PSY 291: Adulthood and Aging Spring 2012/Medvin HSC G22

"All the world's a stage
And all the men and women merely players.
They have their set exits, and entrances,
And each man in his time plays many parts
That of seven ages."

Shakespeare

What is the life course of adulthood? What pathways do individuals follow? Do personalities change, or remain the same as when we were children? What are our abilities in old age? How do we care for our elderly? This course endeavors to explore these important questions through readings, discussion, and projects.

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Office Hours: T 11-12; MWF 10:30-11:30, or by appt. Please feel free to ask questions via e-mail as well.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK: Bjorklund, B. R., & Bee, H. L. (2011). *The journey of adulthood (7th edition)*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

-This textbook does an excellent job of highlighting the major theoretical and methodological issues in adult development through the eyes of the author.

REQUIRED READINGS: On reserve; on the Internet

-These readings serve to expand on topics included in the textbook, provide new topic areas for discussion, and in general, stimulate class discussion.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION: An overview of physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional patterns occurring during adulthood and aging.

COURSE GOALS:

1. To explore multidisciplinary and cross-cultural approaches to the study of adult development.
2. To provide a comprehensive theoretical and empirical foundation for understanding adult development.
3. To understand both stability and change in adult development, and the significant factors (biological, environmental, individual) influencing each of these processes
4. To understand the applications of the field of adulthood and aging to everyday life.
5. To enhance library research, written, and oral skills

COURSE FORMAT: This course will consist of a combination of lectures, discussions, group work, films, and outside speakers. I encourage an open, active format, where students ask questions and participate in class discussions. To facilitate this format, and to maximize learning, students should attend all classes and read the materials prior to coming to class.

Because the area of adult development is rapidly expanding, we will not have time in class to discuss all of the topics covered in the readings. You are responsible for independently mastering the textbook and assigned reserve readings.

Academic Integrity (from the policy approved in May 2004).

"Central to the purpose and pursuit of any academic community is academic integrity. All members of the Westminster community, including students, faculty, staff, and administrators, are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity, in keeping with the philosophy and mission of the College." Instances of misconduct include plagiarism, cheating, and poor classroom behavior. All instances of misconduct will be dealt with according to the college policy.

In my view, I have the greatest respect for you, your abilities, and your work. I expect students in the class the have the same respect both for their own work and the work of others. Therefore, I expect that all students will comply with the academic integrity guidelines.

Other issues

The Dean of Students has asked me to include the following section:

"The mission of Westminster College is to help men and women develop competencies, commitments, and characteristics which have distinguished human beings at their best. The abuse of alcohol and other drugs serves only to undermine the attainment of these goals. The faculty therefore expects all students, as they do of themselves, to take seriously the implications of such risk-taking behaviors in their pursuit of a Westminster education."

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

EXAMS AND QUIZZES	55%	See syllabus
PAPER OR VOLUNTEER PROJECT	20%	T, May 3
INTERVIEW	15%	Th, April 3
ACTIVITIES	10%	As scheduled

EXAMS: Exams will consist of objective and essay items covering the text, readings, handouts, and lectures. Each exam will assess 1/3 of the course material. The exams are worth 55% of your grade. Occasional quizzes will also be given, and will be added into the grades for exams. Quizzes will count for no more than 10% of your total exam grades.

There will be no make-up exams without a medical excuse from the health center or a doctor, or formal notification of a family emergency from the Dean of Student Affairs. I also follow the policy in your student handbook for missing a scheduled examination.

PAPER **OR** VOLUNTEER PROJECT:

Your term paper will be an 10-page literature review of a particular topic area chosen by the student, and approved by the professor. The purpose of the paper is to enable you to become a specialist--to develop expertise in a specific area of adult development. The report should critically analyze and evaluate past and present theories and research in the field. You must let me know which topic you choose by February 23, and the paper is due May 3. The paper is due in class, and for every day the paper is late you will lose 5 grade points. There will be several assignments to guide you in the writing of the paper. The paper is worth 20% of your grade. As requested by the Dean, I will be using Turnitin to evaluate student writing.

OR

In place of the paper, students who are interested may volunteer 3 hours a week at a local care facility or senior center (approx 30 week total, or more if you choose). You will need to keep a journal describing your activities and reflections (for example, how your experiences relate to the course material, how they have changed your perspectives on the elderly or confirmed them), and write a shorter 5-page research paper integrating a topic from the research literature with your experiences (elder care, depression, dementia, therapeutic interventions are examples of possible topics). You will need to follow the same guidelines for the paper as the rest of the class, using 5 sources. Your interview may also be with an individual at the nursing home (pending the permission of the care staff).

