



Developmental Transition to Adulthood

HDFS 433 Fall, 2001

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Office hours: Wednesday, 1:15-2:15. Or please stop by or drop me an e-mail if you have a question about the class.
- Teaching Assistant:** Christina Chhin (csc147@psu.edu)
- Required Texts:** Muus, R.E. (1996). *Theories of Adolescence (6th Edition)*. McGraw Hill, New York.
- Muus, R.E. & Porton (1990). *Adolescent Behavior and Society (5th Edition)*. McGraw Hill, New York.
- Garrod, A., Smulyan, L, Powers, S.I., Kilkenny, R. (1999). *Adolescent Portraits: Identity, Relationships, and Challenges (4rd Edition)*. Allyn & Bacon, Boston.

Course Description:

Adolescence is a time of transition - when children are prepared to take on the roles they will fill as adults. This course will focus on two aspects of that transition: identity development and peer relationships. Within each topic area, we will look at both normative developmental processes - what happens to most people - and individual differences - why we differ from one another. *Theories of Adolescence* provides an excellent summary of perspectives on *why* and *how* adolescents are different from children and adults. *Adolescent Behavior and Society* provides abridged versions of primary scientific articles that will provide more depth to your readings. We will also be reading a series of case studies from *Adolescent Portraits: Identity, Relationships, and Challenges*. These case studies will allow us to apply the theories we have read about to understanding the lives of real adolescents.

A major part of the course will focus on one particular aspect of peer relationships: teasing, bullying, and victimization. In this part of the course, you will take the lead in finding and analyzing information from the primary and secondary literature. As part of the Peer Victimization Project, you will also be finding and reading recent reviews of the literature and empirical articles aimed at professional and scientific audiences. *Why do we read primary and secondary sources instead of relying on textbooks?* When you leave Penn State, many of you will be working in jobs where you will know more about children, adolescents, and families than anyone else in your organization. One part of your job may well be to locate and interpret accurate information for yourself, for your co-workers, and for your clients. You will be the expert! One important skill you will need to develop is to be able to interpret the scientific literature and summarize it for use by general public. Your readings and assignments are designed to help you develop those skills.

Format and Goals:

This course has six primary goals:

1. to add depth to your understanding of the factual information that is the basis of our scientific understanding of adolescent development;
2. to increase your ability to apply what you've learned in concrete ways;
3. to increase your recognition of the difference between primary, secondary, and tertiary sources of information;
4. to improve your ability to access, integrate, and critique primary and secondary sources;
5. to get a better grasp on the variability of adolescent experience;
6. to develop the ability to communicate what you know clearly and accurately.

Because this is a 400 level class, I expect you to begin the class with a basic understanding of human development and family studies and a good background in adolescence. However, we are going to be covering a lot of ground, and you will (hopefully!) encounter many ideas, findings, and concepts that are new to you. If you become confused, or feel like I'm expecting you to understand a concept that I haven't introduced yet, PLEASE STOP ME AND ASK ME TO EXPLAIN! If you don't feel comfortable asking during class, drop by my office, send me an e-mail, or ask me after class. Remember, if you don't understand the material, other people in the class probably don't either, and they will be really grateful to you for asking.

Course Requirements:

It is your responsibility to attend all classes and learn material presented during lectures, class discussions, and in assigned readings. CLASS ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY. You are also responsible for keeping yourself informed of any changes that are announced in class regarding assignments and changes in schedule. Because much of class time will involve discussion of outside readings, it is *imperative* that you keep up with the reading and come prepared for class. The better prepared you are, the more you can contribute to all of our learning experiences. Reading assignments should be completed before class on the dates indicated on the syllabus.

In addition, you should be prepared to participate in group projects and to contribute to making the student groups to which you are assigned work together effectively. Working with a group can be a little like dating - you can have a positive experience where you get a lot of support and learn a lot or you can feel cheated, used, angry, and manipulated. If you have concerns about how your group is functioning or how work is divided ASK FOR HELP! It is your responsibility to come talk to me early enough that we can help things back on track.

Evaluation:

There are three major criteria on which you will be evaluated: your performance on Readiness Assessment Tests (RATS), short homework assignments, and the Peer Victimization Project.

Readiness Assessment Tests. Readiness Assessment Tests are short quizzes (around 20 multiple choice and true/false questions). There will be five RATs during the course of the semester. Their purpose is to save time reviewing material you were assigned to read outside of class and to ensure that everyone has the basics of the material down before we elaborate on that material during class. There are THREE parts to each RAT.

First, you will take the RAT individually. This is a closed-book quiz.

Second, you will take the same RAT with an assigned group of three other students. The group will turn in the group RAT for grading. This is also a closed-book quiz.

Third, after receiving your graded group RAT, your group will have 5 minutes to write an appeal to any question that was marked wrong on the group RAT. Your appeal must be based on a defense of the correctness of your answer. If your appeal is accepted, your grade (both individual and group) will be changed accordingly. The appeal is done open-book. There are no appeals on individual RATs.

