Introduction
This course is designed as survey of a rapidly emerging area of scholarship in social science, namely, the transition to adulthood. Though sociologists, anthropologists, and social psychologists (to name just a few sub-fields) have always examined the passage to adulthood, in the past decade there has been an unprecedented upsurge in the amount of scholarly, and indeed, popular attention to this field. In this course, I would like for you to get a sense of both the current state of knowledge with respect to the transition to adulthood, and from whence many of the ideas and notions that are used to explain the current state of emerging adulthood, as Jeffrey Arnett labels it. One of the central themes of the course and indeed the field is the notion of change. What has ignited this field is the sense that something has changed about the journey from adolescence to adulthood, and though the comparison is often made between what young people did in the 1950s as opposed to now, some work uses a longer lens to examine the shifts in behavior.

We will start with a small foray into some of the popular treatments of emerging adulthood, examining what the popular press has termed adultolescents, twixters, and kippers, and we will also assess how popular culture takes stock of the “failure to launch” phenomenon. We also visit the main nodes around which we conceive of adulthood, education, employment, relationships and parenting, and we examine how the transition occurs in different contexts and for certain vulnerable populations. We finish the course by taking a look at what the future holds, especially in the wake of the Great Recession, and you will have the opportunity to present your own digital view of this phenomenon.

Reading
There are two required books for this course, and all are available for purchase online, save for Coming of Age in America, which can be pre-ordered but will not ship until late September. Other course readings, such as journal articles or chapters, will be directly available to you on the course web site. There is quite a lot of reading each week and you will be expected to keep up with these assignments.

Note on Buying Books: I have tried to choose books that are relatively cheap in price, but I realize that not everyone will have the budget to buy them. Some are available second hand
for a smaller price, and, in certain circumstances, I can make a loaner copy available to you on a needs assessed basis.

**Required Books**


ISBN-10: 0553807404


**Suggested Titles**


**Expectations**

The success of this class is very much dependent on the effort you put forth each week in being prepared and contributing to the best of your ability. I will lecture for the first part of each class, but the remainder of class will be spent discussing the week’s readings and other topics of salience and interest.

I assume that each student who signs up for this course carries with him/her a set of expectations. You expect to learn about the transition to adulthood, and perhaps expect to be stimulated and challenged by the course materials. In turn, I enter each new course with a set of baseline expectations for my students, and I like to have them on the syllabus so everyone knows where I stand in terms of behavior and in-class norms.

You should expect that I be engaged and prepared for each and every class. You should expect that I grade and return assignments and tests in a timely manner. You should expect that I be available to meet with you in office hours, and respond to your questions promptly and courteously. And you should expect that I conduct myself in a professional manner at all times.

In turn, I have the following expectations about you. I expect that you will arrive **on time** (i.e. before 5.00PM) for class-when people are late it is discourteous to teacher and student alike, and disruptive for all. I expect that you pay attention, and not engage in side conversations, text messaging, or other digital distractions that are likewise discourteous and disruptive. I expect you to stay awake during class, and I will do my part to ensure that the lectures are not contributory to napping. I expect that you keep up with course materials and readings, and hand in assignments on time. I expect that during class discussions you are respectful of all of your classmates and their opinions, and that you do not engage in disrespectful or hateful discourse. For my part, I will strictly enforce civility during discussions.
To encourage you 10% of your grade is yours free and clear at the beginning of each semester. To maintain that you have to be present, attentive and civil, and those who are not lose parts or all of the 10%. The choice is really up to you.

Attendance Policy
Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/ to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.

Attendance is an important part of your 10% civility grade

A Note on the Use of Laptops/Tablets in Class
I realize that laptops are useful devices-I even own a couple of them-and that some students like to fire them up in class to take notes. However, in many cases these devices are used to surf the web, check Facebook updates and compose emails during class, none of which is acceptable behavior. I do not prohibit the use of these devices but I pretty much always know when you are using them in ways other than for taking notes, and that is a surefire way to quickly burn your 10% civility grade.

Academic Honesty
Academic honesty is a subject that I take very seriously. I encourage all students to familiarize themselves with the Rutgers University policies and procedures on academic honesty, available at http://teachx.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html. Be assured that any and all violations of honesty, for example, cheating in examinations or plagiarizing others’ work for your written assignments, will be referred to the appropriate authorities and sanctioned accordingly. Again, I think it is important that you know where I am coming from on these issues.

Missing an Exam or Being Late for an Exam
If you miss an exam without discussing with me the circumstances that preclude attendance BEFORE the exam is administered, you will fail that exam. It is only under the most extraordinary of circumstances that I will administer a make-up. Also, please be advised that I never change grades.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you arrive at an exam after the first student has finished and left, you will not be permitted to sit the exam at that time. This is to ensure the integrity of the examination and reduce the temptation to cheat.

Statement on student disability
In accordance with University policy, if you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please contact me at the beginning of the semester or when given an assignment for which an accommodation is required. Students with disabilities must verify eligibility through the Office of Student Disability Services.
Grading and Assignments
Final grades for the course will be based on:
Civility Grade (attendance, punctuality, decorum, and contribution) 10%
Critique Exercise 15%
Term Paper 15%
Midterm 20%
Group Project 20%
Final 20%

Grades for the course are as follows:
A 93-100%
B+ 87-92%
B 80-86%
C+ 77-79%
C 70-76%
D+ 67-69%
D 60-66%
F Under 60%

Requirements

Critique Exercise (15%)
This assignment is a straightforward critique exercise. You will be asked to choose a reading or book, either ones that are assigned for the course or work that is in this substantive area and is approved for the exercise. You will be expected to write a 5-page critique of the work, assessing where it fits into the substantive area of the transition to adulthood, and assess it with regard to the other scholarship you have read in the field. The critiques are due in class September 28th.