INTERVIEW

Interview an individual 20-39, 40-59, 60-79, or older, and ask how life events and transitions impacted his or her life. Relate major life events to concepts covered in the course, such as retirement, changes in physical functioning, family events. Conclude by reflecting on how this

project affected your attitudes toward older adults. You should maintain contact with the interviewee over the course of the semester. We will compare the findings from each age interval.. Grades will be based on the use of relevant class concepts, grammar, spelling, and style. This project is due on April 3.

ACTIVITIES

Activities are used to enhance course content. Some possibilities include a web review of sites on a particular topic, reflections on movies or literary works, analysis of case studies, and response cards. **Response cards** are written on 4 x 6 note cards, and involve reflections on films, class issues, speakers, or discussions. You may be asked to fill these out at the beginning, middle, or end of class, and they are considered a part of your grade (3 points each). You are expected to have read the chapter and to be able to apply the information during class. Attendance and participation may also be included under this category.

FINAL GRADE: The grading scale will be as follows:

Percent of Work Mastered	Grade
93-100%	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
67-69	D+
63-66	D
60-62	D-
<60	F

COURSE OUTLINE

Please share with me your interests in this field--I will try to direct my lectures accordingly. Note that while the topics on this syllabus may change, the relative order will remain the same. In addition, the dates for particular readings or activities may change. I will inform you of any needed changes during class time. Readings are on electronic reserve.

Wk	Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments Due
1	T Jan 17	Intro	Ch 1	
	Th, Jan 19	Concepts/Methods	Ch 1	**Quiz** Chapter 1
2	T, Jan 24	Methods	Ch 1	**Find** a newspaper article that discusses a study in the area of adulthood and aging. Discuss the research question and design, as well as the image it creates about adulthood and aging. Compare it to our class discussions and text material.
	Th, Jan 26	Physical Changes	Ch 2	
3	T, Jan 31	Physical Changes	Ch 2	**Compare** the two health quizzes. What do your findings indicate? How do they compare to the textbook information? http://www.livingto100.com/ http://www.exrx.net/Calculators/HealthAge.html
	Th, Feb 2	Health and Health Disorders	Ch 3	**Article present 1:** Choose a disorder relevant to aging that is in the text, and find a scholarly article that provides information on the disorder. What additional information does the article provide? How does that information add to the textbook?
4	T, Feb 7	Health and Health Disorders	Ch 3	**Article present 2:** Choose disorder assignment
	Th, Feb 9	Cognitive Abilities	Ch 4	**Article present 3:** Same assignment, but focusing on cognition and health
5	T Feb 14	Cognitive Abilities	Ch 4	**Article present 4:** Same assignment, but focusing on cognition and health
	Th, Feb 16	***Exam 1***	Chs 1-4; readings	Exam 1
6	T, Feb 21	Social Roles	Ch 5	
	Th, Feb 23	Social Roles	Ch 5	**Paper Topic Due**

7	T, Feb 28	Relationships	Ch 6; Labozetta (on reserve)	**Read and contrast with textbook:** Making the wine, by Marissa Labozetta
	Th, Mar 1	Relationships	Ch 6	
8	T, Mar 6	**---Spring Break**	---	
	Th, Mar 8	**---Spring Break**	---	
9	T, Mar 13	Work and Retirement	Ch 7	Are you prepared? Consider the information on http://www.jobhuntersbible.com/. Find additional job search resources.
	Th Mar 15	Work and Retirement	Ch 7; reserve articles	**Compare and discuss the issues: Managing Age Discrimination by** Ellie D. Berger. **The great recession** by Amy Buttell. Hand in review.
10	T Mar 20	Personality	Ch 8	**Literature Search and Article Review Due**
	Th Mar 22	Personality	Ch 8	
11	T Mar 27	***Exam 2****	Ch 5-8; readings	Exam 2
	Th, Mar 29	Quest for Meaning	Ch 9	
12	T, Apr 3	Quest for Meaning	Ch 9	**Interview Due**
	Th, Apr 5	**---Easter Break**	---	
13	T Apr 10	Monday classes meet	---	
	Th, Apr 12	Stress, Coping, Resistance	Ch 10	
14	T Apr 17	Stress, Coping, Resistance	Ch 10	

	Th, Apr 19	Death and Bereavement	Ch 11	**Speaker: TBA**
15	T Apr 24	Death and Bereavement	Ch 11	
	Th, Apr 26	Successful Journey	Ch 12	**Comparisons: Emerging and Early adulthood**
16	T, May 1	Successful Journey	Ch 12	
	Th May 3	Class Overview		**Paper Due**
	T, May 8	Final Exam Period-3-5:30 pm	Ch 9-12; readings	Exam 3

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