COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course provides a beginning theoretical foundation for conceptualizing human behavior and personality development. The social functioning and life cycle frameworks will be used to examine: 1) person-environment transactions; 2) basic assumptions and situational tasks, crises, and transitions from infancy to old age. Emphasis will be placed on individual adaptations to environmental demands that promote or inhibit optimal social functioning. Particular attention will be given to human diversity issues (e.g. culture, ethnicity, class, gender, age, religion) as they impact differentially on human needs, growth, and development.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. understand the basic theoretical and value assumptions regarding the person, the environment, and person-environment transactions; understand such transactional concepts as adaptation, stress, coping, role, socialization, and competence;

2. understand the origins, purpose, and basic assumptions of human behavior and personality development; identify common and unique human needs; consider the influence of ethnicity, class, and gender on behavior and personality;

3. compare and contrast psychoanalytic, ego psychology, and behavioral/cognitive theories of behavior and personality development: basic assumptions and concepts, structure and development of personality, adaptive and maladaptive behavior;

4. understand developmental and situational tasks, crises, and transitions from infancy to old age; to consider various roles and functions of social workers in preventing or resolving impediments to successful mastery of tasks, crises, and transitions; to identify the differential
impact and implications of ethnicity, class, and gender on human needs, growth, and development throughout the life cycle.

REQUIRED TEXT:


REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Students are expected to prepare for class by completing the readings as assigned, to attend class each week, and to participate in class discussions. Required and recommended readings are listed on the course outline. Assignments for the course include a midterm exam, a final exam, one paper, and a short presentation to the class (details of these latter two assignments are found in the syllabus). Study questions, presentation schedule, handouts, and all other course materials can be downloaded from the course homepage.

GRADING:

Final grades will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>presentation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>midterm exam</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>final exam</td>
<td>35%</td>
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</tbody>
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Both content and format (organization, grammar, etc.) will be considered in grading written work. Class attendance and participation will be taken into account in determining "borderline" grades.
COURSE OUTLINE

9/20/00  The life span perspective
     Required reading: Newman, chapter 1

9/27/00  Psychosocial theory
     Theories of change and development
     Required reading: Newman, chapters 2 and 3

10/4/00  Theories of change and development, cont.
     Special topic: Risk and resilience

10/11/00 Pregnancy, prenatal development
     Special topic: Drug-exposed infants
     Required reading: Newman, chapters 4 and 5

10/18/00 Toddlerhood
     Special topic: Language acquisition, race, and social class
     Required reading: Newman, chapter 6

10/25/00 Midterm exam

11/1/00  Early and middle school years
     Special topic: Socialization and gender
     Required reading: Newman, chapters 7 and 8

* To be distributed in class.
† On reserve at Langsam Library under instructor's name.

11/8/00 Early and late adolescence
Special topic: Ethnic and racial identity
Required reading: Newman, chapters 9 and 10

11/15/00 Early and middle adulthood
Special topic: Sexual orientation
Required reading: Newman, chapters 11 and 12

11/22/00 NO CLASS

11/29/00 Later adulthood and old age
Special topic: Developmental disabilities
Diverse pathways of development: Implications for social work

12/6/00 Final exam
Interview Paper

Select an individual to interview and/or observe (non-family members and not a client, please). Your task is to discover the ways that person deals with the developmental tasks relevant to his/her stage of development. For example, if your subject is a sixteen year old, your focus might include how s/he deals with issues mentioned in the text, including physical maturation, sexuality, moods, relationships with peer and parents, and drug and alcohol use.

During weeks two and three, the class will divide into small groups reflecting the developmental stage of subjects selected for interviews or observations; i.e. there may be a small group focusing on early adolescence, another focusing on toddlerhood, another focusing on late adulthood, etc. The members of each group will formulate a number of interview questions or methods of observing individuals (in the case of young children) which can be used to address the issues cited above. These questions or observation methods will form the basis of your interview.

Members of each small group will give a short report on their interviews/observations during the class period that corresponds to the developmental stage of their subject. For example, if your subject is sixteen, you would report on your interview on November 8 along with other students whose subjects were adolescents. These reports will be brief (about five minutes each) and are intended to demonstrate the range of experience among individuals.

The written part of this assignment will be a paper that summarizes your interview and compares your subject's experience with that described in the text. This paper will be due the week after your presentation to the class.

All identifying information about your subject should be disguised. If you cite any references, including the text, use the editorial style of the APA Publication Manual. The paper should be no more than eight (8) double-spaced pages, should have a title page with your name and student identification number, and should be stapled (no plastic covers or folders, please).


