

Office hours (121 Clough):

Mondays	10:00-12:00	drop-in (no appointments)
Wednesdays and Fridays	9:00- 5:00	by appointment

I. Course Objectives

A. Content/Knowledge Objectives

Students will be expected to acquire a familiarity with current theories of adolescence and early adult development, and to evaluate the evidence relevant to them. This will involve

- Learning concepts, terminology, and methods used by researchers in this area
- Learning to evaluate theories and evidence critically, and to participate in discussions about the important questions in the field.
- Learning to apply the theory and research we cover to matters of social and educational policy that affect the welfare of adolescents.

B. Student Skills to be Developed

The assignments and the use of class time in this course focus on exercising skills and dispositions required of professionals in adolescent psychology. These include:

- Learning to formulate your own questions and hypotheses in professionally sophisticated formats, and learning to find relevant information for addressing those questions. Students will be encouraged to give special attention to course material that stimulates their own interests and questions.
- The ability to contribute to a productive discussion both by expressing your own ideas and by facilitating the development and expression of others' ideas. Students should be mindful of preparing themselves to join an important national discourse concerning the well-being and the education of our youth.
- The ability to find and evaluate a body of scientific research relevant to a well-defined question, and to write a review of those findings in standard professional style.

C. Recurring Themes

There are three major themes that will continually come into focus throughout this course. These will come into our conversations as we consider every aspect of development.

- (1) The experiences, opportunities, and outcomes of adolescent development vary markedly and in interesting ways for individuals in different ethnic and racial groups and for teens with different cultural traditions. We must be careful not to talk about “adolescent development” without asking “Which adolescents?”
- (2) Related to the above, we will find that ‘adolescence’ has very different meanings depending on the socio-cultural context. We will want to examine ways that adolescent development is influenced by (a) media messages and general beliefs about what teens are like and how they can be expected to behave, and (b) cultural norms that specify the appropriate times for economic independence, marriage, childbearing, etc.
- (3) It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that gender is the pre-eminent feature in the world of adolescence. Although some theorists believe that gender identity is established years earlier, no one disputes the notion that the adoption of gendered roles and coming to terms with sexuality and gender are critical challenges for this part of the life cycle. Many of the experiences, opportunities, and outcomes of adolescent development may be different in interesting ways for girls and boys.

II. Required Texts

Cobb, N. J. (2001). *Adolescence: Continuity, change, and diversity*. (5th edition.) CA: Mayfield Publishing Company.

Garbarino, J. (1999). *Lost boys: Why our sons turn violent and how we can save them*. New York: Free Press.

Rosnow, R. L., & Rosnow, M. (2001). *Writing Papers in Psychology*. Belmont, Ca.: Wadsworth.

Way, N. (1998). *Everyday courage: The lives and stories of urban teenagers*. New York: New York University Press.

III. Course Requirements

A. Engaged Reading and Identifying your own Interests (10% of final course grade)

As you read for this course, you are encouraged to monitor and to make note of your own knowledge, understanding, and feelings relevant to the material.

For readings in the Cobb book, students will turn in Reading Notes that include 10 items:

- Five **FACTS**, things that you know because of this reading. A “fact” is an empirical assertion that is backed up by substantial evidence, so that there is general agreement among experts of its validity. (Definitions are not facts.) Note the five facts you consider most interesting or most important. Facts can be important for a lot of different reasons. What I want to know, is which facts you expect yourself to remember. Facts that you probably knew last year, or that most people who have NOT taken adolescent development probably know, should not be included even if they are important and memorable.
- Three **CONCEPTS**, things you understand because of this reading. A concept is a way of thinking about something. Concepts include explanations and explanatory constructs. You may include among the concepts you select, approaches or ways of studying development. Select concepts you consider most important.
- Two **REACTIONS**, things you felt as you were doing this reading. Your own reactions (fascination, anger, sorrow, awe, puzzlement, etc.) are important guides to your interests and are significantly related to your memory and understanding.

For readings in the Way and Garbarino books, students will turn in Reading Notes that include 5 items:

- Three **CONCEPTS**.
- Two **REACTIONS**.