Both the individual and group RAT will count toward your final grade. Your individual score will be worth 15% of your final grade. Your group RAT score will be worth 10% of your grade. If your group grade is LOWER than your individual grade at the end of the semester, you will receive the higher of the two (in other words, your group can't drag you down, but they will probably help you up).

On the day of each RAT, please be sure to bring in blue or black pen to take your RAT, and a red pen to correct it

Short Assignments. Periodically during the semester, you will be assigned short assignments. Sometimes the goal of these assignments will be to help you prepare for in-class work by thinking about things ahead of times. Other times, the goal will be for you to summarize what you've done in class and tie up loose ends. All short assignments must be turned in during class the day they are due. Assignments can be written either in prose or in a coherent outline form. They can also be neatly handwritten rather than typed. **NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** Assignments will be graded 0 (not done), 1 (minimally completed), 2 (good job), or 3 (excellent). Your best 10 assignments will be contribute towards your final grade.

Peer Victimization Project. The goal of the Peer Victimization Project is for you to learn to do independent library research and to apply that research in an analysis. This semester, the assignments that make up this project are organized around peer relationships, with a focus on the negative impact of peer interactions. You will be working on this project in a group. You will write two papers as part of this assignment and create one webpage.

Why a group? Many students don't like working on group projects. So why am I assigning one? The reason that you are working with a group is that there is simply too much to be done for you to be able to do it all yourself. For example, each group will be responsible for finding information about one aspect of peer victimization: normal patterns of development, sexual harassment, teasing, violence in schools, etc. You are working with a group so that *as a group* you can research these topics and share information with one another. It is not a job that one person can do alone in a one-semester, three credit class.

What about people who never show up for meetings and never do any work? Two big complaints that students have about working on group projects is that it is hard to meet outside of class and that some students do all the work and others don't do any. This is especially annoying when a group grade is assigned.

Although you are working with a group and you will be coordinating your library research with others in a group, **this is primarily an INDIVIDUAL project** You will write and be graded on an individual research paper. Your final analysis will draw on the research papers written by others in your group, but will be written

and graded individually. Your group will be given ample time in class to work on the project. We will be devoting several weeks in class to getting the project organized and completed, which will give you time to meet with others in your group. Attendance is mandatory *specifically* to encourage everyone to be there for group meetings. I don't foresee that you will need to meet as a group outside of this time. Homework assignments and drafts are also designed to encourage everyone to be prepared and contribute to the group.

Do slackers get the same grades as everyone else? Let's assume that, despite all the things we've done to make it easy to work together as a group, someone slacks off, doesn't pull their weight, and doesn't contribute. Is there anything that can be done? YES. Every few weeks, we will be doing peer evaluations where every person's contribution to the group is rated. If there is a consensus within a group that someone is not doing their share of the work, that person will be given four choices. (1) They can start pulling their own weight and continue to participate in the group. They will have one week to clean up their act and must be accepted back into the group by the other members. (2) They can continue to slack off and agree to take 50% of whatever the group grade is. (3) They can choose to work on their own. (4) They can ask to be reassigned to another group. They will be reassigned only with my permission and the permission of all members of the other group. Please note that you will be evaluated by your peers BOTH on your contribution to the RAT process and to your contribution to the Peer Victimization Project.

What are the papers? You have two papers: a research summary and a final analysis.

Research summaries: Each student will be responsible for writing a summary of the scientific literature on a specific topic. The topic will be chosen to contribute to your group's website and provide information on the aspect of peer victimization your group is working on. The goal of these summaries is to be as CONCISE, THOROUGH, and CLEAR as possible.

Final Analysis: Your final analysis will be to discuss the transition you have been researching and to make policy recommendation to facilitate successful transitions in the United States.

Is there any group component to this project? Yes - the webpage. You will be building a webpage on aspect of peer victimization that will summarize what you have learned about normative adolescent development and specific aspects of peer victimization. At a minimum, this webpage will include each of your research summaries. You can also include any additional information that you think will help others to understand this aspect of peer victimization.

Why a webpage? A couple of reasons. First, it is an excellent format for presenting a lot of inter-related information, so it lends itself to a group project. It is also built in small pieces, so it's easier to divide up the work between different people. Third, it makes your writing public. This is important because it changes the audience you should be writing for from me to an intelligent lay audience (including your fellow-group members) and because it means you should be particularly careful about the quality of your writing. Thousands of people may read this! Finally, learning to put together a webpage is a great job skill to have and will look good on your resume. The first time we did this project, one woman got a summer job doing a webpage just from taking this course. If you are absolutely computer phobic and don't want anything to do with the programming part, there are lots of parts of the project that don't require you to learn HTML. We will teach you what you need to know to do this project. Don't panic!

