

Psychology 437 Adolescent Development

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Office Hours without Appointment: Mon 12:00 to 2:00 PM
Thursday 2:00 to 4:00 PM

Office Hours with Appointment: If you cannot make my regular office hours, you should see me after class for an alternative appointment time. I am sometimes available Mon and Wed mornings, and generally available to stay late. Phone appointments can be arranged at other times.

Teaching Assistant: Felix Wang
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Office: SGM 617
Office Hours: Friday 1:00 to 3:00 PM

General Comments: The syllabus below is a contractual agreement between the students and the instructor. Please read this document carefully, and familiarize yourself with the class policies. Be aware that **none of the policies described are negotiable** and that **by agreeing to take this class, you are accepting the terms of the syllabus in full**. In order to receive grades on your midterms, you will be required to sign a student information sheet that includes a promise to follow the syllabus in full.

Course goals: This course will provide students with a broad overview of the research on adolescent development. We'll examine development and functioning in a wide variety of contexts. Although psychological perspectives on adolescence will be emphasized, we will also consider theory and findings from other disciplines (particularly biology, education, sociology, and anthropology). Across domains of investigation, controversies and areas of uncertainty will be highlighted. Interest in the study of child and adolescent development and critical thinking about the relevant concepts will be encouraged.

Text: Steinberg, L. *Adolescence: 10th edition*. McGraw-Hill: New York.

I encourage all students to make sure they have the current edition of the text. The author has not revised the text much over the earlier years, but there is some new

material that you will want to be able to read. There will not be a copy of the text available in the library so you will want to acquire it some other way.

Supplemental Readings: Additional readings will be assigned throughout the semester. These readings will be posted on the Blackboard website in .PDF form. The supplemental readings will be drawn primarily from *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, an academic journal published by the American Psychological Society. There will also be chapter from my recent book, a publication about bully/victim problems, and an article from the *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*.

One of your two papers will be based on the book *My Teenage Werewolf: A Mother, a Daughter: A Journey through the Thicket of Adolescence* by Lauren Kessler. This is an easy (and fun) book to read. I would encourage you to start immediately though, and not leave the book until the last minute.

Internet: Copies of PowerPoint slides from class and the syllabus midterm review sheets will be available on BLACKBOARD. Your supplemental readings will also be available for download (in the ASSIGNMENTS folder). In addition, grades for the exams will be communicated via BLACKBOARD.

We sometimes communicate information about the class via messages generated by BLACKBOARD. So, it is a good idea to check your e-mail regularly during the course of the semester.

Please do not hit the “respond” button when you receive a message via BLACKBOARD. Blackboard communications are one-way. It will not cause any problems if you hit “respond” but your e-mail will end up in a spam folder somewhere.

Lectures: Lectures will often include material that is not in the textbook. Lectures will also be very well represented on the mid-terms. For this reason, I recommend that all students plan on attending class regularly. If you miss class, you will need to make arrangements to get notes from one of your classmates. I do not distribute my own lecture notes to students.

Midterm examinations: There will be three midterm exams. However, the lowest of your scores will be dropped, and only your two highest scores will be included in the calculation of your final grade. Each midterm exam will account for 22.5% of your grade (22.5 % X 2 midterm exams = 45 % total). The exam format will emphasize multiple choice questions but will also include short answer essays. The exams will focus on both material in your text, and material covered in class.

Material that appears in both the text and lectures is certain to be well represented on the exams. In past years, I had primarily relied on the lecture materials to write exam questions but I found that students were not reading the text. Accordingly, I have been re-writing the exams with a somewhat more pronounced emphasis on material from the

text. Each exam will also include questions based on videos seen in class, and questions drawn from the supplemental reading.

Please bring a scantron form to class for the exam. Students are responsible for completing the scantron correctly during the exam, and no consideration will be given to grading errors that occur due to improperly completed forms. You should be aware that the scanner can miss answers that are bubbled in too lightly, and can also misread erasures that are not complete. Please check your scantron sheet very carefully after completing each exam.

I will provide students with some form of study guide prior to the exam. We will also schedule a help session prior to each exam.

I am unable to return scored scantrons to students. Unfortunately, in the past, some dishonest students have hatched schemes to use the scantrons for purposes of cheating. However, you may review your scantrons at any point in the semester by coming to the TA's office hours. There will also be a help session scheduled following each midterm to review the exam.

Pop quizzes: There will be 7 to 10 pop quizzes over the course of the semester, which will account for 5% of your course grade. Pop quizzes will be very short (generally taking less than five minutes to complete) and should be easy for those students who are attending lectures regularly. Your total pop quiz score cannot exceed 5%, but there will be more than five quizzes so that students who miss one or two classes will not be penalized.

You need to be present for at least five quizzes to get full credit. However, if you get a correct score on at least five of the quizzes then you will receive extra credit on the final exam, equal to one multiple choice item.

