

BRIERCREST

PSY 706 Adult Development Fall 2020

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Course Dates: December 14 – 18, 2020

3 Credit Hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A biblical anthropology provides the foundation for this course on the various stages of adulthood. Implications for a counseling ministry are considered from various viewpoints which include the family life cycle, and the existential and spiritual issues which correlate with the various stages.

COURSE INTEGRATION

The population as a whole is getting older. This course provides an overview of the longest stage of development in the life cycle – adulthood – covering the years from emerging adulthood to late adulthood. Life span developmental psychology assumes that development continues well into older adulthood. Biological, psychological and social factors all contribute to changes observed as we age and the resulting changes are found across various domains of development (e.g. social relations, personality, cognitive functioning, spiritual development, as well as others). Throughout the course emphasis will be placed on the various challenges and potentials that arise during the aging process.

COURSE TEXTS and READINGS

Arnett, J. (2000). *Emerging Adulthood: A Theory of Development From the Late Teens Through the Twenties*. *American Psychologist*, Vol. 55, 5, 469-480.
http://jeffreyarnett.com/ARNETT_Emerging_Adulthood_theory.pdf

Dweck, C. (2017). *Mindset: A new psychology of success*. New York: Ballentine Books.

Jay, M. (2012). *The defining decade: Why your twenties matter – and how to make the most of them now*. New York: Hachette Book Group.

Levinson, D. J. (1978). *The seasons of a man's life*. New York: Ballantine Books.

OR [Choose one of the Levinson texts]

Levinson, D. J. (1992). *The seasons of a woman's life*. New York: Knopf.

Settersten, R. & Ray, B. (2010). *Not quite adults*. New York: Bantam Books.

Whitbourne, S., & Whitbourne, S. (2020). *Adult development and aging: Biopsychosocial perspectives* (7th ed.). Hoboken: Wiley and Sons.

Recommended Resources

- Baltes, P. & M. Baltes, M. (1993). *Successful aging: Perspectives from the behavioral sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge Press.
- Baltes, P. (1987). *Theoretical Propositions of Life-Span Developmental Psychology: On the Dynamics Between Growth and Decline*. *Developmental Psychology*, Vol. 23, 5, 611-626.
- Binstock, R. H., George, L. K., Cutler, S. J., Hendricks, J., & Schulz, J. H. (Eds.) (2006). *Handbook of aging and the social sciences* (6th ed.). San Diego: Academic Press.
- Birren, J. E., & Schaie, K. W. (Eds.) (2005). *Handbook of the psychology of aging* (6th ed.). San Diego: Academic Press.
- Byock, I. (1997). *Dying well: Peace and possibilities at the end of life*. New York: Riverhead.
- Byock, I. (2012). *The best care possible: A physicians quest to transform care through the end of life*. New York: Avery.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Cummings, M., Davies, P., & Campbell, S. (2000). *Developmental psychopathology and family process*. New York: Guildford Press.
- Dulmus, C. N., & Rapp-Paglicci, L. A. (Eds.) (2005). *Handbook of preventive interventions for adults*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Dykstra, C., & Parks, S. (1986). *Faith development and Fowler*. Birmingham: Religious Education Press.
- Erikson, E. (1963). *Childhood and society*. New York: Norton.
- Erikson, E. (1968). *Youth and crisis*. New York: Norton.
- Erikson, E. (1982). *The life cycle completed*. New York: Norton.
- Fowler, J. (1981). *Stages of faith: The psychology of human development and the quest for meaning*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.
- Fowler, J. (1984). *Becoming adult, becoming Christian*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.
- Gibson, L. (2015). *Adult children of emotionally immature parents*. Oakland: New Harbinger Publications.
- Gilligan, C. (1992). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Gilligan, C. (2011). *Joining the resistance*. Malden: Polity.
- Gray, K., & Graham, J. (Eds.) (2018). *Atlas of moral psychology*. New York: Guildford Press.
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. New York: Bantam.
- Goleman, D. (2006). *Social intelligence*. New York: Bantam Dell.
- Hurd, H. (2010). *Facing age: Women growing older in an anti-aging culture*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Kohlberg, L. (1981). *The philosophy of moral development*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.
- Levinson, D. J. (1978). *The seasons of a man's life*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Levinson, D. J. (1992). *The seasons of a woman's life*. New York: Knopf.
- McAdams, D., Shiner, R., & Tackett, J. (Eds.) (2019). *Handbook of personality development*. New York: Guildford Press.
- Merriam, S., & Clark, M. (1991). *Lifelines: Patterns of work, love, and learning in adulthood*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. (2016). *Attachment in adulthood*. New York: Guildford Press.
- Palmer, P. (2004). *A hidden wholeness: The journey toward an undivided life*. San Francisco: Wiley.
- Reich, J., Zautra, A., & Hall, J. (2010). *Handbook of adult resilience*. New York: Guildford Press.
- Sapp, G. (Ed.) (1986). *Handbook of moral development*. Birmingham: Religious Education Press.
- Schlossberg, N., Goodman, J., & Anderson, M. (2006). *Counseling adults in transition: Linking practice*

