



## PSY 606 Lifespan Development Spring 2025

Professor: Jesse Schellenberg  
Email: jschellenberg@briercrest.ca  
Course Dates: May 12-16, 2025  
Course Delivery Method: Online Modular

3 Credit Hours

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course surveys the psychological models for understanding human development. Emphasis is given to personality, social, intellectual, spiritual and physical development, and the major theories used to describe how people change throughout their life span.

### COURSE INTEGRATION

This course provides an understanding of development that is foundational for any work with children, adolescents, or adults. It aims to create an awareness of the maturation processes in the context of attachment, from how we connect and relate to ourselves, our family system, our community and our God, throughout the lifespan. It provides a body of knowledge and thought that lays the bedrock for understanding people, problems and how people change.

### COURSE TEXTS

**\*Please note that Kindle versions of these texts are acceptable and that several of these texts are available for rent\***

1) McGoldrick, M., Preto, N.G., & Carter, B. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). (2016). *The Expanding Family Life Cycle: Individual, family, and social perspectives*. Pearson.

2) Neufeld, G. & Mate, G. (2004). *Hold on to Your Kids: Why parents matter*. Knopf.

3) Kobes Du Mez, K. (2020). *Jesus and John Wayne: How white evangelicals corrupted a faith and fractured a nation*. Liveright.

Students are expected to refer to Briercrest Seminary's APA Format and Style Guide 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>) and their myBriercrest.ca email account.

### COURSE OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, each student should:

- 1) Learn an integrative developmental paradigm.

- 2) Have a working knowledge of the factors of attachment, vulnerability, and maturation, especially as they apply to children, adolescents and adults.
- 3) Recognize significant transitional experiences across the lifespan along with risk and opportunity for the individual.
- 4) To recognize that development is a continuous series of changes and psychological processes.
- 5) Think and write critically about theoretical or empirical research in lifespan development and link their ideas to their own experiences and clinical practice.

### COURSE OUTLINE AND CONTENT

- A. Understanding attachment, maturation and vulnerability
- B. Understanding the role of emotion in development throughout the lifespan
- C. Understanding the science of social connection and physiological safety throughout the lifespan
- D. Understanding transition as a *process* rather than a series of stages

### ASSIGNMENTS

Please submit all written assignments to Canvas.

#### *Pre-Course Assignments (Due the first day of class)*

##### **1) Textbook Response #1 (4 pages, 25%):**

Students will read all of the *Expanding Family Life Cycle* and write a brief reflection. *This is not a book review or to be a summary of the information in the text.* This assignment is to be taken as a process of inner reflection looking at your own identity, personality, family history, experiences, cultural dynamics, traditions, practices, etc. Questions that students may reflect on and respond to include but are not limited to: Which theories, concepts, or information resonates with you personally and what is your sense of why this is? What dynamics from your own current family or family of origin do you see present in the text? What ideas and concepts do you agree or disagree with and why?

**Due May 12, 2025.**

##### **2) Textbook Response #2 (4 pages; 15%):**

Students will read all of *Jesus and John Wayne* and write a response critiquing the ideas in the text. *This is not intended as a book review or a summary of the text, though the text should be referenced throughout.* Your response should be based around the questions: What aspects of the author's argument do you agree or disagree with and why? What messages or ideas were you taught in your family of origin or faith tradition that might be in conflict with the author's argument, and how do you reconcile these now? Are there components of the book that elicit a particularly strong emotional reaction in you? Identify and assess your reaction.

**Due May 12, 2025.**

##### **3) Textbook Response #3 (4 pages; 10%):**

Students will read all of *Hold on to Your Kids* and write a response. *This is not intended as a book review or a summary of the text, though the text should be referenced throughout.* Questions for students to reflect on may include but are not limited to: how does the text inform your own Person of the Therapist issues? What aspects of the text help you make sense of your family of origin? How do you integrate the information in the text with your faith?

**Due May 12, 2025.**

### ***Mid-Course Assignments***

#### **1) Online postings (100-250 words per post; 10%):**

Students will create two posts on Canvas each day after class (one original and one response). Students will comment on the course content and on what ideas they agree or disagree with, what concepts they found helpful or informative, and reflect on the information and activities of the day. Students will additionally post a thoughtful response to one of their cohorts' reflections.

#### **2) Final Exam (in class; 15%):**

Students will watch a movie of the professor's choosing, analyzing the various lifespan issues of development, and write an in-class final group exam on the last day.

### ***Post-Course Assignment***

#### **Research Paper (8 pages; 25%):**

Choose and research a topic related to either child, adolescent, or adult development. Select a topic that is relevant to your current and/or future counselling ministry to better equip you with engaging this topic and lived experience. Your paper will include a brief introduction about the topic, a review of the current literature, and bio-psycho-social-spiritual understanding of the topic.

Topics for consideration include, but are not limited to:

Infidelity

Domestic Violence

Navigating grief and loss

Working with members of the LGBTQ community

Premarital counselling

Working with young families

Navigating divorce in the therapeutic setting

Counselling clients with chronic illnesses

Co-parenting

**Due July 11, 2025.**

### **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.

### ***Modular 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***

As members of the Briercrest learning community, students have a responsibility to conduct themselves with integrity and honour. Students who cheat on exams, plagiarize, inappropriately collaborate, or use generative AI without instructor authorization violate the trust placed in them by their instructors, fellow students, and the seminary. Any such actions constitute a breach of academic honesty and will result in serious consequences, such as failure of an assignment, failure of a course, or expulsion from the seminary.

Plagiarism, whether intentional or involuntary, is the submission of the work of others, published or unpublished, in whole or in part without acknowledgment or proper

documentation. All information, ideas and/or direct quotations taken from other primary or secondary sources must be documented appropriately.

Generative AI is an umbrella term for a type of machine learning and a group of algorithms that can create new content, such as text, code, images, videos, music, or a combination of all these formats. Generative AI produces output in response to a query or prompt using generative models such as Large Language Models (LLMs) that rely on large datasets. Generative AI features are also often embedded within tools such as Grammarly, allowing these tools to generate new content, such as the rewriting, paraphrasing, or summarizing of existing text. The generated responses of these tools are probabilistic, which can result in errors and biases in responses.

The use of generative AI to create audio or visual media, to produce outlines, to generate partial or complete drafts of assignments, to answer questions on quizzes or exams, or to edit the grammar of assignment drafts is considered unauthorized unless it is explicitly permitted by the course instructor in writing. All use of generative AI tools must be properly documented.

Students are responsible for ensuring they are using their sources and completing their assignments with transparency and honesty. For more details, consult the [Seminary Calendar](#) and the Briercrest Format Guide. In addition to being familiar with these pages, instructors assume that you have completed the Briercrest Academic Integrity course on [Canvas](#) and understand the information contained in it.

### ***Academic Accommodations***

Any student with a disability, injury, or health condition (mental or physical) who may need academic accommodations (permanent or temporary) should contact the ARC Coordinator in person (L234 in the Library), by phone (1-306-801-6159), or by email ([arc@briercrest.ca](mailto:arc@briercrest.ca)). Documentation from a qualified practitioner will be required (i.e., medical doctor, psychologist, etc.). It is recommended that students meet with their professors to discuss the requirements of their accommodations (i.e., how the student will receive lecture notes, or how the professor wants to receive extension requests).