Note that pop quizzes will often be in the first few minutes of class. If you arrive late and miss the quiz, we will not be able to offer you a makeup.

Students who frequently miss class because of participation in student athletics or other legitimate activities will be offered a written assignment in lieu of the pop quizzes. The written assignment will be a reaction paper to a book that I will assign. Please be aware that the book report will be a time consuming alternative.

Papers: You will write two short papers, each of which will be worth 10% of your final grade. Information regarding the paper will be posted on the Blackboard website. The due date for your papers is in the schedule at the end of the syllabus. Your paper must be uploaded to BLACKBOARD prior to the start of class on the day it is due. From that point forward, the paper will be considered late. Class policies toward late papers are described below.

Final Examination: There will also be a cumulative final exam, which will also have some new material. The final exam will account for 30% of your course grade.

The final will be administered in our regular classroom, unless I instruct you otherwise.

Make-up Examinations and Late Papers: *There will be absolutely no make-ups, test postponements, or early test administrations offered, under ANY circumstances! Do not bother asking!* If you miss an exam because of illness, life threatening disease, family emergency, death of a loved one, natural disaster, traffic jam, civil disturbance, military conflict, terrorism, personal difficulties, reunion of the Beatles, suicide of friend or roommate or family member, job interviews, graduate admissions tests, smog alert, earthquake, tornado, invasion of the earth by creatures from outer space, rise of the machines, zombie outbreak in downtown Los Angeles, attack by giant robots, battles between the Batman and the Joker, mental health problems, drug addiction, or any other reason, you will have to drop that exam. ***There will be no special allowances made whatsoever.*** The dates for the exams are listed in this syllabus.

The only exception with regard to extensions will be if an assignment due date needs to be moved for the entire class. There have been past occasions on which I offered all students an extension for one reason or another. In that case, we will need to have a class vote prior to accepting the extension. Whatever the circumstances, the exact same deadlines will apply to all students.

Because class policy is stated quite clearly in this syllabus, I will not respond to phone messages or e-mails with requests for make-ups. I will also not discuss the possibility of make-ups with students during my office hours.

Do not hand papers in late. I understand that emergencies come up and sometimes prevent students from getting their work done on time. However, it is your responsibility to plan ahead and make sure that does not happen. Late papers will be penalized the equivalent of five percentage points (i.e., from 90% to 85%) each 24 hour period past the due date. So, after 10 days, the maximum score will be 50%. Likewise, after 20 days, your score will automatically be reduced to 0%. This is a non-negotiable policy.

I will ask that you be an adult, and do not put me in a position of having to subtract points. Please respect the policies of the class and do not contact me in the days before a paper is due to request an extension because of illness, personal problems, family emergencies etc.

It is your responsibility to make sure that the paper is uploaded correctly. If we do not receive the paper because of an uploading problem, you will receive a zero on the assignment. Do not show up in my office late in the semester to ask me to grade a paper that was not received because of a computer error on your part. Each semester I am forced to give a student or two a failing grade for exactly this reason. Make sure to check that the paper was uploaded correctly, please.

Consistent with university policy, you may not miss the final exam and the score from the final cannot be dropped. There will be no make-ups for the final whatsoever. Please make sure and make a note of the scheduled time for this exam. If you have any schedule conflicts with the final (i.e., three finals scheduled for the same day), you must let me know within the first two weeks of the semester. **STUDENTS WHO DO NOT COMPLETE THE FINAL EXAM WILL RECEIVE A FAILING GRADE FOR THE CLASS.** In the past, I have been forced to fail students who missed the final because they overslept or made a scheduling error. Please do not allow this to happen to you.

The only exception to class policies regarding deadlines will be for extensions that apply to the entire class. In the past, there have been situations in which it was necessary for me to move deadlines to later points in the semester. However, in any case, the same exact deadlines will apply to all students.

Grading disputes: If you believe that your midterm exam has been graded incorrectly, you must bring the problem to my attention within two weeks after the midterm exams have been posted. I will not alter grades after that period. Because final grades are due in the registrar's office shortly after the final exam is given, you will have 24 hours following posting of the final exam scores to bring any errors to my attention.

As part of our regular scoring procedures, I will statistically analyze responses to each multiple choice item on the midterms and final. If the class as a whole has done poorly on a specific item, we will review the validity of the item. There will be no other appeals accepted regarding the correct answer to multiple choice questions.

If you disagree with grade you receive on an essay question, I will re-grade the item for you immediately. However, please be aware that your grade may go down as well as up. Re-grading will be based entirely on your written response on the actual exam and you will not be given any opportunity to explain your response after the exam.