Reading Notes (RN's) must be typed¹ and will be due at the beginning of each class session. Each Cobb RN will be worth 10 points and the Way and Garbarino RNs will be worth 5 points. Reading Notes turned in later than the beginning of the class period for which the reading is assigned will receive half credit. (No late Reading Notes will be accepted after Reading Day.) Students' grade for this part of the course will be the total number of points they accumulate multiplied by .66. (There are 225 possible points. Students with 145 will get a 96; students with 95 will get a 63.)

The purposes of the RN assignment are:

- To encourage students to take responsibility for deciding what material in the course is important, and serves their own educational goals. (Note that the ability to formulate your own questions is an important professional skill you should be nurturing.)
- To help me come to know what is interesting and important to each student in the class.

¹ All work turned in for this course must be double-spaced and printed with a good, dark print in a font sized no smaller than this footnote, and with 1-inch margins. (The font for this syllabus is only 10, but this footnote is Times New Roman 14. This is the smallest print I will read.) Work that does not meet these specifications will be returned to the student and will suffer the late penalty.

- To help students keep a record of the most important things they are learning.
- To encourage students to read material in time, and therefore to get the most out of our class meetings.

It is critical to the success of this class that students read thoughtfully and critically and spend time preparing to contribute to class discussions. **You should bring copies of each reading to class, along with your notes and questions or comments prepared for discussion.**

B. Contributions to Class Discussions (15% of final course grade)

You are encouraged to develop your skill at contributing to in-class discussions, both by bringing up good questions and comments, and by facilitating and encouraging the development of others' ideas. **Being a good contributor to class discussion does not typically mean being the person who talks the most.** It should be the goal of all of us to see that each of us has an opportunity to express ideas. If there are members of the class community whose ideas we do not hear, this should be seen as a problem for all of us, and all of us should be thinking about ways to include those individuals in our conversations. Class participation grades are positively affected by contributions that highlight or encourage the contributions of other students.

Sometimes you will find that you are unable to express your ideas on a topic during a class discussion. The course of the discussion may move on before you have had enough time to formulate your thoughts, or you may be especially interested in discussing an aspect of the reading that we never get to in class. Sometimes you just need to contemplate your reactions and to explore your own ideas on the topic after the class session has ended. When this happens, you are encouraged to contribute your remarks to the class by webCT.

When you login to webCT, click on 'discussions' and then click on 'afterthoughts' to enter your comments. Afterthought contributions will be considered equally with in-class discussion as part of the class participation grade. Students may write afterthoughts for any class session, but are especially encouraged to write them for the lecture classes and other class sessions that do not allow as much time for student discussion. Students are required to log in to webCT at some time during the 24 hours before each class to read contributions that have been submitted. Failing to do this will hurt the class participation grade. Just as with in-class discussions, you are expected to respond to one another, and to encourage the expression and development of ideas.

If you must be absent from class for any reason (including illness or other excused absence), you are required to contribute your thoughts on the reading by webCT in the section titled "Missed Classes." Each absence that is not made up in this way will result in a 3-point reduction in the Contribution grades.

C. Research Paper (25% of final grade)

Students will select a topic early in the term and begin to review the relevant scientific literature in a paper (approximately 3000 words) written in accordance with APA style.² The Rosnow and Rosnow handbook will serve as a guide for format and style, and also offers useful suggestions for selecting a topic, developing a thesis, conducting library research, and writing. You should consult with me about your paper early in the term. Topic statements, preliminary bibliographies, thesis statements, and organizational frameworks will be due during the term, and each will count toward the final paper grade. A 1-point penalty will be subtracted for each of these that are late. Final papers are due on April 28 at 4:30, and there will be a three-point late penalty that will accrue every day at 4:30.

Students are encouraged to collaborate in pairs on term papers and to co-author their final paper. Collaboration is not required, but many students find they learn more from working together. Most of the professional work in our discipline is collaborative, and most of the papers you read are co-authored. As you work on your research paper, be attentive to the development of the following skills, all of which are critical to our discipline and to many others: the ability to develop your own questions about an area of research, to evaluate previous literature that pertains to your questions, and to develop an argument or conclusions.