Your final grade will be calculated based on the following criteria:

25%	5 RATs
10%	Short assignments
65%	Peer Victimization Project
	25% Research Summary
	25% Webpage
	15% Final Analysis

Missed RATs, late essays, and absences:

Because it is extremely difficult to evaluate the validity of excuses for missing a class, the general policy will be to permit make-up RATs only for confirmed emergencies or an illness that requires confinement to the Health Center. If you miss a RAT, your individual test score will count as both your individual and group score for that week. Please notify me as soon as it is apparent that a RAT will be missed (e-mail is probably the easiest way to do this). Failure to notify me promptly may result in refusal to administer a make-up, with a resultant 0 averaged into your final grade.

ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BY THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON THE DAY INDICATED ON THE SYLLABUS. Long lines at the printer are not a legitimate excuse for a late essay, so PLAN YOUR TIME ACCORDINGLY! I expect you to turn in all written assignments on time. It is unfair to classmates who push themselves to complete their work by the due date for you to turn your essay in late. *Everyone* could do a better job given a little more time. All late papers will be dropped 10 points the first day and will not be accepted more than two days late. If you know your paper will be late, you are responsible for informing me on or before the date it is due. Failure to do so may result in refusal to accept late work.

ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY. You are allowed a total of 4 sick days without penalty. Of those 4 days, only ONE of those days can be during a time when we are working in class on the Peer Victimization Project (i.e. the first two weeks of class or during November). After that, you will drop one grade per missed class. For example, if you had a 95 average, one missed class would give you an A (no grade drop), five missed classes an A-, six a B+, etc. You would also drop from an A to an A- if you missed two classes during the time we are working in class on the Peer Victimization Project. This course is based on in-class activities and group work. The attendance policy has been implemented at the suggestion of students from past semesters in an effort to help you work better in groups. If you have a serious problem that interferes with your class attendance, please come talk to me.

A note on academic integrity:

One important skill that you need to develop is the ability to distinguish between your own ideas and those of other people. Although most obvious in cases where text is copied word for word, plagiarism also includes copying ideas or arguments from one source and presenting them as your own. Plagiarism can involve as little as copying a key phrase or sentence without acknowledging the source. It is easy to avoid. Use quotation marks to indicate direct quotes. If you are presenting an idea or an argument that you read somewhere else, give the person who first developed the idea credit for it. Remember, when in doubt, cite.

Cheating and plagiarism are very serious offenses governed by the student code of conduct (see Senate Regulation 49-20). Anyone cheating on a RAT, purposefully miscorrecting work, or copying work from

another source without proper acknowledgment will receive an F in this class and may be referred to the University Judicial System for further action.

SCHEDULE		
<i>Peer Victimization Project: Planning Phase</i>		
Aug	22	RAT 0: Syllabus
	24	Introduce Peer Victimization Project Finding Sources
	27	Due: Individual Concept Map
	29	Develop Group Conceptual Outline
	31	Due: Group Conceptual Presentation and Plan of Work Individual evaluations of contribution to group performance
Sept	3	Labor Day: No Class
	5	Explain paper requirements, APA style review
<i>Identity Development</i>		
	7	RAT 1: Freud (TOA Chapter 2)
	12	Courting Danger (AIP Case 9)
	14	RAT 2: Erikson (TOA Chapter 3; ABS Chapter 23), Marcia (ABS Chapter 24),
	21	Stages of ethnic identity development in minority group adolescents (ABS Chapter 25) At the interface of cultures: Multiethnic/Multiracial high school and college students (ABS Chapter 31) The hatred within (AIP, Case 4) Seeking the best of both worlds (AIP, Case 18)
	24	In the eye of the beholder: Adolescents' perceptions of peer crowd stereotypes (ABS Chapter 15)
<i>Peer Relations</i>		
	25	RAT 3: Sullivan (TOA Chapter 5), Peer relations (ABS Chapter 14)
	28	The adjustment of early adolescents to school transitions (ABS Chapter 15)
Oct	1	The struggle of a lifetime (AIP, Case 1)
	3	Loving women (AIP, Case 8)
	5	Falling for someone (AIP, Case 6)
	8	Fall Break: No class
	12	Unwanted and illegal sexual experiences in childhood and adolescence (ABS, Chapter 27) Verbal and physical abuse as stressors in the lives of lesbian, gay male, and bisexual youths: Associations with school problems, running away, substance abuse, prostitution, and suicide (ABS, Chapter 28)
	17	RAT 4: Selman (TOA Chapter 11), Peer influence (ABS Chapter 16)
	19	The simple beauty of a conversation (AIP Case 15)
	26	Research summary draft due
	29	Peer editing due

	31	RAT 5: Bandura (TOA Chapter 14)
Nov	1	Research summary due
<i>Peer victimization project: Implementation Phase</i>		
	5	Teach web design
	7	Writing for the web
	9	Color, text, and graphics
	19	Draft website presentation
	23	Thanksgiving break: No class
	30	Website presentation
Dec	7	Final paper due last day of class