Course Number: SOWO 505  
Course Title: Human Development in Context II: Adulthood  
Semester and Year: Spring 2010  
Time and Location: Tuesday 2:00 – 4:50 pm  
Instructor: Marty Weems, MSW, LCSW, LCAS  
Office Phone: 919-843-9161  
Email Address: weems@email.unc.edu  
Office Hours: By appointment  

Course Web Site: http://blackboard.unc.edu

**Course Description**
This course reviews typical and divergent adult development in context, surveys major theoretical frameworks, and highlights the impact of social injustices on adult development.

**Course Objectives**
At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Analyze and evaluate major theoretical frameworks (e.g., bioecological, psychosocial, life span, life course, risk and resilience, person-in-environment, systems) for examining adult development in context;
2. Describe the development of individuals from early adulthood to old age, as well as divergent developmental trajectories that may occur in response to a range of socio-cultural-historical influences, personal decisions, biopsychosocial problems and social injustices (e.g., illness, disability, deprivation, discrimination);
3. Explain the impact of gender, sexual orientation, culture/heritage, spirituality, race-ethnicity, and socioeconomic status on typical and divergent trajectories of adult development;
4. Articulate how the family serves as the primary social context for adult development, including the implications of variations in family structure, development, and process in both the family of origin and the family of choice.
5. Recognize and describe major health and mental health disorders and the comorbidity among these disorders that occurs during adulthood;
6. Articulate key ethical issues for social workers related to adult health and mental health (e.g., access to treatment based on diagnosis, health disparities, end of life decisions)

**Expanded Description**
This course provides students with an overview of typical and divergent adult developmental trajectories, including how biological, psychological, spiritual, interpersonal, family, community, socio-cultural, historical, and economic factors shape these trajectories. In this course, families are considered a primary social context for adult development. The course surveys major theoretical frameworks for explaining typical and divergent adult development in environmental context. Additionally, the course will emphasize risk and protective factors and resiliency as well as the impact of social injustices, deprivation, and discrimination on adult and family development, functioning, and health.
**Readings**

**Required Text**

**Articles and book chapters:** You are responsible for the articles and chapters listed under required reading. Further readings are included for those seeking additional information.

**Web Sites:** You will be investigating health and mental health topics through a variety of Web resources.

**Assignments**

1. **Class Participation.** Students are expected to participate in class discussion. Full credit is given to students who have attended all classes and who have demonstrated engagement with the material (based on their quality rather than quantity of participation in class discussion).

2. **Health Disparities Group Presentation**
   Students will form in groups of four or five and present on a particular health or mental health disorder or environmental condition and its differential impact on a specific subpopulation (e.g., persons of a particular race, ethnicity, gender, age, or sexual orientation). Presentations will be scheduled during classes that best fit your topic and should be between 20-25 minutes (including discussion). The instructor will provide a sign-up sheet to facilitate this process and ensure that topics span the adult life course. Each group is required meet with the instructor at least two weeks prior to their scheduled date and must have their topic approved by the week preceding their presentation.

   Begin by choosing a topic of interest in your professional development – such as particular health or mental health conditions (e.g., diabetes, HIV/AIDS, cancer, schizophrenia, borderline personality disorder) or circumstances (divorce, care-giving across generations, domestic or community violence) that affect individual development and family processes. Next, research the topic as a group, with special attention to the differential impact by race, culture, age, gender, or other salient category. There is much evidence of disparities across subgroups in the causes, diagnosis, treatment, and outcomes for particular disorders as well as the distribution of environmental conditions that affect wellbeing.

   For your presentation, use your creativity to convey information about the disparities you find and their significance. For example, you may decide to provide the class with case vignettes to analyze, administer a “quiz” to test (and enhance) our knowledge, or engage the class in demonstrative role plays, pedagogical games, or experimental exercises. Each group is required to provide information to the class on all of the following in a clear manner:

   **A.** The etiology, symptomatology and prevalence of the disorder or condition within the specific subpopulation.
B. The meaning and significance of the disorder or condition to those within the specific subpopulation. (Many Western, DSM interpretations of disorders and conditions are not shared by all cultures. For example, the ancient Hawaiian culture believed that excess body weight signified royalty, and persons in many cultures believe that people with epilepsy are touched by the gods.)