² The only deviations from APA style will be those required to meet the specifications of footnote 1.

Final papers will be evaluated according to the following point system:

Early Preparation (total 16 pts)

- Preliminary Topic and Bibliography: Feb. 1 (2 pts)
- Research Bibliography: Feb. 10 (2 pts)
- Preliminary Thesis: Mar. 1 (2 pts)
- Preliminary Organizational Framework: Mar. 1 (2 pts)
- Annotated Bibliography: Mar. 29 (4 pts)
- Revised Thesis: Apr. 14 (2 pts)
- Revised Outline: Apr. 14 (2 pts)

Final Paper

Library Research Skills (15 pts)

Adequate coverage of current scholarly journals and books on the topic

Conceptual Work (25 pts)

Focus

- Recognition and discussion of important issues relevant to the topic
- Clear statement of problem, clear statement of thesis and conclusions

Conceptual framework

- Organization of material is clear and sensible
- Relates to developmental theory and conceptual issues

Clear presentation of previous research (20 pts)

- Adequate attention to operationalization and to research procedures
- Appropriate inferences or generalizations made from research findings

Original contributions, creative thought (15 pts):

- evaluation of previous work,
- proposing research that needs to be done,
- pointing out aspects of the problem that have been overlooked or oversimplified.

Style (10 pts)

- Clarity of Writing
- Mastery of APA Style

D. Research Reports (20% of final grade)

Twice during the term, students will prepare a report of a study they have read in pertaining to their term paper topic. Each student will write a brief (500 - 1000 words) summary of the article, partly as practice in reviewing empirical research for the term paper. These reports will be prepared in the format described below. On the day that these are assigned, each student will be given 5 minutes to describe the study to the class. Late reports will suffer a full letter grade penalty.

Complete Reference Information for the Article, in APA Style.

Description and Explanation of Research Question. Describe the authors' research question, the hypothesis they tested, and/or their purpose in doing the project.

Description of Method.

Participants: Detail the number and relevant characteristics of the research participants (e.g., age, education, how recruited, etc).

Procedure: Using the vocabulary presented in Chapter 14 of the Cobb text, describe the design of the research. Is it an experiment, quasi-experiment, or correlational study? Is it longitudinal, cross-sectional, or sequential? What types of variables are assessed and how are they operationalized (e.g., self-report, direct observation, etc.)

Results. Give a brief summary of the research results. You may attach photocopied tables or figures if this helps explain the findings.

Conclusions and Evaluation. Summarize the authors' conclusions and consider how it relates to other material we have read or to the thesis of your paper. How valid do you consider the study and how worthwhile?

E. Examinations (30% of final grade)

		Annotated Bibliography	
Tue	31	W7, G1	Injustice and Moral Development; Epidemic Violence?
Th	Apr 5	G2, Research Reports	Shame and depression in boys Student research reports
Tue	7	W9	'Tough Guise'
Th	12	C12	Pick a Problem
Tue	14	G3, Revised Thesis Statement/ Organizational Framework	Adolescent Consequences of Early Loss
Th	19	G4, G5, RR6	Knowing Evil Too Soon
Tue	21	G6, G7	Prevention: What the lost boys needed
Th	26	G8 C13, W epilogue	What the lost boys need now: Boot Camps or Monasteries? What teens cope with
Th	28	Research Paper	Most Interesting Thing I Learned Writing my Paper
M	May 2	Final Exam Due at 8:30 p.m.	

Estimated Time Commitment Required

Typical students should plan to devote 10 hours a week to each class at Rhodes. Students who are taking a course in an area of study with which they are unfamiliar or for which they have little preparation, may have to spend more time than this. Psychology 230 usually requires approximately 80 pages of text-book reading and 30 pages of primary-source reading each week, with about half that assigned on weeks when other work is due. Many students can complete this amount of reading thoughtfully in about 5 hours if they are adequately rested and healthy.

As you plan your schedule for the semester, try to set aside approximately 5 hours to spend on course reading each week, and plan to work on longer term assignments (most importantly, the term paper) for the other 5 hours each week. You are strongly encouraged to maintain steady work on the paper throughout the term, starting in the very first week.