

CNS 574: College Student Development

**Department of Counseling & Student Affairs
Western Kentucky University**

**Course Instructor:
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The purpose of this course is to provide an overview of the wide array of theories that inform the developmental processes of college students. It is designed to give students a thorough understanding of the developmental processes that tend to be common to all students striving to negotiate the collegiate environment. This includes examinations of theories related to cognitive, psychosocial, and social/sociocultural identity development as well as integrative models of holistic development. Content in this area not only contributes significantly to the theoretical and intellectual foundations of the higher education and student affairs profession, but also serves as an important tool used by practitioners to facilitate student learning. Given the current educational climate of accountability and the desire to measure and shape collegiate outcomes, the ability to understand and apply student development theory is increasingly important. Student Affairs professionals need this type of knowledge and understanding if they are to be successful in responding to student needs via effective program development and implementation.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and nature of theory as it relates to college student development and the content associated with specific theories of college student development.
- Critically analyze theories associated with college students' cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal development, both as individual domains of development and as they relate to one another.
- Communicate how differences in socially constructed categories (e.g., race, gender, socio-economic status, religious background, sexual orientation, ability status) influence developmental processes.
- Express a deeper level of self-awareness as it relates to their own development in relation to student development theory particularly in the areas of cognitive and social identity development and to reflect upon this to facilitate self-knowledge and to enhance their ability to understand college students.
- Articulate how personal developmental perspectives influence their work with college students.
- Apply student development theory to educational policy and practice in higher education and demonstrate their ability to apply theories of student development to their future leadership roles and practices in higher education.
- Articulate an understanding of the importance of student development theory to the Student Affairs profession.
- Identify his/her own individual developmental journeys and begin to develop his/her own philosophies about student development theory.

REQUIRED TEXTS & ADDITIONAL READINGS:

Patton, L.D., Renn, K.A., Guido, F.M., Quaye, S.J., & Forney, D. S. (2016). *Student development in college: Theory, research, and practice* (3rd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Additional readings will be provided in the form of publications accessible via the Blackboard site for this course. You are not required to print or bring these to class, but you are responsible for reading them. The instructor may add and/or distribute additional readings not listed in this syllabus during the semester.

Methods of Instruction:

The methods for instruction for this class are going to be lecture, small group activities, experiential groups, class presentations, videos, and small group discussions.

Course Requirements:

1. Completion of assigned reading.
2. Participation in class discussion and activities.
3. Completion of course assignments (i.e., selfie project, quizzes, show and tell, blog, Wikis, discussion groups, case studies, and letter to freshman self).
4. Completion of student development analysis paper.
5. Completion of your Developmental Autobiography
6. Completion of concept analysis assignment.
7. Development of a case study.
8. Completion of a final exam.

Descriptions of each assignment are below:

Concept Analysis Papers

Much can be learned about identity from reading essays written by members of various populations. Reflecting on such literature in relation to the various theoretical concepts and approaches we will be studying this semester can deepen our understanding of the issues and experiences individuals face as they interact with others.

Select a scholarly article from a refereed journal (I suggest that you use WKU Libraries website at <https://www.wku.edu/library/>) related to college students (e.g., student development, identity development, racial/ethnic development, LGBT development, spiritual development, leadership development, and experiences of college students). Based on the article selected, write a reflection (2-5 double-spaced pages, not counting the title page) related to **(1a) what you have learned about identity and (1b) the impact of identity development for college students and (2) discuss how you might use what you have learned in your work with students.**

Evaluation. This paper will be evaluated on the clarity and thoroughness of your insights in the essay, your analysis of the content, and your ability to **make connections** to student affairs practice. Thoughtful and comprehensive analysis, synthesis, and application are expected. The technical quality of your writing will also be considered.

Case Study & Discussion

In addition to being able to understand the concepts from the assigned class readings, it is important to be able to think critically about what you have read and to be able to extend the information in the readings through engaging in active dialogue.

In groups, you will develop a case study based on a theory. Next, you will facilitate a 10-minute discussion and encourage active dialogue with your peers regarding the case study.

The case study should include areas related to the personal, social, educational, *and/or* career planning and development appropriate for students. Note that it must be grounded in a student development theory (inform the instructor of which theory/theories you select) **and** in research relevant to student learning and personal development.

Please provide a copy of your case study and brief outline of the focus of your discussion to the instructor *at least four days* prior to the class session before you lead the discussion. I will then post the case studies to Blackboard to allow your peers time to read each prior to the discussion.

