

Counseling Psychology 506 - Life Span Development

Fall 2014 – Lewis & Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling

Professor Tod Sloan

Office hours: Mon 3:30-5:00, Wed 11-12:30, and by appointment; Rogers 433

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Course Description (official catalog)

Exploration of life span development through the lenses of social, cultural, cognitive, biological, and learning theories and research. Emphasis is on gaining better conceptual understanding of healthy development and better practical understanding of how to help children, adolescents, and adults address the developmental challenges they face across the life span. Particular focus placed on understanding our own developmental processes as well as the role of cultural difference and commonality in the developmental process.

Course Objectives

Students will demonstrate knowledge of the following subject areas, as well as the awareness of how to apply this knowledge in relevant settings (i.e., schools, communities, families, workplace). These objectives align with those required by NASP, CACREP, and COAMFTE.

1. Human developmental processes, psychopathology, and associated biological, cultural and social influences on behavior (NASP 2.4)
2. Theories of learning, personality, and identity development (class, sexuality, ethnicity) (NASP 2.5)
3. Socialization and the influences of families, peers, teachers, and others on development (NASP 2.8)
4. Development of behavioral, affective, adaptive and social skills; developmental milestones (NASP 2.8)
5. Life cycle of families
6. Developmental crises, situational and environmental factors that affect both normal and abnormal behavior (NASP 2.7)
7. Strategies for facilitating optimal development over the life-span
8. Multicultural and pluralistic trends affecting development, including characteristics and concerns between and within diverse groups nationally and internationally
9. Ethical and legal considerations about working with clients/students and about research procedure and application

Additional objectives emphasized by the instructor are:

- Demonstrate ability to articulate and critique concepts of development and trace their implications for intervention, healing, and well-being
- Examine the ideological functions of various mainstream concepts in developmental psychology
- Recognize the effects of social class and power on developmental possibilities
- Practice dialogue facilitation and group process skills
- Solidify professional writing and oral presentation skills

Readings

Required Texts:

Karen, R. (1994). *Becoming attached*. New York: Oxford.

Kroger, J. (2007). *Identity development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Plotkin, B. (2013). *Wild mind*. Novato, CA: New World Library.

Siegel, D. (2011). *Mindsight*. New York: Bantam.

Articles in Watzek library or web pages (access full text on-line or use hyperlinks): See course schedule for readings for each class period, with citation.

Course Requirements and Grading

Preparation and Participation: This course is organized around the idea of a 'learning community', which means that each student's contributions to our collective learning are as important as his or her individual written products. These contributions to the whole usually show up as 'participation', but they also depend on background research outside of class, careful preparation for class discussion, and willingness to foster dialogue during class by asking productive questions, sharing insights, and so on. I evaluate this participation roughly in a range from low (just showing up), medium, to high (consistently appropriate and serious contributions, and engaging with others respectfully). Approximately 20% of the final grade (20 points) is based on this dimension. Occasional unannounced quizzes will be given to check for preparation and will contribute extra credit points to the total.

Essays: Submit 8 'reading responses' by email to sloan@lclark.edu. There will be 9 opportunities to submit, so you may skip one. Submit responses at least one hour before the beginning of the class period in which the reading will be discussed. Each week's response should contain the following:

1. A subject line that says: Reading Responses – Your Name – Date submitted
2. For each reading: An explanation of an understanding or insight from the reading that feels 'new' or 'deeper' for you. This should be at least a few sentences long. Explain how this is new, or how it differs from what you previously thought about the topic or issue. Explain briefly why this is important, or what implications this might have, if not obvious.
3. For each reading: Description of a significant puzzle or question that arises from the reading. This should be expressed in a couple of sentences.

Each week's response is worth 10 points. Receipt will be acknowledged in an email with a brief comment or two from the instructor.

Final Grades will be based on total points accumulated, with 90-100 = A; 80-89 = B, etc.

