

**Psychology 455**  
**Adolescent Development**  
**Queen's University Fall 2008**  
**Mondays 2:30 – 4:00**  
**Thursdays 4:00 – 5:30**  
**Humphrey 201**

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**by appointment**

*Course Description*

Adolescence is a period of large-scale changes in biological, neural, cognitive, emotional, and social domains. In this course, we will explore the nature of these changes within the context of trying to understand how the timing and magnitude of these changes affect behaviour and developmental outcomes. The course is organized in several sections that progress from broader to more focused topics. In the first section, we will cover historical and cultural ideas about adolescence as well as theories about development in general and adolescence in particular. We will also discuss the transitional nature of adolescence and the nature of transitions – a theme that we will return to throughout the course. The second section will cover domains of transitions that occur “within” the individual (biological, neural, cognitive, and emotional). In the third section, we will consider the transitions that occur within specific contexts: family, school and peers. In the last section, we will explore how certain behavioural (e.g., delinquency) and emotional (e.g., depression) disorders emerge during this transitional period.

*Course Format*

This course is constructed to resemble a master's level seminar course in that student participation in presentations and discussions is mandatory. The balance between lecture/presentations and discussion will be about 50/50. There will be more lecturing in the beginning to lay the groundwork, but then student input will become more and more prominent. Students are expected to come to every class and to actively participate.

This course is also designed so that the concepts introduced earlier in the course will be revisited as new concepts and empirical results are presented in subsequent classes. In this way, we can build an understanding of the complex developmental issues of adolescence.

*Course Requirements*

1. **Readings:** All material for the course can be found on the WebCT site for PSYC455 (<http://www.its.queensu.ca/webct/>). On average, there is one article or chapter to read each week. I have tried to keep these to 20 pages or less, which is certainly not a lot of reading. I expect all students to have read these thoroughly before class and to share questions or comments. Evidence of a failure to read an article will be factored into the grade for participation. Although it is not required, it is recommended that each student read or at least peruse each of the articles that will be presented by fellow classmates. This will facilitate discussions that follow the presentations.
2. **Oral Presentation:** Each student will present one empirical article/study in class (see Presentation Guidelines). There will be 25 presentations with time for discussion after each. The purpose of this exercise is (a) to cover more material in detail than can be accomplished by everyone reading the same articles; (b) to discuss specific details of an empirical study in light of the broader concepts covered in lectures, readings, and discussions; (c) to give each student a chance to become an

“expert” on some facet of adolescent development; (d) to give students experience in and feedback on making presentations. The schedule will be finalized by the second class. The instructor will present one article at the beginning of the course to give an example of what (not) to do.

3. **Oral Presentation Peer Critique:** Each student will also sign up to be a second reader of an article that is presented. This student is expected to read the article carefully, start the discussion after the presentation is complete, and to write a one paragraph critique of the presentation (to be submitted to the instructor and the presenter within ONE day). This is an important responsibility. It is expected that these critiques will be thoughtful, constructive, and substantive. Science is not an individual endeavor and it is essential that the process of communication facilitates the understanding within the collective. We are all in this together.
4. **Attendance and Participation:** The success of this class rests on the active participation of all the students. If you unable to attend a class please notify the instructor. During class each student is expected to contribute to (but not dominate) the discussion. This does not mean you need to make sure to say one thing each class – that would be formulaic and counterproductive - but you should be prepared to answer a direct question, remain alert, ask questions (there are NO stupid questions), and offer observations, connections, or insights.
5. **Final Paper:** Each student will submit an original proposal for research on any aspect of adolescent development (see Research Proposal Guidelines).