- and theory* (3rd. ed.). New York: Springer Publishing Co.
- Vaillant, G. E. (2003). *Aging well: Surprising guideposts to a happier life from the landmark Harvard study of adult development*. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.
- Whitehead, E. E. & Whitehead, J. D. (1992). *Christian life patterns: The psychological challenges and religious invitations of adult life*. New York: Crossroads.
- World Health Organization (April 2016). *Mental health and older adults*.
<http://www.who.int/medicacentre/factsheet/fs381/en>

Students are expected to refer to Briercrest Seminary's Format and Style Guides and Guide for Writing Research Papers, available as PDF documents here: <https://www.mybriercrest.ca/seminary/documents/>.

These texts are available in store and online at the Briercrest Bookstore: <http://briercrest.ca/bookstore>.

Students are responsible for course materials and communication on Canvas (<https://briercrest.instructure.com>; cf. <http://briercrest.ca/online/canvas>) and their myBriercrest.ca email account.

COURSE OUTCOMES

The following objectives for this course are as follows:

- To develop and nurture a desire to learn about adult development. This sense of curiosity should be demonstrated through an enthusiasm for exploring information and knowledge set forth in the course texts, as well as discovering and examining supplementary reading material and research studies related to the study of adult development.
- To appreciate the complexities and subtleties of change across adult development.
- To become knowledgeable of the current research findings and guidelines about adult development that contribute to empowerment, individual growth and development, and resilience, throughout adulthood.
- To learn the basic theories, concepts, principles, approaches and recommended strategies that comprise, and contribute to the body of knowledge about adult development and aging.
- To apply the knowledge gained to your professional and everyday life experiences.
- To enjoy the process of dialogue, exploration, inquiry, and learning in this course.

COURSE OUTLINE AND CONTENT

Unit I: Introduction to the Course and Field of Study

Unit II: Theories of Adult Development

Unit III: Understanding Adults in Transition

Unit IV: Emerging Adulthood

Read: Arnett, J. (2000). [*Emerging Adulthood: A Theory of Development From the Late Teens Through the Twenties*](#). American Psychologist, Vol. 55, 5, 469-480.

Unit V: Young Adult Development

Unit VI: Middle Adult Development

Unit VII: Older Adulthood [Young Old and Older-Old Adulthood] or [Boomers in Older Adulthood]

Unit VIII: Death and Dying

ASSIGNMENTS (submitted to Canvas)***Pre-Course Assignments:***

1. **Read Whitbourne and Whitbourne**
Value: 15%
Due Date: December 14, 2020

This book and required work should be completed before the beginning of the course and submitted on the first day of class. Please state the question and then your response. In most cases there is one assigned question per chapter; in other instances you will have a choice of doing one of two questions that are presented. Each question should be answered in one or two paragraphs. Please be brief in your responses.

Chapter 1: Themes and Issues in Adult Development and Aging (Do two (2) of the following)

1. As you ponder the influences on lifespan development, what normative history graded and non-normative influences have you experienced?
2. What do you think some of the challenges are to families and to social structures as a result of a population that is aging?
3. When you consider your own family situation, do you feel you have an obligation to look after your parents or grandparents now or in the coming years?