I will only agree to re-grade an exam if there is a legitimate reason to believe an error has been made. ***A legitimate reason specifically DOES NOT include efforts to raise your final grade.*** *If you fall a percentage point or two short of the grade you desire at the end of the semester, I will not re-grade your final, midterms, or papers as you attempt to squeak out a slightly higher grade.*

Extra Credit: Midterm exams will generally include at least one extra-credit item.

As described below, students will also receive extra credit for coming to my office hours.

Grades: Final grades will be based on the grading distribution summarized below.

There is no curve on the midterms or final grades. However, if I have reason to believe that an item is bad (i.e., nearly all of the students in the class get it wrong), I will likely adjust everybody's test score upward in compensation.

Because there will be extra credit items on the midterms so that it will be possible to score greater than 100% on a midterm (I am absolutely thrilled when students do this). In this case, I will average the score into your final midterm grade. However, your final midterm average cannot be greater than 100%. For example, if your two highest midterm scores are 98% and 104%, your midterm average for the semester will become 100%. Once the final grades are handed into the registrar's office, they will not be changed.

Regardless of your personal circumstances, do not contact me after the semester requesting a higher grade. The same grading curve applies to ALL students. So, do not contact me to explain that you need a higher grade because you are in danger of failing out of school, not being able to get into graduate school, etc.

In the very unlikely event of a legitimate grading error (e.g., your midterm and final average would indicate an "A" but you receive a "B" in the class) please contact me immediately. Grade changes at USC are an extremely complex process that requires the professor to write an appeal to the registrar's office, get signatures from the Department Chair, and provide evidence that a legitimate error has occurred. So, it is best that we get the ball rolling quickly.

Office Hours: Students are **STRONGLY ENCOURAGED** to take advantage of my office hours. I am available to discuss issues directly relevant to this class (e.g., questions about the text or lectures), the psychology program here at USC, graduate school, career plans (psychology or otherwise), and other issues regarding psychological research and training. I am also happy to meet with students to talk about areas of personal interest or questions that have emerged in other psychology classes. I will even meet with you to discuss papers and assignments that you are working on in other classes. Basically, any topic that is remotely related to psychology, careers, your educational development, classes at USC, or academic interests, is fair game.

A primary advantage of being at a good university like USC is the opportunity to interact with faculty members. Take advantage of this aspect of your education and come chat with your professor. If you are unable to attend my regular office hours, you may schedule an appointment at a time that better fits your schedule. I'm happy to make appointments in the early morning or late evening hours for students who have unusual schedules.

It is not necessary to schedule appointments with me for my regular office hours, and I am unlikely to respond to e-mail requests for appointments in any case. Just come by and say hello! If you can't make my regular office hours, please see me after class and we will make an appointment for a different time. I will bend my schedule to fit yours, so please don't hesitate to ask me to meet outside my regular times.

I will not give advice to students on more personal matters. *Do not come to my office hours with questions regarding your mental health, or the mental health of friends or family members.* I will absolutely, positively, refuse to respond to any such inquiries. If you feel that you need help with a personal issue, please contact Student Counseling Services at (213) 740-7711. For evening and weekend emergencies, contact the USC Department of Public Safety at (213) 740-4321.

Schwartz Dollars: As an incentive for students to take advantage of my office hours, if you come by to see me for any reason, you will receive a coupon for one Schwartz dollar. A Schwartz dollar can be “spent” at any midterm to buy extra credit equal to one multiple choice item. You may use one Schwartz dollar per midterm, or for the final. In other words, you may use up to four Schwartz dollars over the course of the semester.

If you are in two of my classes at once (e.g., Psychology 360 and Psychology 437) you may use the dollar in either class. However, each dollar can be used only once. Schwartz dollars will be only awarded during the regular semester. There will be no Schwartz dollars awarded during finals week.

If you make an appointment with me, and I miss it because of my own dumb mistake, then you get a Schwartz dollar for the failed appointment as well as the makeup appointment (in other words, you get two Schwartz dollars).

A phone appointment counts the same as a regular office visit and also gets you a Schwartz dollar.

There are no Schwartz dollar’s for visiting the TA! Come visit with your instructor – please!

To use a Schwartz dollar, you must hand it in at the time your turn in your midterm. Bring the dollar to the exam, and hand it in with your scantron. We will not retroactively offer extra credit.

Making appointments and contacting the professor: Insofar as possible, I will regularly end class early and students will have opportunities to see me if they need to chat or schedule an appointment. However, I generally discourage students from contacting me via e-mail. Likewise, if you have questions about course material, please come to my office hours rather than relying on e-mail.

In this day and age, we all expect information to be widely available in electronic formats. Nonetheless, I will not be able to respond to e-mails with lists of questions in the days before a midterm. You will have plenty of opportunities to get extra help though, including my office hours, the TA’s office hours, or the review sessions. Remember that I am willing to meet with students at times other than my regularly scheduled office hours. I will also not answer e-mail requests for exceptions to policies that are already described in the syllabus

If you really must e-mail me, it is best to send the mail from a USC account. E-mail from most third party providers (Yahoo, AOL, Hotmail) will be automatically deleted by the spam filters on my account.