Each case study must include adequate detail for the class discussion and reflection. Discussion questions **and** a reference page **must** be included. **The guidelines and template for this assignment are included in Blackboard.**

Evaluation. This assignment will be evaluated based on content, organization, the framing of the theoretical concepts in the case, depth of analysis, ability to generate reflective and critical thinking, facilitation of discussion, and technical writing.

Student Development Analysis Paper

Every person develops "informal theories" regarding the ways in which individuals develop in college, the issues they face, and areas in which they need to change in order to become more fully functioning. Being aware of your own developmental process can assist you in being sensitive to the developmental concerns of students with whom you work and enable you to determine areas of agreement and disagreement you may have with the formal theories. Reexamining your thinking provides a vehicle for determining where new learning has occurred and how your thinking has changed and expanded considering new information. Determining the applicability of theory to your own development also assists in making concepts clearer and helps to integrate a significant amount of material in a systematic fashion.

Part I: Discuss your psychosocial and cognitive-structural development during the time you were an undergraduate student.

- Identify the critical points or incidents in your college development —psychologically, socially, cognitively, vocationally, etc. Include significant formative experiences you had **and** the reasons these experiences were significant.
- What was your most successful experience as an undergraduate student?
- What was your least successful experience and how did it influence you? It may help to think about key people that you met who were influential to you and the role they played.
- In addition, identify areas in which you feel you have made especially good progress and identify factors that you see as contributing to your development in the areas you mention. Do the same with areas in which you feel your development has been slower. What factors do you believe have held you back?
- Furthermore, discuss your learning style. How do you approach learning and how do you learn best?

Part II: For this section, review your developmental autobiography in Part I, paying close attention to your development and learning process, psychosocial development, cognitive-structural development, and learning concepts/styles as they relate to your experience.

- Identify and elaborate on major developmental and learning theories discussed in class (you are expected to cite *at least 4* theories in your discussion) that are applicable to your developmental process as an undergraduate student. Look again at how you have grown and changed as a person as well as the factors that have contributed to your development; but this time, do so **within the context of the theories** we have examined this semester.
- Discuss the ways the selected theories relate to your life experiences? In addition, provide tangible and concrete examples.

Part III: For this section, discuss college student development in higher education in a pluralistic society.

- Interconnect college student development in a multicultural society, including characteristics such as immigrant status, disability, cultural background, spirituality, and family situation.
- How does this perspective incorporate into your overall viewpoint of how students develop?
- Next, discuss how learning styles as well as institutional, systemic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal barriers to learning, impact students.

Part IV: Discuss how you will incorporate what you have learned from this course into your philosophy for practice. The discussions of implications for practice and your philosophy should be directly related to the examples and integrated analysis you provide.

Evaluation. This assignment will be evaluated based on content, organization, the framing of your reflection and the theoretical concepts for *each* item within *each* part, depth of analysis, ability to generate reflective and critical thinking, and technical writing.

Class Participation/Assignments

As a graduate level class, it is expected that everyone is fully engaged in the course content. This course will include assignments and discussions. Accordingly, active interaction and participation are important; however, participation does not mean merely verbal interaction and it is expected that everyone is prepared to contribute meaningfully. Your preparation, attentiveness, and willingness to participate in discussions and small groups are essential.

Assignments for Class Activities and Discussion

Selfie Project

Each student will create a Selfie which should illustrate you relating to a student development concept. You must be visible and recognizable in the selfie. The assignment requires that you post your 50-100 word caption naming and explaining the concepts you are illustrating. You are required to post your Selfie to Padlet (link and password in Blackboard). Descriptions should possess accuracy and clarity. An example is provided in Padlet for your information.

What I Wish I Would Have Known

Each student will contribute at least two statements to each Wiki, *What I Wish I Would Have Known*, based on your lived experiences. The statements should not repeat any previous statement (in other words, be original). There are 4 sections included:

1. Things I wish I knew before college.
2. Things I wish I had learned in college.
3. Things universities should know about college students.
4. Things I wish my parent/guardians/family would have known and/or told me (including what to expect) as well as done for me.

To add content, select "Edit Wiki Content" on the top right corner and add your content (see instructions below). Put your name in brackets at the end of your content (remember you are to add two sentences). When someone is editing a Wiki page, the page is locked for a duration of 120 seconds to prevent others from editing the same page. If you try to edit a page someone else is editing, you are informed that someone is currently editing the page.

