Purpose
This course focuses on common dilemmas faced by young people who are making the transition from childhood into adolescence. To highlight this period in human development, we will draw age-related comparisons between children and adolescents and theorize about how to construct stimulating environments that account for this developmental transition. Representations of adolescence in the media and in research will be compared, calling attention to common stereotypes that limit or support development. Research findings will also be compared with the details of lives in progress to explore individual differences in adolescents’ social and intellectual functioning. Ideally, students who finish the course will have a greater understanding of the common stress and strain as well as the thrill and excitement associated with the transition into adolescence.

This course is designed to allow students to fulfill one of the requirements for the Illinois State Board of Education’s Middle Grades Endorsement and addresses several learning outcomes. Findings from developmental and educational psychology will be used to highlight the characteristics of early adolescence, the needs of youth in early adolescence, and how teachers of middle school students assess, support, and refer youth who require extra health and social services. The course also offers a strong foundation in key developmental issues that occur in early adolescence. Students from all program levels (undergraduates, masters, and doctoral) who are enrolled in professional schools such as Education, Communications, Nursing, Psychology and Social Work typically collaborate to improve their knowledge of this important period in the lifecycle. Click here to see how the specific learning outcomes are aligned with assessments.

Readings
The readings will come primarily from journals and book chapters. Most articles can be found online. Students will be expected to take advantage of online journal services and to master the technology needed to find course readings. Those articles that are not online will be distributed electronically. For those students who do not have their own computer connections to the library, the ETL on the second floor of ETMSW is available along with other labs on campus.
Format
Students are expected to read and critique all assigned readings **before** coming to class. Class time will be spent clarifying misunderstandings and/or controversies associated with the material and drawing connections between theory and empirical research. We will also compare research findings with media stereotypes and with details of lives in progress, generating conclusions about how to build nurturing environments. Needless to say, these forms of knowledge cannot be generated if students come to class unprepared or fail to collect and study the appropriate readings. This is a course in which procrastination often leads to failure.

Assignments
To remain responsive to the ebb and flow of the discussion, assignments will not require a fixed set of readings and students are encouraged to share suitable materials with the class. The syllabus is posted online and changes may occur across the course. To comply with programmatic needs, a predetermined set of topics has been established and are listed in the tentative schedule. Those topics are sufficiently broad to cover the requirements established for this course.

Assignments measure the degree to which you are able to construct general relationships between topics and back up your ideas with research and practical evidence. Four assessments will be combined in your final grade: reading summaries and discussion questions, a group discussion log, a group presentation with a final written account of what you learned from interviewing at least one middle school student. These are designed to assess whether you are able to integrate the research information about adolescent development with practical plans for nurturing adolescents’ growth. Across assignments we will evaluate three sources of evidence; research findings, media representations, and details of lives in progress. These sources will be weighted differently in various segments of the course.

Reading summaries. To ensure that we are able to cover a wide range of topics during our time together, the course will rely heavily on jigsaw learning. You will be assigned to small groups based on your interests and reasons for exploring early adolescence. Each week, groups will meet during class time to discuss the readings and imagine ways to use the information in practice. Because you will probably want to keep a personal copy of the reading summaries and gather those written by your group members, you are encouraged to use e-mail, Google+, or Box.com to keep track of your work as well as the work of your group members. On the rare occasion when you find yourself unable to attend class, you are responsible for submitting your article summaries to the group as a whole as soon as is practical. It is also your responsibility to obtain any assigned readings and procedural information that might have occurred in class while you were away. When reading your chosen articles, please include at least one extension question in the summary that you might then share with your group members when we return to class.
Discussion activities. Along with the article summaries, you will be asked to create a discussion log, an activity that is similar to the generation of minutes in a business meeting. To assist you in connecting the research information with media representations and details of lives in progress, we will complete a range of activities in class. Group members will ideally take turns recording minutes for your group discussion. The note-takers of the week will be responsible for recording the content of the discussion as well as documenting who offered each contribution. Some groups may prefer to record the discussion and transcribe their conversation, but an accurate gist is perfectly acceptable. Just be sure to document where each group member has contributed to the discussion. This offers each note taker practice listening to the views of others in a careful manner—and essential skill in good teaching. The notes should be typed up for critique by group members in the following class. Members may edit these notes, add amendments, or delete any material they do not feel is accurate. Group discussions, in other words, will include a critique of the accuracy of the transcript from the previous week as well as a new conversation. Once notes are approved by the group, a set of the final notes should be placed in a log that will be collected and evaluated at various points in the semester. If someone should miss a class, he or she is responsible for making a contribution to the group discussion by adding a response either to the readings or to the discussion that is represented in the notes. I will look for signs of your intellectual growth over time and the degree to which you are coordinating information from research, media sources, and lives in progress in your discussions. Labeling participants in each conversation ensures that your grade is not caused by variation in group dynamics.