#### *Grading*

Oral Presentation	30%
Peer Critique	10%
Participation	20%
Paper	40%

#### *Deadlines*

Presentation outline	one week before presentation (optional but recommended)
Presentation critique	one day after presentation
Paper Proposal	Nov. 3
Paper Due	Dec. 5

**Late submissions will not be tolerated except for documented emergencies. Late submissions lose 10% per day late. Presenters and those providing critiques **MUST** be in class on the scheduled date.**

**PLEASE SUBMIT BOTH ELECTRONIC AND PAPER COPIES OF ALL ASSIGNMENTS**

## Course Schedule

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Presentation</b>
<b>1</b>	9/8	Intro		
<b>Part I: Introduction</b>				
<b>2</b>	9/11	History, definitions, development, and transitional theme	Kimmel & Weiner (1995) Chapters 1&2	
<b>3</b>	9/15	Theories of adolescence I	Margaret Mead in Muuss (1996)	
<b>4</b>	9/18	Theories of adolescence II	Developmental Systems Theory in Muuss (1996)	
<b>Part II: Intraindividual Transitions</b>				
<b>5</b>	9/22	Biological Transitions	Susman & Rogol (1994)	Dorn et al (2003) <b>INSTRUCTOR</b>
<b>6</b>	9/25	Puberty		1. Moffitt, et al (1992) 2. Matchock, et al. (2007)
<b>7</b>	9/29	Sleep	Spear (2003)	3. Wolfson & Carskadon (1998) 4. Susman, et al. (2007)
<b>8</b>	10/2	Neural Transitions		5. Killgore et al (2001) with Killgore et al. (2005)
<b>9</b>	10/6	Cognitive Transitions		Muuss chapter on Piaget
<b>10</b>	10/9	Adolescent Thinking	8. Vartanian (2001)	
	10/13	<b>THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS</b>		
<b>11</b>	10/16	Emotional Transitions	Rosenberg & Lewis (2003)	9. Larson & Ham (1993)
<b>12</b>	10/20	Storm and Stress	Arnett (1999)	10. Larson et al. (2002) 11. Steiner et al, (2002)
<b>13</b>	10/23	Integration and Timing of Multiple Changes	Graber & Brooks-Gunn (1996) Granic et al. (2003) <i>optional</i>	12. Caspi & Moffitt (1991)
<b>Part III: Contexts</b>				
<b>14</b>	10/27	Family	Steinberg (2001)	13. Laursen, et al. (1998) 14. Larson et al. (1996)
<b>15</b>	10/30	School	Eccles (2004)	15. Simmons, et al. (1987) 16. Eccles, et al.; (1996)
<b>16</b>	11/3	Peers: Relationships	Brown & Klute (2003)	17. Bryant et al (2003)
<b>17</b>	11/6	Peers: Risk-Taking	Steinberg (2007) Steinberg (2008) <i>optional</i>	18. Jaccard et al (2005) 19. Gardner & Steinberg (2005)
<b>Part IV: Developmental Psychopathology</b>				
<b>18</b>	11/10	Developmental Psychopathology Intro	Steinberg & Belsky (1996)	
<b>19</b>	11/13	Externalizing Problems	Farrington (2004)	20. Silverthorn & Frick (1999) 21. Moffitt & Caspi (2001)
<b>20</b>	11/17	Internalizing Problems	Hyde, et al. (2008)	22. Field (2002) 23. Graber et al. (1997)
<b>21</b>	11/20	Developmental Psychopathology Wrap-Up		24. Ge, et al. (2001) 25. Angold, et al (1999)
<b>Part V: Real World Applications</b>				
<b>22</b>	11/24	Legal responsibility & Sex	Steinberg & Scott (2003) Auslander, et al. (2006)	
<b>23</b>	11/27	Wrap-up		

## Web resources

Adolescence general:

Society for Research on Adolescence

[www.s-r-a.org](http://www.s-r-a.org)

BRAIN:

The teen brain

[www.theteenbrain.com](http://www.theteenbrain.com)

The Digital Anatomist (Brain illustrations)

<http://www9.biostr.washington.edu/da.html>

The Neuro Guide

<http://www.neuroguide.com/>

Brain structures and functions

<http://serendip.brynmawr.edu/bb/kinser/Structure1.html>