CPSY 506:
Lifespan Development

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Class meeting time: 12:30-4:30 pm, Fridays, Rogers 105

Office hours: Thursday, 2:00-5:00 pm (call CPSY office for appt. 768-6060)

"What do we do when we raise a child, teach a student, or educate a person as a member of society? All these forms of pedagogy require painful yet exhilarating departures from home and encounters with otherness. Like the swimmer who plunges into the river's current to reach the opposite bank, the person who wishes to learn must risk a voyage from the familiar to the strange."   Michel Serres (1997)

General Class Information

Required Reading

1) Crain, W. (1992), *Theories of Development: Concepts and Applications,* Prentice Hall, NJ

2) Atkinson, R. (1998), *The Life Story Interview*, Sage Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA

3) Reading packet (distributed in class)

Required Packet Readings

Oaklander, V. (1998) *Gestalt Play Therapy in Handbook of Play Therapy, Volume Two: Advances and Innovations* (eds. O'Conner, Schaefer) John Wiley and Sons, NY

Mortola, P., (2001) *Sharing Disequilibrium: Links Between Gestalt Therapy Theory and Child Development Theory*, Gestalt Review, The Analytic Press, Hillsdale, NJ

Mortola, P., (1999) *Narrative formation and gestalt closure: helping clients make sense of "disequilibrium" through stories in the therapeutic setting*. Gestalt Review, 3(4): 308-320, The Analytic Press, Hillsdale, NJ

Mortola, P., (2007) *Image before word: Making good contact with boys*, Counseling Children and Young People, June 2007, 28-31, British Association for Counseling and Psychotherapy, Lutterworth, UK

Santrock, J.W. (1998) *Adolescence*, McGraw Hill, Boston, MA Seventh Edition

McConville, M. (2003) *Lewinian Field Theory, Adolescent Development and Psychotherapy*, Gestalt Review, in press

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990) *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience,* Harper Perennial, NY

Csikszentmihalyi, M. ((1993) *Talented Teenagers: The roots of success and failure*, Cambridge University Press, MA.

Feldman, R.S. (2000), *Development across the lifespan* (2nd edition) Prentice Hall, NJ

Fredricson, I., Handlon, J.H. (2003) *The later years from a gestalt systems/field perspective: Therapeutic considerations,* Gestalt Review, The Analytic Press, Hillsdale, NY

CPSY Catalogue Description

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

Further Description, Rationale, and Goals

In this class, we will explore aspects of lifespan development as seen from varying theoretical perspectives. The goal of the class is to provide some conceptual frameworks that will enable us to better understand and work with children, adolescents, and adults as they grow and change throughout their lives. Additionally, this class will provide opportunities to practice and learn developmentally

appropriate approaches in the mental health professions. Particular emphasis will be placed on the following areas of study:

- the role of counselors as facilitators of the developmental process
- the understanding of our own developmental processes to better understand others
- the influence of cultural difference and universality in human development as applied to the helping professions
- the relationship between professional practice and the following key lifespan developmental themes: *Differentiation & integration, Support & risk, Contact & withdrawal, Self regulation & environmental context, Narrative & meaning making, Sense of Self & Identity development, Gender & culture*

Class Assignments and Requirements

Project 1: Personal narrative paper

One of the themes in our class will be the role of narrative in development and learning. Please write up a brief story (3-4 pages, typed, double-spaced) from your own personal experience as a child or adolescent, age 3-19. This could be a story that you thought of while doing the class readings, it could be something that was triggered through your observations of other children, or it could be an event in your life that was in some way developmentally significant for you. In any case, I ask you to choose a "middle story" — a story about subject matter that is neither completely stale nor completely raw and unprocessed. In the write-up, imagine you are telling it to someone in our class and be prepared to share it with others during class time.

> *Language is the greatest human resource for representing and structuring events in our lives. And no language practice has more impact in this direction than storytelling. Storytelling, one of the earliest forms of communication engaged in by young children, is universal to all human cultures and a powerful means of socializing values and world views to children and other intimates.*   Capps and Ochs, 1995

Project 2: Experience and theory paper

In this assignment, please reflect on your own and others' personal stories from Project 1 through the perspective of developmental and narrative theory. In 3-5 pages, reference 3-5 aspects of the personal stories and link them to developmental or narrative theory from the class readings and discussions. Please see the *Project Writing and Grading Guidelines* to complete this assignment. What developmental and/or narrative theory can be used to help you understand better the experiences described in the personal stories? In what ways are you able to see the experiences from the personal stories in new ways after our class readings and discussions? How did discussing the stories in small groups help you

understand narrative and developmental theory better? In what ways might your new learning about development and narrative inform your professional practice? The following is a good example from a student's paper of linking narrative and theory:

Midway through the interview, Rachel described how she had experienced the death of her dearly-loved grandmother:

> *So she finally passed away after a long illness when I was eight. It was so hard at the time because I had been so close to her. I was devastated. I wouldn't talk to anyone in my family for days and my parents got really worried. My grandma was the one I could talk to about anything. It's interesting because, as I already told you, when my dad died a few years later, I wasn't quite as devastated even though I was close to him too. Somehow, I had learned something about the grieving process, I guess.*

At this point in her story, Rachel describes how the experience of dealing with her grandmother's death helped her develop a kind of resiliency that then helped her cope with the death of her father when she was an adolescent. To me, this is a good example of what Bandura described as the development of "self efficacy". Crain (2000) summarizes Bandura by stating,

> *The most influential source of knowledge is actual performance. If we repeatedly succeed at tasks, our sense of efficacy increases…once we have developed a robust sense of efficacy in an area, we are not too troubled by temporary setbacks" (pg. 203).*

Project 3: Erikson quiz

For this project, you are asked to memorize Erikson's stages of lifespan development and be prepared to write briefly on each stage.