Final project. A final project consisting of a written paper and a group presentation will be used to determine if you have coordinated the information on early adolescent development with some practical plans for working with such students. The details of these projects will be negotiated with the instructor and other group members after the midterm evaluation of the group discussion logs. However, you can begin thinking about how you will find at least one adolescent in our target age group to interview about how they understand their life experiences.

Academic honesty
Academic dishonesty, intentional or accidental, seems to be cropping up across classes in the COE. Two issues seem especially important to discuss as part of our course activities: plagiarism and the use of assignments for more than one course.

First, your article summaries should represent your version of the main information you were able to obtain from the readings. You do not need to quote information from the articles, but may want to do so on a rare occasion. This is an acceptable practice IF you accurately cite the place in the article you are quoting from; including the last name of all the authors, the year of the publication, and the page number where the language appears. You will also be asked to support all your ideas with evidence in the final paper. There is a wide variety of information that would qualify as evidence and a set of formal rules for citing these sources properly. You can find the rules that we use in the field of Education in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Failure to cite your sources for borrowed ideas is an act of plagiarism.
Second, in this course, you are free to use materials from other courses if that information helps you better understand the developmental processes that occur in early adolescence. That sort of sharing is very helpful among professionals. In addition, it will be important for you to use information from the article summaries and discussion group logs as well as the grading rubric for your final paper. Grading rubrics offer an outline of how to meet the requirements of the assignments. We will discuss academic dishonesty further as part of the course.

**Resources for students who need extra help**

UIC also offers a wide range of resources for students who need extra help. Doctoral students may want to pay particular attention to the resources available at the UIC Writing Center. It is essential that students get in the habit of writing at least something as often as possible, preferably every day. More details on support services can be found at: [http://www.uic.edu/academics/student-support](http://www.uic.edu/academics/student-support)

**Accessibility**

UIC strives to ensure the accessibility of programs, classes, and services to students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations can be arranged for students with various types of disabilities, such as documented learning disabilities, vision or hearing impairments, and emotional or physical disabilities. All students should know that the University of Illinois at Chicago is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that individuals with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities at UIC. Students with disabilities who require accommodations for full access and participation in UIC Programs must be registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Please contact DRC at (312) 413-2183 (voice) or (312) 413-0123 (TDD).
## Tentative Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Social Sphere</th>
<th>Common Issues</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 16th</td>
<td>Characteristics in Context</td>
<td>Development is pan-contextual, Stage-environment fit</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Slides</td>
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<td>June 18th</td>
<td>Selves</td>
<td>Physical changes</td>
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<td>Slides</td>
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<td>Film Critique: Inside the Teenage Brain</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 23rd</td>
<td>Selves</td>
<td>Identity</td>
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<td>Slides</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 25th</td>
<td>Families</td>
<td>Attachment/parenting</td>
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<td>Group logs (discussion + summaries) due</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Slides</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 30th</td>
<td>Families</td>
<td>Siblings/family structure</td>
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<td>Slides</td>
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<td>July 2nd</td>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>Intimate relationships, (friendships/romance)</td>
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<td>Slides</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 7th</td>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>Exchange relationships, (acquaintanceship/aggression)</td>
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<td>Slides</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 9th</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
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<td>Group logs (discussion + summaries) due</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Slides</td>
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<td>July 14th</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>Achievement</td>
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<td>Slides</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 16th</td>
<td>Neighborhoods and communities</td>
<td>Free-time activities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Slides</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 21st</td>
<td>Societies</td>
<td>Causes and Citizenship</td>
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<td>Slides</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 23rd</td>
<td>Final papers due no later than July 31st</td>
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<td>Final group logs due as soon as they are ready.</td>
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Suggested Readings

**June 16th Characteristics in context**


**June 18th Self system: Physical changes**


June 23rd  Self system: Identity and personal engagement


**June 25th Family system: Attachment**


June 30th Family system: Siblings and structure


**July 2nd Peer systems: Intimacy (friendship and romance)**


**July 7th** Peer systems: Exchange (acquaintanceship and aggression)


July 9th School systems: Motivation


**July 14th School systems: Achievement**


July 16th  Societal systems: Neighborhoods and communities


*Characteristics of Early Adolescence, Summer 2015*


**July 21st** Societal systems: Civic and civil engagement


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