Chapter 2: Models of Development: Nature and Nurture in Adulthood (Do one (1) of the following)

1. What ageist beliefs do you have about older adults?
 - a. If you have these beliefs can you recall when you first started thinking that way about older adults?
 - b. As you reflect about some these ageist beliefs you may have, would you apply these beliefs to your grandmother or grandfather or just to older adults you do *not* know?
2. Do you think that the social clock is helpful or harmful when people think about themselves and their lives?

Chapter 3: The Study of Adult Development and Aging: Research (Do one (1) of the following)

1. Suppose you wanted to know whether adults become more religious in their forties and fifties than they were at earlier adult ages. Briefly describe a study you would design to answer this question.
2. Figure 3.12 in the text notes several issues raised by ethical review boards on research applications. Can you think of other ethical issues that might arise when conducting research with adults?

Chapter 4: Physical Changes

Several researchers argue that there is a generalized "slowing" with age. What is your personal opinion of this phenomenon?

Chapter 5: Health and Prevention (Do one (1) of the following)

1. Consider someone you know who has an age-related disease. Describe the disease and how it is affecting them. Describe potential measures that have or could be taken to prevent or ward off this disease.
2. Consider the types of neurocognitive disorders which can frequently occur during aging. Imagine that you are afflicted with one of these disorders. Of those described in our text, choose one and provide a full explanation of how it could affect your daily functioning. End by describing possible measures you can take to avert this mental disorder. If you know someone who has been afflicted by one of these disorders, apply this same question to that person's situation.

Chapter 6: Basic Cognitive Functions: Information Processing, Attention, and Memory (Do one (1) of the following)

1. Although there is consistent slowing of reaction time in adulthood, is this slowing (on the order of 1/2-2 seconds) significant in its effects on everyday life?
2. Does the general slowing hypothesis seem sophisticated enough to you to serve as an explanation of the effects of aging on cognition?

Chapter 7: Higher-Order Cognitive Functions (Do one (1) of the following)

1. What are the best ways to preserve an older adult's executive functioning? Do measures of executive functioning seem relevant to everyday activities?
2. Do you think that life has gotten more complex with advances in technology? How might such changes particularly affect older adults?

Chapter 8: Personality (Do one (1) of the following)

1. Which adult pathway do you believe that you are on? What evidence do you have to support that conclusion? How about your parents or other family members?
2. Do you agree that views of the self are important in understanding personality? Why or why not? How might views of the self change as people develop through adulthood?

Chapter 9: Relationships (Do one (1) of the following)

1. In what ways might personality development, particularly regarding identity, influence the role friends play in our lives?
2. What kind of situation or circumstance might pose the greatest challenge for a young adult as it concerns dealing with the six psychological perspectives on long-term relationships?

Chapter 10: Work, Retirement, and Leisure Patterns

Our jobs occupy a hefty portion of our time, our thoughts, and our emotions. They determine in large part where we live, how well we live, and with whom we spend time— even after working hours. On another level, our jobs provide a good deal of our identity and self-esteem. If you could change one aspect of work in North America, what would it be? Make sure to provide a rationale for your perspective.

Chapter 11: Mental Health Issues and Treatment (Do one (1) of the following)

1. Do you agree with the text definition of psychological disorder? Why or why not? What alternatives might you suggest to the current definition of psychological disorder?
2. What are the possible reasons that people who survive to advanced old age would wish to end their lives? Why is it that health care providers often miss the diagnosis of suicidality in older adults?

Chapter 12: Long Term Care

Have you thought about the time when your parents may need to go into a long-term care facility? (If not your parents, think of an older individual or couple that comes to mind for you.) What do you think would be most important to them in selecting a facility? What would be most important to you?

Chapter 13: Death and Dying

Do you think the five stages of dying provide a useful perspective for understanding the dying process? Why or why not? What alternatives would you propose as a way of thinking about the dying process?

Chapter 14: Successful Aging

Rowe and Kahn have proposed a Model of Successful Aging; the model has also received a fair share of criticism. What would you add to the model to make it more comprehensive in helping us understand what successful aging entails?

