

PSYC 314-003, Adolescent Psychology
Fall 2006
Tuesdays, 7:20-10PM

Instructor: Amanda M. Rahimi
Class Location: Robinson Hall B, Room B118
Office: David King Hall, Room 1001 (subject to change)
Email and Phone: arahimi1@gmu.edu; 703-993-4619
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1-3 PM, or by appointment
Mailbox: Graduate Student Mailboxes, David King Hall 2nd Floor

Course Goals

- To understand theories of the adolescent development stage
- To understand cognitive, psychological, biological and social changes that occur during adolescence.
- To understand cultural influences on adolescent development.
- To understand normative development in adolescence, and examine some problems that can arise during this stage.

Required Text

Rice, F. P. & Dolgin, K. G. (2005). *The Adolescent: Development, Relationships, and Culture* (11th edition). Pearson: Boston.

Other Required Readings (found online through GMU's e-Journal Finder)

1. Grieser, M., Vu, M. B., Bedimo-Rung, A. L. (2006). Physical Activity Attitudes, Preferences, and Practices in African American, Hispanic, and Caucasian Girls. *Health Education & Behavior*, 33(1), 40-51.
2. Striegel-Moore, R. H., Seeley, J. R., & Lewinsohn, P. M. (2003). Psychosocial adjustment in young adulthood of women who experienced an eating disorder during adolescence. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 42(5), 587-593.

Use of Technology

- All students will be expected to check their GMU email account on a regular basis, as email will be used to communicate announcements and distribute some course materials.
- WebCT (<https://webct41.gmu.edu/webct/public/home.pl>) will be used to post select course materials; thus, students should check their WebCT pages regularly.

Suggestions

- Attendance is very important; material discussed in class that is not in the text may be on the exams.
- Readings are expected to be completed PRIOR to class.
- Due to the number of student enrolled in this course, most classes will be focused on lecture. However, large group discussion and/or small group work will be incorporated into every class. I highly encourage you to participate in these activities and be an active contributor in the classroom.

Course Requirements

1. Exams (100 points each)

Exams will cover class lectures, in-class videos, and assigned textbook and journal article readings. Exams will include a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay. The journal articles listed above are available online. Exams 1-3 will cover the

chapters denoted in the class-by-class outline below. Exams will not take the whole class time, therefore there will be lecture for *approximately* the first hour of class on exam days. This time is approximate, so make sure to arrive at class on time to ensure you do not miss the exam. The final exam will be cumulative, meaning all topics covered throughout the semester will be fair game. However, the emphasis of the final exam will be on chapters 15-18. Your lowest exam grade will be dropped. There will be NO make-up exams, so please plan accordingly. In the unfortunate event that a serious life situation causes you to miss more than one exam, please see the make-up policy below.

2. In-Class Assignments (25 points)

There will be several graded in-class assignments that will help you think about the material in a way that will help you better understand it and prepare for exams (e.g. reflection on assigned readings, previous lectures). These in-class assignments will be conducted on a random basis. Thus, if you miss an in-class assignment, you will not be able to make it up unless you have documentation of hospitalization, jury duty, death, disability, or a car accident. There may be times when other, less severe circumstances cause you to miss or be late to class (severe traffic, cold/flu, work commitments). In these cases please use the extra credit option to make up the assignment. No make-ups will be allowed in less severe circumstances.

3. Paper (75 points)

Each student will conduct a live interview, which will then be organized into a meaningful and informative case study paper and presentation on adolescence. You are to find an adolescent to interview for 45 minutes. After conducting the interview, you will write a 4-6 page paper discussing themes that arose in your interview. You will be expected to fully integrate research (e.g. journal articles) into your discussion. Further details will be provided at a later date. If this paper is not handed in before or during class on the due date, one letter grade will be deducted for each day late.

4. Presentation (25 points)

Using the information you collect in your interview, you will prepare a 10 minute presentation integrating your interview experience and related research. This will be presented at the end of the semester. Further details will be provided at a later date. Failure to attend class for the presentation will result in zero credit unless I approve your absence and documentation for why you must miss class is provided.