C. Individual, family, or community traits or conditions that affect the incidence and/or course of the disorder. (For example, gun violence in low-SES urban neighborhoods may prevent community members from going outdoors to play or exercise; the resultant sedentary lifestyle may lead to obesity in children and adults.)

D. The impact of the disorder or condition and its sequelae on individuals, their family and community, if relevant. (For example, how has the incarceration of a significant portion of the male African American population in some urban neighborhoods affected life in these communities?)

E. Specific recommendations for social worker assessment and intervention with individuals and families affected by the disorder or condition.

F. Specific recommendations for macro assessment and intervention, including policy changes that affect the outcome or incidence of the condition or disorder, with an eye on issues of discrimination, inequality, and social justice.

Given the time limit, each group will have to decide which pieces to focus on during the activity itself, and which to cover in another format. You may focus primarily on one or two components in an experimental exercise and then provide the remaining information in a clear and concise handout. Please submit all written materials electronically so that the instructor can post them on Blackboard for your colleagues. Each group must also submit an APA-style reference list of scholarly articles to the instructor on the day of the presentation. In preparing for your presentation, use current literature from professional journals. You may also supplement this information with additional resources and sources.

3. **Critical Thinking Papers**

Students will complete two (out of four) critical thinking papers during the semester. These papers build on the critical thinking papers from HBSE, Part I. For each paper, students will apply course material to analyze a case study, including explicit reference and incorporation of readings from the classes covered. The instructor will provide more detailed description of these assignments. Each paper will be limited to 2 pages (12pt font), not including the case description. APA format is required, with the exceptions that you are to omit the cover sheet and may single space your paper.

Students choose between options for each paper:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st</th>
<th>CT#1 - Class 4-6 Early Adulthood Development (due by beginning of class 6) or CT#2 - Class 7-9 Middle Adulthood Development (due by beginning of class 9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>CT#2 - Class 7-9 Middle Adulthood Development (due by beginning of class 9) CT#3 - Class 10-12 Older Adulthood Development (due by beginning of class 12) or CT#4 - Class 13 Death and Bereavement (due by beginning of class 13)</td>
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4. **Older Adult Life Review (Counts as Final Exam)**

This assignment provides the opportunity for students to analyze and evaluate theories and information about human development to understand the developmental over the life course of an older adult. The first part of this assignment is to interview an older adult to learn about his or her life-span development. In this life review, students are to ask the older adult to reflect on the most significant actions and developmental milestones that have shaped his or her life. The second part involves using a theoretical perspective and factual information from the course to explain the individual’s development within relevant contexts. Your written assessment should include how the person’s life has been shaped by diversity (race, ethnicity, rurality, gender/sexual orientation, disability, and social class); health and mental health issues; family, cultural, and community context; and the roles that risk and resilience played in the person’s life trajectory. **Due by start of the last day of class.**

**APA and Written Assignments**

The School of Social Work faculty has adopted APA style as the preferred format for papers and publications. The best reference is the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Fifth Edition (2001) that is available at most bookstores. The following web sites provide additional information:


The UNC School of Social Work Style Guide: A Writing Manual for Social Work Students ([http://ssw.unc.edu/currentStudent/index.html](http://ssw.unc.edu/currentStudent/index.html)) also contains basic APA information and a section on how to avoid misuse of the words and ideas of others in your written work. Students are strongly encouraged to review the section on plagiarism carefully. All instances of academic dishonesty will result in disciplinary measures pre-established by the School of Social Work and the University.

**Honor Code**

The Student Honor Code is always in effect in this course. The Instrument of Student Judicial Governance ([http://instrument.unc.edu/](http://instrument.unc.edu/)) requires that you vouch for your compliance on all your written work. You must write the following pledge in full on each document title page: “I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment.” Sign and date your statement.

**Policy on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities that affect their participation in the course must notify the instructor if they wish to have accommodations in instructional format, examination format, etc. The instructor will work with the Office of Disabilities and the student to make appropriate accommodations.