2. Read Settersten, & Ray's book *Not quite adults*, as well as Jay's book *The defining decade*.

Value: 20%

Due Date: December 14, 2020

These two works are intended to give the reader an understanding of why twenty-something's and some who are older, are choosing a slower path to adulthood. Keep in mind that one of the books takes a more empirical approach to the subject, whereas the other, a more subjective and personal view of the topic. After reading the two books do the following:

- What do you think the authors are trying to communicate through their respective works? Is their intention to target twenty and thirty something's, their parents, or society in general about the state of this age group?
- Do you agree or disagree with the basic premises of the two books?
- What are the key issues identified in this book as it relates to understanding the age group(s) that are dealt with in these two books? What are the big ideas the

authors are trying to convey in these two works? What solutions are presented for dealing with these issues?

- If you are a twenty-something, or an early thirty-something, can you relate to what the authors are saying? If so, how; if not, why not? If you are older, can you relate to what the authors are saying about the respective age groups today? How similar or dissimilar is/was your experience as a twenty or thirty-something as compared to the perspectives shared in the book?

The assignment should be completed in a maximum of 5-6 pages.

Mid-course Assignments:

Read Levinson (either book as listed) and do the following:

Although this is a bit older work, Levinson has contributed a great deal to our understanding of adult development via his perspective on the 'life structure of adult development.' In reading the book, please identify here you presently fit in Levinson's scheme (i.e., chronological age area; are you in a time of transition; entering the adult world; settling down; etc.). Please respond to the following for the stage of development you are presently in:

- Describe how the various issues that Levinson deals with apply to your life. Can you relate to what he describes - if so, how? If not - why not? Explain fully.
- What adjustments and/or plans do you need to make to best cope with the demands that are being placed upon you at this time in your life?
- What things do you need to do to make for a successful transition to the next major stage of development? (i.e., If you are presently in your young adult years what do you need to do to prepare for your mid-life transition? If you are in the middle of your adult years – what preparation will there need to be for your later adult transition?)
- Even though Levinson does not speak directly to the following, his research should help you as you elaborate on your present stage of development, and the effect it has on the following goal areas. Briefly share the effect the following have on your life (the concepts noted in the brackets are to be used as reference points only. You do not need to deal with each characteristic noted).
 - Achievement and Work (Competence; identity; economic reward; success; social status)
 - Philosophical and Religious meaning (Living a spiritual life; doing God's will; having a philosophy of life; seeking the meaning of life; being wise; being morally good; personal faith development)
 - Social Service (Helping others; serving the community; contributing to human welfare and some aspect of it)
 - Ease and Contentment (Freedom from hardship; security; self-maintenance; peace of mind; health)
 - Seeking Enjoyment (Recreation and leisure; exciting experience; moments of celebration)
 - Personal Growth (Self-improvement; physically; mentally; emotionally; spiritually; socially; being creative; learning new things; knowing yourself; developing greater resiliency; meeting and mastering new challenges; mentoring and being mentored)

Make sure that you integrate all concepts with various “developmental” perspectives as well. The assignment should be completed in 6 – 8 pages.

Value: 15%

Due Date: December 18, 2020

Post-Course Assignments:

1. Read Dweck’s book “Mindset” and do the following.

- Give a brief overview of what you see as being the primary objective of the book.
- Do you agree or disagree with the assumptions Dweck is making about the concepts related to a fixed vs. growth mindset?
- Where do you see yourself in terms of what Dweck is saying? For example: (Respond briefly to three of the following):
 - Can you think of a time you faced an important opportunity or challenge with a fixed mindset? What were your thoughts and worries – about your abilities? About other people’s judgments? About the possibility of failure? Describe them.
 - Think of times other people outdid you and you just assumed they were smarter or more talented than you.
 - How do you respond to “constructive criticism”? How does it impact your view of your abilities?
 - Do you use feeling bad as a reason for doing nothing? When you feel disappointed, thwarted, cheated, or depressed do you use this as a reason to stop trying?
 - Think of something about yourself you’ve been wanting to change. What is it? Has a fixed mindset prevented you from doing this?
 - Valuing the process over the end result.
 - Celebrating growth with others – both yours and theirs.
 - Placing effort before talent.
 - What metaphor comes to mind to describe your developmental journey?
- Finally, what role do you think a person’s mindset has on one’s development in adulthood? Think developmentally here – for example, what role does a given mindset have on one’s sense of identity; relationships; engagement in community (generativity or stagnation); integrity, etc.