Project 4: Life story interview & map

For Project 4, please conduct a life story interview with an adult who differs from you in terms of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, class, or culture. Class readings and discussions will help you with the guidelines for this project. Please address the following two pieces as you work on Project 4:

Developmental theme: To conduct the life story interview: 1) choose at least one developmental theme (e.g. identity, generativity, moratorium, integration, support and risk, disequilbrium, etc.); 2) develop questions based on that theme; and 3) choose quotes from class texts to share with the interviewee (You can choose this theme before the interview or pick up on a theme while the interview is in progress, following up with relevant questions and quotations).

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. Your map will be turned in with Project 5 below.

> *In order to exist in the social world with a comfortable sense of being a good, socially proper, and stable person, an individual needs to have a coherent, acceptable, and constantly revised life story.*
> Charlotte Linde, 1993, p. 3

Project 5: Life Story Paper

After you have discussed your interview with others in class, please write up a 6-8 page paper that will serve to complete this life story assignment and bring closure to your experience in this course. Please refer to the *Project Writing and Grading Guidelines* to complete this assignment. Please include the following two sections in the body of your paper, addressing the questions within each:

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 or narrative theory? Did the interviewee find the theory that you shared helpful? What unplanned directions did the interview take? What evidence of narrative sense-making was apparent? Include at least three, transcribed vignettes from the interview in paragraph form to highlight any of the above points.

Attendance and class participation

Regular class attendance and active participation are expected. More than one absence from class over the term may result in a failing or incomplete grade. Please contact me prior to class or due dates regarding any absences from class or problems with assignment deadlines. Any missed class time will require a standard make-up assignment: A 2-3 page paper on the writings discussed in class that week will be due the week following absence. This piece should include comments, questions and learnings regarding the readings.

<u>Points summary</u>

Project 1: Personal narrative paper	30 points possible
Project 2: Experience and theory paper	60 points possible
Project 3: Erikson quiz	50 points possible
Project 4: Life Story interview & map	60 points possible
Project 5: Life Story paper	80 points possible
Attendance and class participation	70 points possible
Total	**350 points possible**

<u>Important note regarding all writing assignments for this class:</u>

One of my main tasks as a professor is to help you better integrate your thoughts, feelings and actions regarding both your personal life and professional practice. To me, clear writing plays a big part in accomplishing this goal. That is, good writing reflects a conscientious and sustained effort to make clear and visible your thoughts and feelings about a topic and how you should act as a consequence of these reflections. Clear writing is a result of a process, not a one-time venture.

Your paper should therefore be proofread by a second reader and on your final version, you should have a paragraph on the bottom of the last page as to who proof-read previous versions, what changes were made, and what you learned in this process. Any paper that contains numerous errors in punctuation, spelling, grammar or clarity will be returned for a rewrite and your grade for the class will be withheld until satisfactory completion of that assignment has been fulfilled. The *Project Writing and Grading Guideline* (below) gives guidelines for how your papers will be graded and how your writing should be proofread.

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<u>Project Writing and Grading Guidelines</u>

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Pragmatics: language and conventions

1. Clear and effective use of spelling, punctuation, and grammar in communicating ideas.

2. Clear and effective construction for meaning at all levels (sentence, paragraph and whole paper) with helpful transitions between each provided.

3. All sections of the paper are present, clear, and well-articulated (within and between):

    a. Opening:

        What do you intend to do and why?

    b. Body:

        How do you show detailed expansion of ideas and connections between theory and data?

c. Closing:

What have you learned both as a person and as a professional?

c. Proofreading paragraph:

What did you learn in the proofreading process?

Content: theory and data

4. Specific, quoted examples from the narrative (indent quotations of over 40 words) that are then linked to…

5. Specific, meaty, and detailed references to theorists and ideas that are defined, correctly referenced, and expanded upon.

Form: information and materials

6. Cover page included with project number, title, and contact information (phone, email, etc.)

7. Pages are typed, double-spaced, numbered, and stapled (no covers) and a reference page is included.

CPSY 506: Lifespan Development
Class readings and assignments

	Readings	Assignments & lifespan themes
1 9/7	• Crain 12: Erikson	**Quick Write Due**
2 9/14	• Crain 3: Ethological • Crain 10: Vygotsky	
3 9/21	• Crain 5: Werner • Packet: Oaklander	**Project 1 Due**
4 9/28	• Crain 6: Piaget • Crain 4: Montessori	**Project 1 in-class group work: Part A**
5 10/5	• Packet: Mortola, "Sharing disequilibirium…" • Packet: Mortola, "Narrative formation…"	**Project 1 in-class group work: Part B**
6 10/12	• Packet: Santrock • Packet: McConville	
7 10/19	• Crain 9: Bandura • Packet: Mortola, "Images before words"	
8 10/26	• Packet: Csikszentmihalyi "Flow" & "Talented"	**Project 2 Due**
9	• Packet: Feldman	

11/2	• Crain: Conclusion & Epilogue	
10 **11/9**	• Atkinson (pgs. 1-54) • Atkinson (pgs. 79-91)	**Project 3 Quiz**
11 **11/16**	• Atkinson (pgs. 54-76) • Packet: Fredrickson & Handlon	
11/23	No Class	
12 **11/30**		**Project 4 Due** **Project 4 in-class group work**
12/7	No Class	**Project 5 Due**