**Grades**

The School of Social Work uses an evaluation system of Honors (H), Pass (P), Low Pass (L), and Fail (F). For this class, the numerical value of an H ranges from 94 - 100; a P is 80 - 93; an L is 70 - 79. A grade of P is considered entirely satisfactory. On a traditional grading scale, a P would range from B- to A-. The grade of Honors signifies that the work is clearly excellent in all respects. A student receiving nine or more Low Passing credits is ineligible to continue in graduate school. The final grading breakdown is:
**ASSIGNMENT PERCENTAGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Disparities Presentation (group)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Papers (2 at 20% each)</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Older Adult Life Review</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total 100%**

**ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION**

Attendance at all class sessions is expected; it is important to be on time so as not to disrupt class. We will cover a great deal of information in each class. If you will not be able to attend a class, let the instructor know as soon as possible. It is also your responsibility to obtain handouts, information about class content, and information about announcements, etc., from your classmates. Students with more than two absences will receive an “L” unless they have made prior arrangements with the instructor. In order to fully participate in and benefit from each class session, students must complete required readings and come to class prepared to discuss them.

**LATE PAPERS**

Late papers are strongly discouraged. To obtain permission to submit a paper after the deadline, the student must seek approval from the instructor before the beginning of class on the day that the product is due. If permission for late submission is not granted before breaking a deadline, the grade will automatically be reduced 10%, and another 10% reduction will occur each day, including weekends. In case of an emergency, a late paper may be accepted without penalty at the discretion of the instructor. Avoid having last minute computer failures prevent you from turning papers in on time. Plan ahead! Keep backups and don’t rely on having computers, printers, servers, and email programs working perfectly a half-hour before class.

**CELL PHONE POLICY**

Cell phones are a disruption to the learning process. Students are expected to turn off their cell phones during class.

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**Week 1 / January 12 / Introduction: Adult Development in Theoretical Context**

**Topics:**
- Bridging child/adolescent development to young adult/adult/older adult development
- Life course theory of development
- Bioecological systems theory for adult and family development
- Diverse family forms in adulthood
- Risk and resilience in adulthood

**Required Readings:**
Week 2 / January 19 / Adult Development in Family and Wider Context

Topics:
- Contextualizing adult and family development within the context of the family including considerations of illness, disability, deprivation, discrimination
- Video: Depression: Out of the Shadow http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/takeonestep/depression/
  Chapter 5: Trauma, Stress, Depression (nine minutes)

Required Readings:

Week 3 / January 26/ Perspectives on Health and Mental Health in Adult Development

Topics:
- Use of DSM framework within a social work practice context
- Frameworks for understanding health/mental health disorders in adulthood including bioecological systems, life course perspective, biopsychosocial, risk and resilience, stress and coping
- Focus on the interactions between health disorders and mental health disorders
- The DSM: Inventing Mental Illness (10 minutes)

Required Readings:
1. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Text Revision (DSM-IV-R). Multiaxial Assessment (9 pages). Also familiarize yourself with Content and play around with the differential diagnoses decision trees in Appendix A.
   To access the complete DSM-IV-TR on line from off campus, you need to go through the UNC library Web site. Go to http://search.lib.unc.edu/search?R=UNCb5288285 Click on "Full text available via the UNC-Chapel Hill Libraries," then “Continue” and Onyen when prompted


**Week 4 / February 2 / Early Adulthood and Substance Abuse**

**Topics:**
- Physical, cognitive, emotional and social development in young adulthood
- Issues in emerging adulthood: identity, beginning work/career, developing intimate relationships, forming family
- Video in Class: Young adulthood: the winding road from late teens through the twenties (YouTube video, six minutes)
- Risk-Taking Behaviors
- Violence
- Substance Abuse (including alcohol misuse and binge drinking)

**Required Readings:**
1. Hutchison, E. Chapter 7: Young Adulthood.
3. Corcoran & Walsh, Ch. 11, Substance Use Disorders, pp. 304-348.

