

Psychology 3000A – Adolescence

Issues in Psychology (Psychology 3000 Series), Fall 2011 Department of Psychology The University of Lethbridge

Location:

MWF; 2:00-2:50; D634

Instructor:

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Office Hours: By individual appointment at a mutually convenient time.

Undergraduate Student Assistant:

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Course Description:

The Issues in Psychology Series courses are designed to allow students to expand their knowledge of the fundamental principles of a specific discipline that were accrued at the second-year level. This semester, Psychology 3000A is intended to give students the opportunity to expand on the material covered in Psychology 2110A by placing emphasis on the period of lifespan development that marks the transition from middle to late childhood through adolescence to young adulthood. To this end, lectures, reading material, and in-class discussions will address three major themes: principles that apply to all humans or universals (i.e., the normative path); the sources and types of individual differences in this normative path; and finally, the problems that arise from severe disturbances or deviations that may affect only some adolescents. As with all courses in developmental psychology, it is essential to address these issues from an interactionist perspective that considers the biological, physical, cognitive, social, and emotional processes that are characteristic of the period under discussion. Although attendance at lectures is not mandatory, each student is responsible for any material that is presented in the lecture whether or not you choose to attend. It is your responsibility to ensure that your notes are complete.

Required Prerequisites:

Prerequisites for this course are Psychology 2110 and one additional 2000-level course (3.0 credit hours) in Psychology or Neuroscience. Regardless of specific background, I expect all students to have a working knowledge of the fundamentals of developmental psychology, and the scientific approach to understanding human behaviour.

Lectures and Required Reading:

Rather than using a published textbook for course content, required reading consists of a series of published journal articles and book excerpts that will be made available online using the Moodle Learning Management System (LMS). Due to the fact that we will have no formal textbook, summaries of lecture material and study questions will also be posted to Moodle (see below). Students are required to purchase the reference text by Northey, M., & von Anderkas, P. (2011). *Making Sense in the Life Sciences: A student's guide to research and writing*. Oxford University Press: Don Mills, ON.

Online Resources:

(1) About Moodle: The University of Lethbridge has replaced Blackboard/webCT with Moodle (<https://moodle.uleth.ca/>). For those students that are not familiar with the new Moodle system, I will provide an in-class demonstration during the introductory classes. I will use Moodle to provide you with a weekly update on material to be covered, including assigned readings and lecture summaries. As with the previous LMS, I will provide an online grade book to allow you to track your standing in the course.

(2) Email: My primary method of communicating with you for general notices and points of interest to supplement lecture material will be via email and in-class announcements. Please check your U of L email account on a regular basis, or have that account forwarded to your usual email provider. Please do your best to remember to do regular housekeeping so that you do not miss important notices that relate to this course due to a full mailbox. Any requests for information pertaining to matters of a confidential nature (e.g., your particular standing in the course) must be sent from your U of L account. Please include your student number and your full legal name as it appears on your registration. Please do not abuse the class listserv by sending communications that are not relevant to this course.

Course Requirements:

(1) Exams. There will be three exams in this course, each of which will account for 15% of your final grade. Exams will be based on both lecture material and required readings, and will consist of short-answer, definition, and multiple-choice questions. There is no cumulative final exam in this course.

Exam Dates: Exam 1 – October 12, 2011; Exam 2 – November 9, 2011; Exam 3 – December 9, 2011

(2) Oral Presentation. Students will be responsible for giving a short, conference-length presentation (10 minutes for presentation and 3 minutes for question period). Students will present in groups of three (maximum time for the group is 15 minutes, with length of time strictly enforced by the instructor). This presentation will be worth 20% of your final grade, with 10% accorded to the group and 10% accorded to each individual's contribution. Approaches from all levels of psychological analysis are encouraged (e.g., depending on your interests, you might choose to focus on the physiological changes that occur during puberty or you might choose a topic related to decision-making and social cognition). All group members are responsible for ensuring that the presentation is a cohesive group effort. Details related to this assignment will be discussed during the introductory classes and in an in-class workshop. **One member of the group MUST provide me with an electronic copy of your final presentation slides (Keynote or Powerpoint only) by 4:00 pm on the day of your presentation.**

(3) Abstract Assignment. As a companion to your presentation each student must submit a written assignment that is adapted from several standard abstracted and annotated formats. The assignment consists of writing a one-page, critical abstract of each of five (5) primary research articles that address the same topic as your presentation. The articles must have been published in a peer-reviewed (refereed) journal within the last six (6) years (i.e., 2005 or later – no exceptions). This assignment will account for 15% of your final grade and will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Students that pass the assignment with their first submission will receive 15%. Students that do not pass the assignment with their first submission will be required to submit a revised assignment to achieve full marks. In other words, everyone can achieve the full 15%. An information sheet for this assignment will be available on Moodle and will be discussed during the introductory classes. **First submission of this assignment is due NO LATER THAN 4:00 pm on the day that you give your presentation. Assignments may be handed in during class time or placed in the dropbox located adjacent to D866.**

(4) **Journal Assignment.** Each student will submit a written assignment that consists of an essay explaining a single, original research article (the target article) concerning any topic in the area of adolescent development (i.e., your journal assignment does not have to address the same topic as your presentation and abstract assignment). As with the presentation and abstract assignment, approaches from all levels of psychological analysis are encouraged, and your target article must be a primary research paper that has been published in a peer-reviewed (refereed) journal within the last six (6) years (i.e., 2005 or later). This assignment is worth 20% of your final grade. Following initial grading (according to the grading scheme given below), all students will be given an opportunity to revise their paper for a higher grade. An information sheet for this assignment will be available on Moodle and will be discussed during the introductory classes (see schedule). **First submission of this assignment is due NO LATER THAN Wednesday, November 16 by 4:00 pm. Assignments may be handed in during class time or placed in the dropbox located adjacent to D866.**

NB. With the exception of extenuating circumstances (e.g., illness), all students must write the exams and submit assignments on the scheduled dates. You must provide supporting documentation (e.g., a doctor's note) should you be unable to meet submission deadlines or write an exam. Late submissions of the Journal Assignment or the Abstract Assignment will result in a 25% penalty per day. Failure to deliver your part of the in-class presentation will result in a grade of zero percent (0%) for both portions of the mark. Your group will be graded without your result. Students that contribute little to the group presentation will have their mark adjusted accordingly. All assignments will be graded under the assumption that you have read and understood the contents of the second required text by Northey and von Anderkas (2011). In particular, all assignments must be in your own words. Paraphrasing someone else's words, even if you reference those words, is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense. Any case of suspected plagiarism will be dealt with severely, including the imposition of the maximum penalties allowable (please consult the current U of L Calendar regarding academic offenses).

Students with Special Needs:

If you have a documented condition that prevents you from fully participating in this course, including evaluation procedures, it is your responsibility to contact me regarding your individual situation. Please note that no accommodations will be given without an official letter from the Disabilities Resource Centre (<http://www.uleth.ca/ross/disabilities/index.html>).

Grading Scheme:

Letter grades will be assigned to final course percentages according to the following scale:

A+ (90+)	B+ (77-79)	C+ (67-69)	D+ (56-59)
A (85-89)	B (73-76)	C (63-66)	D (50-55)
A- (80-84)	B- (70-72)	C- (60-62)	F (< 50)