1. On the wiki topic page, select the wiki page to edit.
2. Select Edit Wiki Content.
3. On the Edit Wiki Page, make the necessary changes.
4. Select Submit to save your work.

We will discuss the document using student development theories in a class discussion. Each student is expected to contribute *at least two* (original) items to each section.

Show and Tell

You will present an item that illustrates a stage of personal, social, educational, and career planning development in your life. You will share with your peers the significance of the item and to which theory it relates.

Gone Baby Gone Blog

After watching the movie, you will share your insights via Blog related to moral development (theories). The questions are listed in Blackboard.

Letter to Freshman Self

This assignment allows you to reflect. Compose a letter to yourself during your college years. If you could go back in time and talk to yourself, what would you say? Think about how you have changed and grown and life lessons you have learned. What would you do differently (if anything)?

Final Exam

At the conclusion of the class, students will complete a final exam which will give them an opportunity to demonstrate what has been learned throughout the semester. The final exam will be an essay format and cover the full content of the course.

Evaluation: The final exam will be evaluated on your ability to successfully relate theoretical material to each question with the thoroughness and thoughtfulness and the coherency and technical quality of your writing.

COURSE EVALUATION

Everyone is expected to participate fully in this course by (1) attending class meetings prepared and willing to participate as well as engaged, active participation in all activities; (2) reading assigned materials; (3) completing written assignments by the assigned due dates; and (4) producing quality, graduate-level work.

The final course grade will be determined (weighted per assignment) as follows:

Assignment	% Weight
Concept Analysis	10%
Student Development Analysis	25%
Selfie Project	10%
Case Study	20%
Class Activities/Assignments	20%
Final Exam	15%
100 %	

Grade Criteria:

Assignments will be graded using the following scale:

A= 90 - 100%; **B=** 80 - 89%; **C=** 70 - 79%; **D=** 60 - 69%; **F=** below 60%

A grade of 0 will be awarded for any assignment not completed.

Academic Performance:

Understand that students' academic performance (grades) is monitored. See the graduate catalog and Department of Counseling & Student Affairs Graduate Student Handbook for more details.

Assignments in this course will be evaluated according to the following rubric:

EVALUATIVE DIMENSION	"A" GRADE	"B" GRADE	"C" GRADE	"D/F" GRADE
Achievement of Specified Learning Outcomes	The assignment demonstrates strong achievement across designated learning outcomes	The assignment demonstrates evidence of meeting the designated learning outcomes	The assignment meets the majority, but not all of the designated learning outcomes	The assignment is not complete, does not conform to the instructions provided, or does not meet the majority of designated learning outcomes
Demonstrated Understanding of Content	Exceptional ability to both synthesize course content and identify similarities and differences between and among content areas	Demonstrates adequate competence in articulating central points of core content	Demonstrates varying degrees of understanding of content with some accurately explained and others missing key points	Assignment is not complete or does not demonstrate accurate or full understanding of content
Thought & Originality	Demonstrates significant complexity of thought as well as creative approaches in both content and structure	Complexity of thought is of adequate depth and elements of creativity are present in work	Complexity of thought varies significantly between topics with some demonstrating adequate complexity and others inadequate	Assignment is not complete or lacks complexity of thoughts required for graduate-level work
Application to Practice	Application to practice is accurate, creative, reasonable, and takes into account multiple perspectives and considerations	Application to practice is accurate and adequate	Application to practice varies in accuracy and does not take into account varying perspectives and considerations	Assignment is not complete or application to practice fails to take into consideration higher education and student affairs/higher education context
Critical Analysis	Depth of analysis is significant offering areas of both strength and limitation, connecting multiple dimensions of content, and/or meaningful interpretations	Depth of analysis is adequate and presents both strengths and limitations as well as general interpretations	Depth of analysis varies greatly and lacks consistent representation of strengths and weaknesses, connections between multiple	Assignment is not complete or depth of critical analysis is not consistent with requirements of graduate-level work
Appropriate Structure, Style, and Grammar	The final product is well organized, structured in way that builds on the argument or central thesis, and is free of errors related to grammar or APA style	The final product is well organized and clearly structured with only minimal grammatical and APA style errors	The final product suffers from problems associated with organization and structure and/or grammatical and APA style errors	Assignment is not completed or final product is poorly organized, structured, and/or possesses significant grammar and/or APA style errors

CLASS STANDARDS & POLICIES:

As a graduate student, I expect the highest personal and professional standards which reflect the objectives of our graduate program and our professional ethics in student affairs and higher education.

