

**Lewis & Clark College**  
**Professional Mental Health Counseling Program**  
**CPSY 506**  
**Life Span Development**

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The focus of this class will be to learn basic life span developmental theories and to practice applying them in the counseling setting. My intention is for this class to be a dynamic experience of contact with developmental issues in counseling. It is also an open and student-guided process of learning. Please ask any questions you have or express any interests you want addressed in the class.

### Assignments

#### **Assignment 1**

Personal narrative paper. Due 2/10/16

Write a brief story (3-4 pages, typed, double-spaced) of an incident or a time from your own personal experience as a child or adolescent, age 3-19. This could be a story that you thought of in the context of the class content, it could be something that was triggered through your observations of other children when you were young, or it could be any event in your life that was in some way developmentally significant for you. Choose a story that was (or is) meaningful to you rather than one that may be more meaningful to others. A focus of the exercise is to allow you share a developmentally important story from your life. Choose a story that you are comfortable sharing with the class and be prepared to share it with others during class time. Consider your personal story in the context of the developmental theories discussed in class, and speak to how you understand what happened in those developmental terms.

#### **Assignment 2**

Observation Paper: Due 3/2/16, but you may turn it in at any time before that.

Write a 3-5 page paper on a fictional or non-fictional person focused on describing their developmental level in terms of Piaget, Kohlberg, Kegan or a combination of the three. Use quotes and observations of behavior to support your assessment of the person's level of development. Use the subject/object terms described in class to describe in what ways and to what extent, or not, the person has reached developmental stages. If you select a non-fictional person they must be a public figure. My reasoning here is that a public figure has chosen to share themselves and their ways of being in the public setting, whereas a private figure has not. Example: Barack Obama, Anderson Cooper and Maya

Angelou are public figures who chose that status. Octo-mom, your brother and the friend who over-shares did not. What I'm looking for here is your thinking process in attempting to understand HOW this person sees the world and makes their choices. I'm not as concerned that you know exactly what each developmental level is for this person or that you demonstrate a complete knowledge of developmental terms. I recommend you use someone you are familiar with (such as a character from a favorite movie or book) or someone it is easy to gather a lot of information about, including quotes (such as a newsmaker).

### **Assignment 3**

Life Story Paper and Presentation: Due 3/9/16

Conduct a life story interview with an adult who differs from you in terms of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, class, or culture. Please address the following two pieces as you work on Assignment 3. Create your own questions based upon what you have learned in the class, what interests you about the person's life, and from any relevant sources. Plan for an approximately 60-90 minute interview.

**Developmental theme:** Use follow-up questions to highlight areas of the person's development that stand out for you in the course of the interview. As you're talking with them, be thinking of what, developmentally, this person needed at different points, what they had that they needed to deal with the events and challenges of their life, and what they may have needed (but didn't have) in terms of developmental learning.

**Recording and mapping:** You will need to record the interview (with either audio or video), listen to the recorded version of the interview carefully and create an "event map" of the interview in which you outline the process and content of the interview, highlighting interesting themes/questions/strengths/weaknesses as they emerged. Come to class on the date this assignment is due ready to discuss both the process and content of your interview with others in a small group.

**1) Process:** Whom did you interview? Why? Where? Under what conditions? Did the interview go as planned? Were there surprises? Were there themes that emerged in the process? How did you do as interviewer? What did you learn from the interview process? Include at least three, transcribed examples of helpful or unhelpful exchanges between you and the interviewee.

**2) Content:** What were the themes you hoped to explore? In what ways did the interviewee's story reflect developmental theory? What unplanned directions did the interview take? How did you come to understand this person's ways of approaching life from a developmental perspective?

Resources for life story interview:

Here is a style of life story interview used at Northwestern University. For this assignments, Sections A and B may be useful in helping you construct your questions.

<http://www.sesp.northwestern.edu/foley/instruments/interview/>

Here is an example from the Legacy Project of questions directed at eliciting life stories. Use these questions as a guide for your own interview, rather than a fixed concept of what should be asked.

<http://www.legacyproject.org/guides/lifeintquestions.pdf>

I like these questions on culture from the University of Southern Maine

[http://webapp.usm.maine.edu/LifeStories/Public/Section/View.do?type=CULTURAL\\_SETTING](http://webapp.usm.maine.edu/LifeStories/Public/Section/View.do?type=CULTURAL_SETTING)

### Other Assignments

~ 2 page summary paper on positive and negative critiques of Jean Piaget's developmental theory. Due 1/27

~ 2 page summary paper on positive and negative critiques of Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development. Due 2/3

### Course Calendar

- 1/13 Intro to course. Developmental theory of Piaget. Review of assignments. Goals of the class.
- 1/20 Developmental theory of Kohlberg. How to look at development as a therapist.
- 1/27 Developmental Theory of Kegan. Gestalt therapy and development. Summary paper on Piaget due.
- 2/3 Counselor as parent. What is our role? Summary paper on Kohlberg due. Live work. Read two articles on counseling as a form of parenting or re-parenting and be prepared to discuss in class.
- 2/10 Trauma and development. Personal narrative paper due. Small group discussions of personal narrative. Read two articles on the role of trauma in development and be prepared to discuss in class.
- 2/17 Depression and development. Live work in class with discussion.
- 2/24 Technology and development. Open time for discussion as needed.
- 3/2 To be determined. Observation paper due.
- 3/9 Presentations on life story interview. Life story papers due.
- 3/16 Presentations and unfinished topics.

Grading:

Personal narrative paper – 20 points

Observation paper – 20 points

Life story paper and presentation – 40 points

Piaget and Kohlberg papers – 20 points (10 each)

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*Also see guide for MCFT and School Psychology Syllabus Cover Sheet*

Professional Identity Standards (CACREP 2009 Standards)

- 3a. theories of individual and family development and transitions across the life span
- 3b. theories of learning and personality development, including current understandings about neurobiological behavior
- 3d. theories and models of individual, cultural, couple, family, and community resilience
- 3h. theories for facilitating optimal development and wellness over the life span

Clinical Mental Health Standards (CACREP 2009 Standards)

- D3. Promotes optimal human development, wellness, and mental health through prevention, education, and advocacy activities
- E2. Understands the effects of racism, discrimination, sexism, power, privilege, and oppression on one's own life and career and those of the client.
- E5. Understands the implications of concepts such as internalized oppression and institutional racism, as well as the historical and current political climate regarding immigration, poverty, and welfare.

Other Objectives

Knows typical milestones and institutional expectations for various ages within the dominant culture, and understands critiques of these norms.

Student Learning Outcome for Students in Marriage, Couple, and Family Therapy

SLO 1.2 Students recognize the interconnections among biological, psychological, and social systems in people's lived experience.

No required assignments for MHC and MHCA: Students demonstrate knowledge through CPCE exam and overall course grade of B or above.