NOTE: All written assignments are due in class (hard copy) only. I do not accept emailed assignments and any assignment that is late is penalized one half letter grade for every day or part thereof for which it is late.

Term Paper-What is Wrong with Young Adults Today? (15%)
Each student will be expected to complete a term paper on the broad topic of what is wrong with young adults today. You can either choose to answer the question in a polemical fashion, or to offer two sides of the debate. What you must do is make an argument and bring in course materials to support it. A great deal of our discussion at the beginning of the course focuses on this topic and so it will serve you well to be in class for these discussions. The paper should be between 1800-2000 words and be composed using APA style. I will provide a style sheet for you. The paper is due in class on October 31.

Midterm Examination (20%)
The in-class midterm will combine short answer and essay format questions and will be based on review questions that will be posted regularly on the course web-site. The midterm will be held on October 10th.
**Group Project (20%)**
The group project is designed to give you an opportunity to create a “digital short” presentation on emerging adulthood topics, weaving in research on “the iConnected generation” and their parents, the impact of social media, the impact of the Great Recession on the millennials, hookup culture/relationships or any other aspect of the transition to adulthood. There will be 9 groups of 6 people and group selection will be done randomly at the end of October. From November 2, I will allot 20 minutes of each Wednesday class period for group discussion, because I know it will be difficult for you all to find time outside of class to meet. Each group will have the opportunity to present their digital shorts to the class from November 30 through December 7. Your grade for the digital short will be divided as follows-half will be for the final product, including presentation to the class, and half will be for the effort you personally brought to the group. The “effort” grade is assessed by each person filling out a grade sheet both for themselves and fellow group members, where you assign a letter grade to everyone including you, and then add a sentence justifying each grade. This is done to offset the free rider problem and to recognize the people putting the most effort in.

**Final Examination (20%)**
There will be a final exam that is based on material covered after the midterm. The exam will be made up of short answer and essay questions and will be based on review questions posted after each section of the course.

**Class Schedule**

Sept. 7: Introduction to the Course
Reading: Lev Grossman “Grow Up? Not so Fast”; Peg Tyre “Bringing Up Adultolescents”;

Sept. 8*: Growing Up is Harder to Do
Reading: Furstenberg et al. “Growing Up is Harder to Do”; Kantrowicz and Tyre: “The Fine Art of Letting Go.” Waters, Carr and Kefalas “Introduction” from Coming of Age (will be available online)

*NB: Note Change in Day-class held on Thursday

Sept. 12-14 What is Different about the Transition to Adulthood?
Reading: Shanahan “Pathways to Adulthood in Changing Societies: Variability and Mechanisms in Life Course Perspective,”; Arnett, chaps 1-2 of Emerging Adulthood

Sept. 19 Is There a Failure to Launch?
Reading: NY Times “What is It About Twenty Somethings?; Arnett “Suffering Selfish Slackers”
Also view 60 Minutes in class
Sept. 21-24  Education and the Transition to Adulthood: College for All?
Readings: Settersten and Ray, Ch.1; Leonhardt, “The College Drop-out Boom”; Steinberg “Is Going to an Elite College Still Worth It?”; Rosenbaum et al. “The Problem with College for All”

Sept. 26-28  What About the Economy? Jobs, Careers, and Employment
Reading: Settersten and Ray, Chaps 2-3

Sept. 28: Critiques Due in Class-hard copy only

Oct. 3-5  The Changing Role of Parents in the Lives of Young Adults

Oct. 10  In-class midterm examination

Oct. 12-17  Relationships, Love, and….Marriage

Oct. 19-26  The Transition to Adulthood in Different Contexts
Reading: Waters et al. Chaps 2-5

Oct. 31  Term Paper-“What is Wrong with Young Adults Today?” Due in Class

Nov. 2-9  The Transition to Adulthood for Vulnerable Populations
Reading: Osgood et al. “Introduction” to On Your Own Without a Net, chapters by Uggen and Wakefield, Hagan and McCarthy, Courtney and Heuring on criminal justice system involvement, homeless youth and youth aging out of foster care.

Nov. 7  Film: Aging Out

Nov. 9  Social Networks, Connections and Activism
Reading: Settersten and Ray chaps 5 & 7;

Nov. 14  Key Institutions: The Military
Reading: Carr and Kefalas “The Seekers”; Beth Bailey, “The Army in the Marketplace: Recruiting the All-Volunteer Army,”

Nov. 16  Film: The Recruiter

Nov. 21  When Do You Consider Yourself an Adult?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 28</td>
<td>What Does the Future Hold? The Great Recession and the T2A Reading: Settersten and Ray, chap. 8; Waters et al. chap. 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 30</td>
<td>Group Project Presentations-Groups A through C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 5</td>
<td>Group Project Presentations-Groups D through F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 7</td>
<td>Group Project Presentations-Groups G through I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 12</td>
<td>Final Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 22</td>
<td><strong>Final Examination 4-7PM</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>