Class Participation. Everyone is expected to participate in class discussions and group activities. To meet the aforementioned learning objectives, students must be present and actively participate in the discussions and experiential aspects of the course without engaging in behaviors that are distracting to them or others in the learning environment. Respect for the learning community is also expected.

Readings. It is **imperative** that you complete all assigned readings **before** the scheduled class sessions. Your responsibility to other students is to be prepared and able to engage fully in our discussions. Furthermore, the required text and articles will provide a good beginning for your professional library. We may not be able to discuss all readings in class, but all will be a good basis for context setting and professional development. From time to time, additional readings will be assigned.

Civil Dialogue. Although deep and meaningful learning often comes as a result of fruitful discussions and cognitive and emotional disagreement, it is desired that each person in this learning community feels both challenged and supported. The underlying expectation of this course is that participants will approach one another with the same ethic of care and developmental concern with which they deal with those they help. This approach requires a willingness to engage in critical and controversial discussions while maintaining that we also advance our individual and collective knowledge and utilize skills that require both empathy and the ability to acknowledge multiple points of view. Please respect your classmate's confidentiality and opinions.

Academic Integrity. Academic integrity is an essential component of an academic community. Each student is responsible for fostering and maintaining a culture of academic honesty by making a commitment to the academic values of honesty, integrity, responsibility, trust, respect for self and others, fairness, and justice. In addition, students are expected to abide by the code of ethics for the profession of student affairs and the student code of conduct for the university.

Violations of academic integrity include cheating, plagiarism, or lying about academic matters. Plagiarism is defined as any use of another writer's words, concepts, or sequence of ideas without acknowledging that writer properly. This includes not only direct quotations of another writer's words, but also paraphrases or summaries of another writer's concepts or ideas without acknowledging the writer properly (i.e., citing them).

Cheating includes behaviors such as giving or receiving data or information under any circumstances not permitted by the instructor. Lying about academic matters includes falsification of data or information as part of an academic exercise, or knowingly providing false information to a faculty member.

Academic dishonesty is a profoundly serious offense because it involves an act of fraud, jeopardizing genuine efforts by faculty and students to teach and learn together. Students who are determined to have plagiarized an assignment or otherwise cheated in their academic work or examination may expect an "F" for the assignment in question or an "F" for the course, at the

discretion of the instructor. All incidents of cheating or plagiarism, reported by the instructor, will follow the Student Remediation Process as described in the departmental handbook. Please note: The University does use web-based products to detect plagiarism.

Assignment submission. Assignments are due at the time specified and should be submitted according to the directions provided. It is suggested that you plan appropriately to avoid missing due dates and accruing unnecessary penalties. When unforeseen emergencies and circumstances occur (e.g., a death in the family, a sick child, an illness that substantially impairs your functioning, etc.), I will work with you to grant a reasonable extension whenever possible and am happy to help you by relieving any pressures I can. Extensions may involve grade reductions particularly when more responsible planning was possible. If you must hand in work late due to an unforeseen circumstance, please note that you must contact the instructor to discuss the situation PRIOR TO the date the assignment is due. No points will be awarded for late assignments without prior permission. In addition, resubmitting an assignment (the same or substantially similar) from another course to satisfy the requirements for this course is not acceptable. Each student is expected to produce original, scholarly work for this course.

Email/ Blackboard. Email will be used as a primary mode of correspondence. As such, it is imperative that you check your WKU account consistently for course related and other pertinent messages. Additionally, Blackboard will be used for the submission of assignments and as a source of continual updates about course material and required reading material.

Blackboard: <http://blackboard.wku.edu>

Writing Style: Graduate education places a strong emphasis on developing writing skills and the ability to communicate effectively. Note that all papers should be submitted in APA 6th Edition format. Read the section on **Manuscript Preparation and Sample Papers** as well as other areas within the Style Manual. Use the index to find multiple discussions on each topic. Papers should be submitted using one-inch margins and 12-point type/font size. Page numbers should be placed on all pages with page headers. Edit for style and other corrections *before* submitting assignments. The quality of writing is also of high importance. Be sure to edit for style and other corrections *before* submitting assignments.

Students with Disabilities Who Require Accommodations: Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services, DUC A200. The OFSDS telephone number is (270)745-5004; TTY is 745-3030. Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

Graduate Student Handbook: Students are responsible for understanding the content and procedures contained in the most recent version of the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs Graduate Student Handbook. The handbook is found on the department's web site (http://www.wku.edu/csa/documents/cns_grad_handbook.pdf).