students to demonstrate their citizenship in
ways that will contribute to the common good, complement their program of studies and enrich their quality of
life.

Course Description

This course provides an overview of the psychological and social development of adolescence. Issues related
to the adolescent experience, such as parental relations, substance abuse, sexuality, education, delinquency,
and suicide will be explored, discussed and researched.

Course Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

• Identify and describe the biological, psychological, and social changes that characterize normal
adolescence.
• Identify and describe a range of interpersonal, contextual and societal influences on adolescent behavior.
• Identify and describe the ways in which the individual, interpersonal and contextual factors common to
adolescence intersect across diverse groups, and relate these outcomes to adolescent developmental
problem behaviors, discrimination and conflict, including youth violence.
• Identify what professionals can and should do to promote adolescent health and well-being and act to
prevent and treat adolescent problem behaviors in homes, schools and other community settings.
Course Design

This course will use a variety of strategies to promote student understanding of the course material, including PowerPoint lectures, course tools, small group discussion, multi-media materials, student presentations, debate, and written assignments. The first section of this course will examine normal adolescent development. The format for this section will consist of lecture and group discussion and the student will be evaluated with written assignments and an in class examination. The second section of the course will consist of looking at adolescent problem behaviors concluding in a group project with the goals of: 1) to examine adolescent problem behaviors and their relationship to normal adolescent development; 2) to explore ways to promote adolescent health and well-being and to prevent adolescent problem behaviors; and 3) to complete a written report and present your findings to the class.

A. Attendance, Participation and Reading:
Class attendance, keeping up with assigned readings, and participation in class discussions are required due to the issue-focused and interactive format of the course. It is expected that students are punctual, present, and actively participate during class. Unexcused absences will be penalized.

B. Assignment Format
Written assignments must be typed, double-spaced as well as edited for spelling and grammar. Handwritten assignments will NOT be accepted. Papers will be read and graded for quality and clarity. If papers are confusing to read or have many spelling and grammatical errors, there will be a grade reduction. Assignments will not be accepted late unless arrangements have been made in advance.

C. Papers and Individual Presentation
Adolescent Experience Paper: The first short paper will focus on integrating the initial reading material with your own personal narrative of your biological, psychological and sociological adolescent development. Using your own adolescence, either trace “key” milestones or turning points in the developmental narrative of your teen years or choose a single issue, school year or event and discuss the contributions of factors such as environment, family, culture, race, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, media, gender, school influences or peers to the impact of that event in your adolescent development. The paper should end with a consideration of possible interventions and propose a larger societal response to the issues presented in your history. This paper should be limited to 6-8 pages.

Research Based Perspective Paper: For the final paper, you will choose an adolescent psychosocial issue of interest and where there has been some empirical research on treatments. You will write an 8-10 page paper to include the following: 1) The nature of the problem behavior (prevalence and trends); 2) The socio-demographic distribution of the problem behavior; 3) The problem behavior in the context of normal adolescent development; 4) Risk and protective factors for the problem behavior; 5) Well being promotion, prevention and intervention (must include evidence based practices); and 6) Recommendations for policy and practice.

Film Analysis: You will choose to view one of the following films: Juno or Mean Girls. I will have these films available. However, the must be returned by the next class session. When watching the film, look for what the adolescents are experiencing and how does this relate to the information that you have been given in class. Identify 4 topics from the text that directly relate to the film. You must include 3 outside resources as well….not including the film. The paper should be 8-10pp., double-spaced, and written in APA style. Reference page should be included.

Individual Presentation: You are to imagine that you are presenting at a professional conference on adolescence. For the presentation, you will present the information from your final paper, with a focus on prevention, intervention and treatment approaches to the problem behavior. You are encouraged to be creative and use PowerPoint, handouts, videos, experiential exercises, role plays, etc. The audience will provide each presenter with written feedback. Presentation should be no longer than 25 minutes including questions from the audience. I will end the actual presentation at 20 minutes if it has
yet to conclude. The presentation will be a synopsis of the issue that you are researching for your Research Based Perspective Paper.

D. MID-TERM ASSIGNMENT

The Tuesday prior to Spring Break, each student will be required to turn in the following information regarding their individual presentation.

- Research paper and presentation topic.
- Rough outline of paper
- References which have been located to date.
- Further instructions will be given in class regarding the mid-term assignment.

E. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Students are responsible to have read any chapter assigned in the syllabus prior to the class meeting for which it was assigned. I will make every effort to cover the material in the text. It is the responsibility of the student to ask questions concerning any material not covered about which they have questions. If there are questions regarding assignments or other instructional material, it is the responsibility of the student to ask the instructor for clarification and/or set a time to meet with the instructor to further clarify any questions that you may have. This syllabus serves as a course outline. There may be modifications based on individual circumstances or instructor discretion.

The classroom environment is one that is considered to be a safe place to learn and to express opinions in a responsible fashion. Any acts of physical or verbal intimidation towards the instructor or towards other students or the instructor will be taken seriously and managed per Siena Heights University Policy. No weapons are allowed in the classroom per the policies of Lake Michigan College and Siena Heights University.

Due to the challenges of a shortened semester, this course is heavily-laden with writing and reading. If at any time, you are having difficulty meeting these challenges, please contact me immediately. I will not be able to provide you with assistance or refer you to the appropriate resource if this is something that I am not aware of until the last day of the semester.

Please print and bring a copy of your syllabus to the class. I am no longer able to distribute copies of the syllabus at the beginning of the semester.

Assessment and Grading

Your grade for the course will be based on the following:

1. Pre-class assignment/Adolescent Experience 100 points
2. Presentation/Research Paper Outline 50 points
3. Film Analysis 100 points
4. Student Presentation 50 points
5. Research Paper 100 points

Papers will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Did the writer address all points outlined in the paper description?
2. Did the writer integrate material and concepts learned in class?
3. Is the writing professional? Is grammar correct? Are the sentences clear? Is the paper written in a coherent and concise fashion? Are there typographical errors? Would a professional colleague be able to read and understand the issue without any prior knowledge?

Individual presentations will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Did the student provide the audience with a clear understanding of the problem behavior?
2. Did the student provide evidence-based prevention and intervention practices to address the problem behavior?
3. Did the student engage the audience and make the presentation interesting?
Grading Scale:
A  450-500 points
B  400-449 points
C  350-399 points
D  300-349 points
Below 60% is a failing grade

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

Please refer to page 166 in the 2006-2008 catalog for a complete description. Violations will result in a failing grade on the assignment and a remedial assignment, or a failing grade in the course.

Disability Statement

Siena Heights University is committed to providing a learning environment that benefits all students. Please refer to page 181 in the 2006-2008 catalog for a complete description and discuss any concerns with this instructor.

Pre-Class Reading and Assignment

Please complete the following:
Reading:
Adolescence: Section 1 (Ch.1-2)- The Nature of Adolescent Development

Written assignment:
Complete Adolescent Experience paper and turn in at the beginning of the first class.

Tentative Class Schedule

Below is a tentative class schedule with reading schedule and assignment due dates. These are subject to change at the instructor’s discretion. Please note that the readings and assignments appear on the date that they will be discussed/are due.

If class is cancelled due to weather, please e-mail assignment due and complete readings as assigned. We will have to cover the information at the next scheduled class so be prepared.

Jan. 6  Introduction/class expectations
The nature of adolescent development

Readings:
Adolescence: Chapters 1 and 2

Assignments: Pre-class assignment due
Jan. 13  Puberty, Health and Biological Foundations  
Cognitive Development  
**Readings:**  
Adolescence: Chapter 3 & 4

Jan. 20  The Self, Identity, Emotions and Personality  
**Readings:**  
Adolescence: Chapter 5

Jan. 27  Gender and Sexuality  
**Readings:**  
Adolescence: Chapters 6 and 7

Feb. 3  Peers  
**Readings:**  
Adolescence: Chapter 10

Feb. 10  Families  
**Readings:**  
Adolescence: Chapter 9

Feb. 17  Schools  
**Readings:**  
Adolescence: Chapter 11

Feb. 24  Adolescent Problems  
**Readings:**  
Chapter 14  
**ASSIGNMENTS:**  
Outline/References for Research Paper

Mar. 2  SPRING BREAK!!

Mar. 9  Moral Development, Values, & Religion  
**Readings:**  
Chapter 8  
**Assignments:**  
Film Review Paper Due
Mar. 16  Presentations

Mar. 24  Presentations

Assignment: Research Paper