**Week 5 / February 9 / Early Adulthood and HIV**

*Speaker: Laura Musselwhite, MSW, LCSW, Addictions Therapist, UNC School of Medicine, Infectious Diseases Clinic, (919)843-8677*

**Topics:**
- HIV/AIDS

**Required Readings:**

**Week 6 / February 16 / Early Adulthood and Psychotic Disorders**

*Speaker: Guest Speaker- Bebe Smith, LCSW- Director UNC STEP Clinic*

**Topics:**
- Schizophrenia

**Required Readings:**
1. Corcoran & Walsh, Ch. 14, Schizophrenia and Other Psychotic Disorders, pp. 412-447.
2. Schizophrenia community website: http://www.schizophrenia.com
3. Poland, J. (2004). Bias and schizophrenia. In P. Caplan & L. Cosgrove (Eds.), Bias in psychiatric diagnosis (pp. 149-161). NY: Jason Aronson. [Blackboard]

Due Date for Critical Thinking Paper #1

Week 7 / February 23 / Middle Adulthood, Health, and Family Processes

Topics:
- Physical, cognitive, emotional and social development in middle adulthood
- Caregiving in middle adulthood, including considerations of parenting children and caring for aging parents
- Divorce and other family transitions of middle adulthood
- Key health disorders, including cancer, diabetes, obesity
- Injury and disability
- Health disparities

Required Readings:
1. Hutchison, E. Chapter 8: Middle Adulthood.
5. Heart Disease - http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease

Week 8 / March 2 / Middle Adulthood and Mood Disorders

Topics:
- Depression
- Bipolar Disorders
- Suicidality
- Dual Disorders
- DSM-IV Case Videos in Class: Depression and Bipolar Disorders

Required Readings:
1. Corcoran & Walsh, Ch. 10, Depression, pp. 261-303.
2. Corcoran & Walsh, Ch. 13, Bipolar Disorder, pp. 381-411.
4. Depression, Mental Health America http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/go/depression
Week 9 / March 16 / Middle Adulthood and Intimate Partner Violence

Guest Speaker: Ardith Burkes (Family Violence Prevention Center) and panel of survivors

Topics:
- Traumatic experiences in adulthood (domestic violence, community violence)

Required Readings:

Due Date for Critical Thinking Paper #2

Week 10 / March 23 / Middle Adulthood and Anxiety Disorders

- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Anxiety Disorders
- DSM-IV Case Videos in Class: Anxiety Disorders

Required Readings:
1. Corcoran & Walsh, Ch. 7, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, pp. 164-190.
2. Corcoran & Walsh, Ch. 8, Anxiety Disorders, pp. 191-230.

Video: The Soldiers Heart [http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/heart](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/heart) (60 minutes)

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Week 11 / April 7 / Older Adulthood

Topics:
- Physical, cognitive, emotional and social development in late adulthood
- Families in later life
- Transitions, losses and gains in older adulthood, including work, family, and friends
- Video in Class on the new science of aging
• Heart/cardiovascular disease and stroke
• Health and physical disability in older adulthood
• Caregiving in older adulthood

Readings:
1. Hutchison, E. Chapter 9: Late Adulthood
2. Hutchison, E. Chapter 10: Very Late Adulthood
3. AARP Web Site. http://www.aarp.org Explore the themes and messages in site. Read at least one article on brain development. (Use “search” function.)

Week 12 / April 13 / Older Adulthood and Cognitive Disorders

Guest Speaker, Cornelia Poer, MSW, LCSW, Duke Geriatric Evaluation and Treatment Clinic

Topics:
• Cognitive disorders, including dementia
• Overview of how major mental health disorders manifest in older adulthood, including depression, schizophrenia, substance abuse disorders, suicidality, and eating disorders

Required readings:
1. Corcoran & Walsh, Ch. 16, Cognitive Disorders, pp. 479.

Video: Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter. (1995, by Deborah Hoffman.)

Due Date for Critical Thinking Paper #3

Week 13 / Friday, April 20 / Death and Dying

Topics:
• Loss of partner
• Death and bereavement
• Death in individual life cycle and family life cycle

Required Readings:
1. Berk, Ch. 19: Death, dying, and bereavement, pp. 634-663. [Blackboard]

Due Date for Critical Thinking Paper #4

Due Date for Older Adult Paper (Counts as Final Exam)