

BRIERCREST

PSY 706 Adult Development Winter 2023

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Course Dates: February 27- March 3, 2023

Online modular course

3 Credit Hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A biblical anthropology provides the foundation for this course on the various stages of adulthood. Implications for the 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 students 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.

COURSE TEXTS

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

- 1) Bjorklund, B. (2019). *The journey of adulthood (9th ed.)*¹. Prentice Hall.
- 2) Palmer, Parker. (1990). *The Active Life: A Spirituality of Work, Creativity, and Caring*. Jossey-Bass.
- 3) Seamands, Stephen. (2005). *Ministry in the Image of God: The Trinitarian Shape of Christian*. IPV Press.
- 4) Van Vonderen, Jeff. (1989). *Tired of Trying to Measure Up: Getting free from the demands, expectations, and intimidations of well-meaning people*. Bethany House Publishing.

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

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

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 life cycle, and challenges of these stages, will affect and inform clinical work.
- 5) Have developed a clearer understanding of how their own spiritual beliefs are related to understanding adult development and the practice of counselling.

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%

III) Post-course assignments:

- 5) Reflection Paper: 25%

1) Adult Development Paper, 20% (6-8 pages):

Students will read *Tired of Trying to Measure Up* and write a thoughtful response which interacts with the material of the text. This paper is not intended as a book review or summary of the text, though material from the text should be referenced throughout the paper. Students will reflect on how their understanding of adult development is informed by the ideas in the text and how this understanding integrates with the Christian faith and practice of counselling.

Due on the first day of class, February 27, 2023.

2) Adult Development Questions, 15% (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, **February 27, 2023**. 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 the syllabus 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 forum, reflecting on the information and activities of the day. Students will additionally post a thoughtful response to one of their cohorts' reflections. All responses are due prior to the beginning of the next class.

4) Final Exam, 25%:

Students will perform an in-class written 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), due April 28, 2023:

Students will provide a personal response on the themes and content of the texts *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 the texts should be referenced throughout the reflection paper. Students will thoughtfully interact with the material of both 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?

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 Academic Resource Centre Coordinator in person (L234 in the Library) or by email (ntooke@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 well-being 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 disadvantages of being a single or married adult? How might some of these disadvantages 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 shortfalls 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 negatively impact healthy coping and resilience or 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?