This assignment should be completed in five (5) pages.

Value: 15%

Due Date: February 12, 2021

2. Counseling / Training Need Identification Project: Upon completion of all reading and interactions as assigned above do the following for each of the following three stages of adult development (young adulthood; middle adulthood; and later adulthood):

- In your opinion what are three main issues that adults in a given stage of development might need to work through as they progress to the next stage of development? Do this for all three of the primary adult age groups. (i.e., What do you think are three pressing issues that emerging adults/young adults may need to work through during their emerging/young adult years? Do the same for middle, and, older adulthood.)

- Explain why you think these are key issues. Support your perspective(s). (A sound understanding of developmental theory and perspective should be evident in your response.)
- Once you have identified the key issues and have supported your opinion, how would you help an adult in this stage of development who might be working or struggling with this issue? In addressing this need, do the following:
 - In two or three paragraphs summarize what you know about his issue.
 - Summarize what you think could be the cause(s) of the problem or concern.
 - Briefly outline a plan for helping a person deal with this issue. (Give three key principles that the individual would need to work through, with your help, in dealing with the issue under consideration.)

In doing this assignment make sure you deal with the three issues for emerging / young adults (working through the steps outlined above) before doing the same for middle adults and older adulthood.

The length of this assignment will vary in accordance with the amount of detail given to completing the assignment. As a general guideline this assignment should be completed in a minimum of 15 – 20 pages.

Value: 35%

Due: February 12, 2021

SEMINARY CALENDAR

Students are expected to be aware of the policies that govern course work at Briercrest Seminary, all of which are published in the current Seminary Calendar:

<https://www.briercrestseminary.ca/academics/calendar/>.

Attendance Policy

In order to benefit fully from a seminary education, to be good stewards of time and finances, and to be considerate of their classmates and faculty members, students must be in class at every opportunity.

Modular Courses

Students are expected to attend 100 per cent of each modular for which they register. If this is impossible due to extenuating circumstances, arrangements must be made with the course professor before the first day of class. If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from attending class, a maximum of one (1) full day of class can be foregone. If additional time is missed, the student will fail the course unless they first request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit.

Online Courses

If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from attending scheduled meeting times, then up to 20% of meeting time can be foregone. Students missing scheduled meeting times should make every effort to inform the course professor prior to any time missed. If additional time is missed, the student will fail the course unless they first request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit.

Semester-Based Courses

All students missing more than two full weeks of a particular course from registration to the last day of classes will receive an automatic fail (0%). A student may appeal a course failure due to excessive absences. Successful appeals will be granted only in rare cases where all absences are clearly beyond the student's control. Appeals must be made through the Academic Appeal Process.

Course Schedules

Classes begin at 9:00 a.m. on Monday morning and run a minimum of 30 hours through the course of the week. The schedule is determined by the course professor. Students should check the syllabus for specifics. When the syllabus does not state class times, students are responsible to check with the professor prior to making travel plans.

Assignment Submission

All assignments must be submitted no later than eight weeks after the last day of class as stated in the syllabus. The correct due dates will be clearly noted in the syllabus and each faculty member will state in their syllabus how assignments should be submitted. Assignments submitted within a week after the due date will be accepted with a 10 per cent penalty. For additional information refer to the late assignment policy or the extension policy in the [academic calendar](#).

Return of Graded Assignments

Professors are expected to return graded assignments within six weeks of the due date. If they fail to do so, students may submit an inquiry to the [Seminary](#). If an extension is granted, the professor is no longer obligated to meet this deadline.

Academic Honesty

Students are accountable to perform each task according to principles of academic honesty. Please refer to pages 24-25 in the [academic calendar](#) for more information.

Academic Accommodations

Any student with a disability, injury, or health condition who may need academic accommodations (permanent or temporary) should discuss them with the course instructor after contacting the Director of the Academic Resource Centre in person (L234 in the Library), by telephone (1-306-756-3230) or by email (academicresourcecentre@briercrest.ca). Documentation from a qualified practitioner will be required (i.e., medical doctor, psychologist, etc.).