Letters of Reference: This class is quite large and I don't get to know students well in the context of lectures only. If I have had no contact with you outside of class, I will probably not be a good person to ask for a letter of reference. That said, I will be available to meet with you at any time (before, during, or after the semester) to help you with admissions applications, etc. Please feel free to use me as a resource when you are completing graduate applications.

Academic Honesty: I do not expect academic dishonesty to be an issue in this class. However, the relevant University policies (see the SCAMPUS handbook) will be strictly enforced. Any student who is caught cheating on an assignment or exam (e.g., copying another student's answers while taking a midterm, or plagiarizing a paper assignment), will receive a failing grade for that assignment. Students who engage in such behavior on more than one occasion will receive a failing grade for the course. Penalties for other acts of academic dishonesty will be determined after consultation with the Office for Student Conduct. All incidents of academic dishonesty will be referred automatically to the Office for Student Conduct. There will be no exceptions.

Student athletes: Arrangements will be made for student athletes who are unable to attend more than one midterm because of scheduled games. At my discretion, we will either arrange for the athletic department to proctor an alternative form, or arrange for you to take the exam before or after the rest of the class. However, **within the first two weeks of class**, you must provide written documentation to me regarding legitimate conflicts (e.g., a letter signed by the relevant team official). The conflict must involve athletic activities that are formally scheduled by the university. If you will miss an exam because of an activity that has not been scheduled yet (i.e., a particular game or tournament that is dependent on the team's standing during the year), you should provide written documentation of this possibility during the first two weeks of class..

Student disabilities: Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for the approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me or the TA as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Mon-Fri 8:30 -5:00. The office is in Student Union 301 and their phone number is (213)740 -0776.

Religious observance: It is the policy of the University of Southern California to respect the religious practices of all students. Accordingly, if you need accommodations related to religion (i.e., missing class or an assignment because of a specific holiday or ceremony), you should contact me **within the first two weeks of the semester**. Please look at the syllabus carefully, and alert me to any potential conflicts as soon as possible.

Grade Distribution:

Grade	Score
A	93-100
A-	90-92.999
B+	87-89.999
B	83-86.999
B-	80 -82.999
C+	77-79.999
C	73-76.999
C-	70-72.999
D+	67-69.999
D	63-66.999
D-	60-62.999
F	Below 60

If you are taking the class on a pass/fail or credit/no credit option, you'll need a score of 70 or better to pass.

The above grading scheme will be applied rigorously and is completely and totally non-negotiable. **DO NOT contact me after your final exam pleading for me to raise your grade.** If your average is a 92.99, your final grade will be an "A-"and not an "A."

Do not expect a different grading algorithm to be applied to you because you are in danger of failing out of school, on probation, etc. The same grading rules apply to ALL students. There will be absolutely, positively **NO EXCEPTIONS EVER.**

I will reserve the right to adjust grades upward if I see problems in the grading distribution. However, in that case, the same adjustment will be applied to every student in the class and there will be no special arrangement made for you.

Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading
Aug 26	Class Introduction	Introduction
Aug 28	Introduction/Theories	
Sept 2	Labor Day	
Sept 4	Biological Development	
Sept 9	Biological Development	Chapter 1
Sept 11	Cognitive Development	Chapter 2
Sept 16	Cognitive Development	Steinberg (2007)
Sept 18	Social Development	
Sept 23	Social Development	Chapter 3
Sept 25	FIRST MIDTERM	
Sept 30	Family Environment	Chapter 4
Oct 7	Family Environment	
	PAPER # 1 DUE	
Oct 9	The Peer Group	Chapter 5
		Schwartz & Gorman (2011)
Oct 14	The Peer Group	Graham (2006)
Oct 16	The Peer Group	Schwartz, Mayeux, & Harper (2011)
Oct 21	Schools	Chapter 6
Oct 23	Schools/ Work and Leisure	Chapter 7
Oct 28	SECOND MIDTERM	
Oct 30	Identity	Chapter 8
		Robins & Trzesniews (2005)
Nov 4	Identity/Autonomy	Chapter 9
	PAPER # 2 DUE	
Nov 6	Autonomy	
Nov 11	Intimacy	Chapter 10
Nov 13	Intimacy/Sexuality	Chapter 11
Nov 18	Sexuality	
Nov 20	Achievement	Chapter 12
Nov 25	THIRD MIDTERM	
Dec 2	Achievment/Maladjustment	Chapter 13
Dec 4	Maladjustment	Schwartz, Gorman, Duong, & Nakamoto (2008)

Please see University Final Examination Schedule for Final Exam time and date!