Department attendance policy:

Class attendance is expected and required. Any missed class time will be made up by completing extra assignments designed by the instructor. Missing more than ten percent of class time may result in failure to complete the class. This would be 4.5 hours of a 45 hour class (3 credits), 3.0 hours for a 30 hour class (2 credits) or 1.5 hours for a 15 hour class (1 credit.) In case of extreme hardship and also at the discretion of the instructor, a grade of incomplete may be given for an assignment or the entire course. In such cases, the work to be submitted in order to remove the incomplete must be documented appropriately and stated deadlines met. Students are expected to be on time to class and tardiness may be seen as an absence that requires make-up work.

Course Process

Each class session (after the introductory class session) will include the following components:

- 1) **CORE:** Coverage of basic concepts, findings, issues in mainstream developmental psychology; discussion of assigned readings; insights and puzzles from reading responses; critical perspectives. Goals: wisdom, know the basics for general knowledge, licensing exams, and further study.
- 2) **CONTEXTS AND STORIES:** Discussion of a context in relation to which development or change may occur. We will break up into groups of 3 or 4 and tell stories about experiences related to the context, with these guidelines in mind:

The aim of our dialogues is to examine, collect and critique our experiential knowledge of how each context offers challenges and opportunities for development. In order to do this, the following sorts of questions may be helpful after hearing each other's stories:

Describe some of the main ways in which the context can push a person to examine understandings, values, priorities, choices, and commitments. What do these ways have in common?

What do we know, from experience, about how people become more capable of effective and meaningful functioning in this context as they move through childhood, adolescence, and adulthood? What kinds of experiences seem to enhance the development of these capabilities?

What signs do we see when people are not developing well in this context? What do we do about these failures of development, informally, institutionally, or professionally? What could we do differently?

What are some of the wonderful things that can happen in this domain? What are some of the horrible things that can happen? What do we learn about the nature of development from the contrast between the good and the bad?

Are there factors in this context that tend to go unnoticed, that we take for granted, or that operate unconsciously? How might things be different if we were more able to attend to those hidden factors?

Course Schedule

Sept 3 (8)

Initial thoughts on change and development (writing and dialogue); “Life Span Developmental Psychology” as a subdiscipline; critical scholarship; overview of course objectives, requirements, schedule.

Context and Stories: “Learning and Change”

Sept 10 (15)

Readings: Karen, 1-102; Ainsworth, M. (1989). Attachments beyond infancy. *American Psychologist*, 44, 709-716. (library)

Context and Stories: “Peers”

Sept 17 (22)

Readings: Kroger, 3-30; Karen, 103-219

Context and Stories: “Siblings”

Sept 24 (29)

Readings: Kroger, 33-57; Karen, 220-288

Context and Stories: “Travel”

Oct 1 (6)

Readings: Kroger, 59-84; Karen, 289-357; Eriksen, K. (2006). The constructive developmental theory of Robert Kegan. *Family Journal*, 14, 290-298. DOI: 10.1177/1066480706287799 (library)

Context and Stories: “Friendship”

Oct 8 (13)

Reading: Kroger, 87-112; Karen, 361-441

Context and Stories: “Love and intimacy” - bring a favorite poem, saying, song, etc to share with class with brief explanation, critique or comment.

October 15 (20)

Readings: Kroger, 115-136; Siegel, 3-101; 20somethings:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/22/magazine/22Adulthood-t.html?pagewanted=all>

Context and Stories: "Work and Vocation"

October 22 (27)

Reading: Kroger, 139-162; Siegel, 102-261

Context and Stories: "Spirit" and "Art"

October 29 (Nov 3)

Reading: Kroger, 169-189; Plotkin, 1-122

Welwood, J. Embodying Your Realization: Psychological Work in the Service of Spiritual Development. Retrieved from <http://www.johnwelwood.com/articles/Embodying.pdf>

Context and Stories: "Community/Nation"

Nov 5 (10)

Readings: Kroger, 192-215; Plotkin, 125-247; Video (ten minutes) on "inner transition":

<http://www.transitiontowntotnes.org/groups/inner-transition/>

Context and Stories: "Nature/Technology"