

BRIERCREST

PSY 706 Adult Development

Winter 2022

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Course Dates: April 18-22, 2022

3 Credit Hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION

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

COURSE INTEGRATION

This course is designed to provide student counselors with an overview of adult development that enables them to better attend to client's needs from a bio-psycho-socio-spiritual perspective. Since development is continuous throughout the individual lifespan, and the family context in which the individual exists, emphasis will be given to the ongoing nature of growth and change, and the challenges within each stage. Emphasis will be given to the student's ability to identify their own place within adult development, as well as the accompanying challenges and opportunities of their current developmental stage, and the application of course material to the counselling setting.

COURSE OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, each student should:

1. Have a comprehensive understanding of the main theories of individual adult development within the family life cycle.
2. Be able to identify the main challenges and opportunities of the various stages of individual adult development within the family life cycle.
3. Be able to identify their own stage of adult development, the person-of-the-therapist issues related to this stage and have a proactive strategy for how these issues will be successfully addressed.
4. Understand how the various stages of individual adult development within the family lifecycle, and challenges of these stages, will affect and inform clinical work.
5. Have developed a clearer understanding of how their own spiritual beliefs relate to understanding adult development and the practice of counselling.

COURSE TEXTS

*Almost all course texts may be purchased in Kindle format. *

- 1) Bjorklund, B. (2019). *The journey of adulthood –Access Card (9th ed.)*¹. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
Note: This text can be purchased as an e-text at: <https://www.pearson.com/store/p/journey-of-adulthood/P100000881560/9780134811642> or by searching for it on Amazon.
- 2) Nouwen, Henri, Donald McNeill, Douglass Morrison. (1983). *Compassion: A Reflection on the Christian Life*. New York, NY: Doubleday.
- 3) Palmer, Parker. (1990). *The Active Life: A Spirituality of Work, Creativity, and Caring*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- 4) Richardson, Ronald. (1995). *Family Ties that Bind: A self-help guide to change through Family of Origin therapy, 3rd edition*. Vancouver, B.C.: Self-Counsel Press.
- 5) Seamands, Stephen. (2005). *Ministry in the Image of God: The Trinitarian Shape of Christian Service*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.
- 6) Van Vonderen, Jeff. (1989). *Tired of Trying to Measure Up: Getting free from the demands, expectations, and intimidations of well-meaning people*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishing.

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.

ASSIGNMENTS

Please submit all written assignments to Canvas.

- I) Pre-course assignments, due first day of class:
 - 1) Person of the Therapist Paper: 25%
 - 2) Adult development questions: 10%
- II) In class assignments:
 - 3) Online postings: 15%
 - 4) Final Exam: 25%

¹ Although this edition is the most recent publication of Bjorklund's book, the previous two editions will also be acceptable for course requirements.

III) Post-course assignments, due June 17, 2022:

5) Reflection Paper: 25%

1) Person of the Therapist Paper, 25% (10-12 pages):

Students will read chapters 1-6 of *Family Ties that Bind* and all of *Tired of Trying to Measure Up* and write a thoughtful reflection which interacts with the material of both texts. This paper is not intended as a book review or summary of the texts, though material from both texts should be referenced throughout the paper. Students will identify their Person of the Therapist Issues (personal issues and difficulties stemming from the counselor's family of origin that may negatively impact their personal or professional life) and the family of origin dynamics that gave rise to these issues. In light of the material in both texts, you are asked to examine the issues that need further reflection and supervision to help you become, not just a qualified therapist, but a competent and skilled therapist. Questions for the student to reflect on may include, but not be limited to: What are some of the issues that you need to grapple with from your family of origin? What are some of the past/current dysfunctions and how have/will you overcome them? What were the unspoken rules in your family of origin? What happened when someone broke these rules? How were strong feelings like love and anger expressed in your family growing up? How were issues of sex, money, and power dealt with in your family of origin? How might these issues impact your practice as a therapist? How do these issues impact your current family/life as an adult?

Due on the first day of class (April 18, 2022).

2) Adult Development Questions, 10% (8-12 pages):

Read Bjorklund. This book and the required questions should be completed before the beginning of the course and submitted on the first day of class (April 18, 2022). Please state the question and then your response. Each set of chapter questions should be answered in half a page (minimum) to 1 page (maximum), *single spaced*. See appendix for questions.

3) Online postings, 15% (max. 250 words per post):

At the end of each class, students will post a response in the online discussion form, reflecting on the information and activities of the day. Students will additionally post a thoughtful response to one of their cohorts' reflections.

4) Final Exam, 25%:

Students will perform an in-class exam on the last day. In groups, and using the course material, students will watch a film of the professor's choice and analyze the movie's characters and dynamics of adult development within the context of the family life cycle.

5) Reflection Paper, 25% (10-12 pages):

Students will provide a personal response on the themes and content of the texts, *Compassion, The Active Life*, and *Ministry in the Image of God*. This assignment is not to be a book report or a summary of the texts, though all three texts should be referenced throughout the reflection paper. Students will thoughtfully interact with the material of all three texts and will reflect on and answer questions

that include, but are not limited to: How do the texts' themes of care, identity, suffering, and ministry, inform your personal identity at this stage in adult life? How is your professional practice and vocation an expression of your adult identity? In what way does your spirituality intersect with your adult identity as a counselor and inform your values? What motives are you aware of that may not be consonant with your faith? What themes or content in the books do you find helpful for constructing your adult identity as a Christian counselor and how you relate to issues of suffering and care?

Due June 17, 2022.

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 Student Success in person (L234 in the Library), by telephone (1-306-756-3230) or by email (egordon@briercrest.ca). Documentation from a qualified practitioner will be required (i.e., medical doctor, psychologist, etc.).

Appendix**1) Intro**

What are some personal characteristics of yours that have remained stable over time? What has changed? How has adulthood, gender, and your faith played a role in altering/maintaining these characteristics?

2) Physical changes

What are some of the most significant physical changes that you can identify which individuals undergo during adulthood? How do these physical changes relate to and impact mental health and well-being?

3) Health and health disorders

What are some of the major physical health disorders that you might see in adults? How do physical health disorders impact mental and emotional wellbeing in adulthood?

4) Cognitive abilities

What are some of the most significant cognitive alterations that take place during adulthood? How might these alterations relate to mental health and well-being?

5) Social roles

What are some of the most prominent advantages and deficits of being a single or married adult? How might some of these deficits present themselves in the counselling setting?

6) Social relationships

Of the four theories of social relationship (attachment, convoy, socioemotional selectivity, and evolutionary) which do you like the most and why? What are some of the deficits of this model?

7) Work and Retirement

In your chosen field of counselling, what do you find to be the most satisfying aspect and why? What are some of the deficits of your chosen field? How might your work impact, positively and negatively, your family life?

8) Personality

How has your culture, family of origin, and gender, informed the development of your personality in adulthood? How has your faith informed your personality development in adulthood?

9) The Quest for meaning

How has your understanding of what is meaningful changed over the course of your adult life? How has your culture, faith, and family impacted your development of meaning in your life?

10) Stress Coping and Resilience

What are some of the main sources of stress in adult life? What are some of the major barriers to healthy coping and resilience for adults to overcome? How might some of these deficits in healthy coping and resilience present themselves in the counselling room?

11) Death and Bereavement

In your assessment, what is North American culture's approach to death, and what aspects of this approach are healthy or unhealthy? What is your relationship to death anxiety?

12) The Successful Journey

What are some of the main contributors to successful aging? What might the negative impact be if an individual lacks these contributors to successful aging? How do you define a well lived life?