5. (optional) Extra Credit (up to 10 points)

You may earn extra credit points for participating in research given that you provide me with a write-up detailing your participation. The write-up should be ~2 paragraphs in length and should include the hypothesis of the research project and a brief statement about what your participation entailed. You can locate studies through the Experimentrix webpage (www.experimentrix.com/gmu). Additionally, you may earn extra credit points for attending relevant psychology-related seminars if you provide me with a short (~2 paragraphs) write-up summarizing the lecture and providing your personal insight into the information provided. You will be able to earn a maximum of 10 extra credit points—1 point for each hour of research participation or seminar attended.

Grade Calculation and Grading Scale*

Exams (4 exams, drop lowest)	300 points
In-Class Assignments	25 points
Paper	75 points
<u>Presentation</u>	<u>25 points</u>
TOTAL	425 points [+ extra credit]

97-100% = A+; 93-96% = A; 90-92% = A-; 87-89% = B+; 83-86% = B; 80-82% = B-;
77-79% = C+; 73-76% = C; 70-72% = C-; 67-69% = D+; 63-66% = D; < 63 = F

* Note: Grades will be assigned according to these percentage values. All decimal points will be “rounded down,” meaning if your final grade for the course is 79.8%, you will receive a C+.

Please keep in mind that this is a tentative syllabus and topics and assignments can be changed, added, or deleted at any time at the discretion of the instructor to improve the quality of the course. I will do my best to announce such changes ahead of time in class.

Class	Topic	Readings	Exams and Assignments Due
8/29	Syllabus, Introduction, Course Overview	Ch. 1	
9/5	Theories of Adolescence	Ch. 2	
9/12	Issues of Diversity	Ch. 3, Grieser article	
9/19	The Body: Weight, Health, and Appearance	Ch. 5 & Striegel-Moore Article	
9/26	Biological and Sexual Development	Ch. 4	Exam 1 (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5, and articles)
10/3	Cognitive Development	Ch. 6 & 7	
10/10	NO CLASS (Columbus Day) —Monday classes meet on Tuesday		
10/17	Identity and Gender Development	Ch. 8	
10/24	The Family	Ch. 10, 11	
10/31	Sexual Values and Behaviors	Ch. 9	Exam 2 (Chapters 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11)
11/7	Social Development	Ch. 12, 13	
11/14	Moral Development	Ch. 14	
11/21	Issues in Education and Work	Ch. 15, 16	Exam 3 (Chapters 9, 12, 13, 14)
11/28	Psychosocial Problems	Ch. 17, 18	
12/5			Papers and presentations due
12/12			Cumulative Final Exam 7:30-10:15 PM, Robinson B118

Drop/Add Dates

- Last day to add: September 12
- Last day to drop: September 29

Make-up Policy

No make-up exams will be provided. Instead, you are allowed to drop your lowest exam grade. If you must miss an exam for any reason, plan to have that exam grade dropped. The following policy refers to students who must miss more than one exam due to **very** serious life circumstances. This policy **does not** apply to students who choose to skip an exam at the beginning of the semester then run into a situation later in the semester that

causes them to miss a later exam. **Alternative exam arrangements will only be considered under the following serious circumstances:**

- Hospitalization or illness that has been documented and judged by your instructor as preventing you from (a) preparing adequately for a test or (b) sitting for a test
- Death or serious illness in your family
- Court appearances

Documentation must be provided by health officials (e.g., a physician or member of the student center health staff) in the case of serious illness; an immediate family member in the case of a death or serious illness in the family; and official paperwork in the case of court dates. Decisions about whether and when to allow a student to make up an exam will be made on a case-by-case basis.

GMU Honor Code

Students are expected to abide by the GMU Honor Code: “Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.” Exams and assignments are expected to be individual efforts unless noted otherwise by the instructor or teaching assistant. Violations of the GMU Honor Code can result in failure of an assignment or exam, depending on the severity of violation. All violations will be reported to the Honor Committee.

Please review the honor code: <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>

Accommodation of Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Note that this provision includes the range of disabilities, including physical, psychiatric, and learning disabilities.

Student Support Services

George Mason offers services to support students' academic development and emotional development. The Learning Center, located in SUB I (room 364, see <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/csdc/lc.htm>), offers workshops in academic skills and a tutor referral program. The Counseling Center, located in SUB I (room 364, see <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/csdc/>) offers stress management training, as well as individual and group counseling for students who would like some help with social, emotional, or educational concerns—or who have concerns about their friends. Consider taking advantage of these free resources.