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 – 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 their implications for the craft of counseling and students’ self-in-role as a professional counselor.
- Practice dialogue facilitation and group process skills
- Solidify professional writing and oral presentation skills
Readings

Book to borrow / rent / purchase / read on reserve:


Supplemental Readings:

Other readings available by hyperlink or through Watzek Library are listed in the schedule below. Some resources will be available on the course Moodle site ([moodle.lclark.edu](http://moodle.lclark.edu)) (Code: lifespan)

Course Requirements and Grading

Attendance: On time attendance of all sessions is required (10% of final grade). Given department policies, missing more than one class session of this course will be grounds for an incomplete. Students are responsible for accessing information about missed class activities from peers. The instructor does not provide extra “make up” assignments. The class will not meet on Monday October 15 and an alternative activity will be assigned.

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 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. I evaluate this participation roughly in a range from low (just showing up), medium, and high (consistently appropriate and serious contributions). Approximately 30% of the final grade is based on this dimension.

Weekly Essays: Submit eight brief, one-page essays over the course of the semester (due for class sessions 9/17, 9/21, 10/1, 10/8, 10/22, 10/29, 11/5, 11/12). Each essay should open with a question that may be posed for general class discussion. The essay itself should demonstrate brief consideration of issue(s) raised within the readings (e.g., “What concept(s) are you finding most intriguing, useful, or problematic as you work to deepen your understanding of change and development? Elaborate, explore”). Commentaries should be ~ 250 words (one page, double spaced) in length. These will account for 20% of your final grade. Late essays will not be accepted. Missing essays will reduce final grade total by 2% per commentary.

All papers APA style, with clear introduction and closing sections, and inline citations and reference list (if needed). No separate title page needed. If low quality writing or format interferes with reader comprehension, papers will be returned for editing and resubmission for a grade.

Film Commentary: Demonstrate your ability to interpret aspects of the assigned film in light of the developmental issues and theories covered in the course. Length 750 words (3 double spaced pages). Due Monday 10/22. Late commentaries will not be accepted. The film commentaries will count for 20% of your final grade.

Interview, Presentation and Case Study Write Up: Each student will be responsible for interviewing a person outside of the class on a developmental theme, and presenting an anonymous case study presentation and paper based on the interview (5 minutes, paper length 500-750 words, 2-3 Double
Space pages). Presentations will occur in the latter portion of the course. The write up is due on the
day of your presentation. Presentations and write ups will be evaluated for their application of
theories, models or findings, their clarity, and usefulness for the craft of counseling. Constructive
feedback will be supplied by classmates, but will not affect the grade. The presentation and write up is
worth 20% of the final grade.

**Course Meeting Format**

Each class session after the introductory session will follow a similar pattern of large and small group
activities:

**CORE:** Learn basic concepts, findings, and issues in developmental psychology using lecture, text
references, case studies, exercises, and video and other media. Add supplemental readings and
insights from student essays. Goals: Wisdom, knowing the basics for general knowledge, licensing
exams, and further study.

**CONTEXT:** Explore contexts in which development or change may occur, including gender and sexual
orientation, socio-cultural-technological contexts, and the context of other folk and academic
developmental theories. Goals: Understanding of lifespan development in context (e.g., what features
pull for change, what resists, and what helps) and ability to apply concepts to personal experience,
critically. Context discussions will typically be done in a small group dialogue format.

**APPLICATION:** Discuss how to apply material in our personal lives and in our role and practices as
counselors. Goals: Support students’ emerging sense of self-in-role as professional counselors and
improve their listening and speaking skills

**Class Topics (subject to change)**

**Sept 10**

Overview of course objectives, assignments, student and faculty goals, and grading. Initial discussion of
age and “life span development.” Differentiating theories, models, and empirical findings, and what
constitute ways of knowing and standards of evidence. “Stage of Change” exercise: Self-assessment of
ability to apply developmental perspectives to the craft of counseling.

Video Excerpt: 49-Up.

**Sept 17**

Core: Maturational & Constructivist Perspectives: Biological Maturation, Behavioral Norms,
Developmental Periods, “Child Rearing,” Assimilation vs. Accommodation, Concrete vs. Abstract
Thought

Text Reading(s): Crain Chapters 2, 6: Gesell’s Maturational Theory; Piaget’s Cognitive-Developmental
Theory

Supplemental Reading(s):
• Example from Kegan, R. (1994). *In over our Heads: The Mental Demands of Modern Life.*

**Sept 24**

Core: Social-Historical Perspectives: Culture, Class & Technology

Text Reading(s): Crain Chapter(s): Vygotsky’s Social-Historical Theory of Cognitive Development

Supplemental Reading(s):

  http://www.psychologytoday.com/print/104234
  http://psycnet.apa.org/critiques/57/5/1.html

**Oct 1**

Core: Social Learning and Behavioral Perspectives: Parent Training, Mindset, Self Changing

Text Reading(s): Crain Chapter(s): 9 Bandura’s Social Learning Theory; Pages 181-196  Skinner & Operant Conditioning

Supplemental Reading(s):

• Effects of Becoming a Love and Logic Parent training program on parents’ perceptions of their children’s behavior in their own parental competence: A preliminary investigation.  
  o  http://www.loveandlogic.com/pdfs/research_data_bllp.pdf
• Discussion of Carol Dweck’s research on “mindset”  
• Prochaska, Norcross & DiClemente (1995) *Changing for Good – Summary*  
Oct 8

Core: Evolutionary perspectives: Humans as social primates, Attachment, Interpersonal Neurobiology

Text Reading(s): Crain Chapter(s): 3 Ethological Theories: Darwin, Lorenz and Tinbergen, and Bowlby and Ainsworth

Supplemental Reading(s):


Oct 15 – No Class Meeting

Film Commentary Assignment (see details above)


Film Alternates:


Oct 22

Core: Somatic and Ecopsychological Perspectives: The Body and the Earth, Epigentics, Life Style and Physical Fitness Across the Lifespan

Text Reading(s): Crain Chapter(s): 5 Werner’s Organismic and Comparative Theory; Mahler’s Separation-Individuation Theory

Supplemental Reading(s):

Oct 29

Core: Psychosocial Perspectives: Emerging Adulthood, Life Tasks, Mid-life, Crisis, Generativity

Text Reading(s): Crain Chapter(s): 12 Erikson & the Eight Stages of Life

Supplemental Reading(s):

  - [http://books.google.com/books?id=F7HcrLYJGjAC&dq=seasons+of+a+man%27s+life+excerpts&source=gbs_navlinks_s](http://books.google.com/books?id=F7HcrLYJGjAC&dq=seasons+of+a+man%27s+life+excerpts&source=gbs_navlinks_s)

11/5

Core: Soul, Psycho-spiritual and Transpersonal Perspectives

Text Reading(s): Crain Chapter(s): 16 Jung’s Theory of Adulthood

Supplemental Reading(s):


11/12

Core: Moral Perspectives: Wisdom and Ethics

Text Reading(s): Crain Chapter(s): 7 Kohlberg’s Stages of Moral Development

Supplemental Reading(s):

- Examples of Carol Gilligan’s responses to Kohlberg’s Model

• Except from Haidt, J. (2012). *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion – Chapter 1*

  o [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/08/sunday-review/get-a-midlife.html?_r=4&ref=patriciacohen&pagewanted=all](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/08/sunday-review/get-a-midlife.html?_r=4&ref=patriciacohen&pagewanted=all)


**NOTES**

**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.