

# IDS4930 – The Art of “Adulthood” in the Liberal Arts and Sciences

Spring 2020 – Tuesdays, Period 7: 1:55-2:45 in Matherly 0011

Instructor	Email	Office Location & Hours
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## Course Description

This course explores the process of coming of age as a young professional in today’s society. Human civilization has consistently created categorical distinctions between life stages, but what exactly determines “childhood” or “adulthood” has changed significantly. We will look at history, literature, popular culture, and media to investigate the concept of what it means to be an adult today. By the end of this class you will be able to:

- Articulate how concepts of “adulthood” have changed over time
- Identify the ways in which American adulthood is socially constructed
- Discern and distinguish between various representations of markers of “adulthood” in media and society
- Utilize effective strategies for time management, personal productivity, and financial responsibility
- Recognize the civic responsibility of coming of age and its applications
- Articulate a coherent individual worldview

## Course Materials

Readings will be provided either in hard-copy or PDF format by the instructor.

## Course Assignments

- Autobiography – 25%
- Financial Plan – 20%
- Worldview Statement – 20%
- Informational Interview Report – 20%
- Participation – 15%

## **Attendance**

This class meets once a week and requires fruitful engagement, so attendance is mandatory. However, life happens. Everyone will be granted one “no questions asked” absence during the semester. Use it wisely. After that, each missed class will decrease your final grade 1/3 of a letter grade (so an A- becomes a B+, and so forth). If multiple absences become necessary, please speak to me. Absences for medical reasons or other extenuating circumstances will be excused with proper documentation.

## **Lateness**

Adulthood, I’m fairly certain, involves punctuality, so lateness is unacceptable. You will be considered “late” if you arrive after the scheduled start time for the course. Two instances of lateness will be considered equivalent to an absence and impact your final grade accordingly. Adulthood, however, also involves communication, so let me know if extenuating circumstances will impact your timely attendance for class and we can make appropriate arrangements.

## **Late Assignments**

The goal of this course is for you to develop skills, and that development is more important than deadlines or grades. However, submitting work by the posted deadline is crucial. Late work will be accepted up to ONE WEEK after the deadline but will automatically be assessed one full letter grade deduction. As always, please speak to me if extenuating circumstances impact your ability to submit your work in a timely fashion.

## **Notes for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

## **Grading Policies and Grade Points**

Please refer to the UF Catalog for information on grading and GPA:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

## Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <http://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

## Course Schedule

### **Part 1: “Adult” as a Noun**

#### **January 7: Introduction, Overview, and Orientation to Class**

- Welcome to class
- What is this course about?
- What does it mean to be an adult?
- What does it mean to be an adult now?

#### Assignment:

- Read “When Are you Really an Adult?” by Julie Beck

#### **January 14: Defining Adulthood**

- Discuss Beck reading
- Social Construction of Adulthood
- Signifiers and Markers

#### Assignment:

- Read “The Tangled Transition to Adulthood” by Steven Mintz

#### **January 21: History of Adulthood**

- Discuss Mintz Reading
- Changing Nature of Adulthood
- Ambition, Vocation, and Adulthood
- Discuss Autobiography, Chapter 1

#### Assignment:

- Read “Getting Control of Your Life” By David Allen

## Part 2: “Adult” as a Verb

### **January 28: Time Management and Productivity**

- **DUE:** Autobiography, Chapter 1
- Discuss Allen Reading
- Five Steps
- Eisenhower Matrix
- “2-Minute Rule”

#### Assignment:

- Read “Do Less, Then Obsess” by Morten T. Hansen

### **February 4: Priorities, Balance, and Focus**

- Discuss Hansen Reading
- Quantity/Quality
- Simplicity and Productivity
- Chaos and Order

#### Assignment:

- Read “Workism is Making Americans Miserable” by Derek Thompson

### **February 11: The Dark Side of Productivity**

- Workoholism, hustle culture, and #riseandgrind
- What is “self-care” anyway?
- Conditions of “Enoughness”

#### Assignment:

- No reading, complete Chapter 2 of Autobiography
- Identify your Informational Interview subject!

## Part 3: “Adult” as a Process

### **February 18: Career, Part 1**

- **DUE:** Autobiography, Chapter 2
- Beyond the “basics”
- Navigating the job offers
- Introduction to negotiation

## **February 25: Career, Part 2**

- Negotiation practice
- The nuts and bolts of a paycheck
- Taxes?

### Assignment:

- Read “Taking Stock of Your Financial Life” by Beth Koblner
- Keep a “spending journal” during Spring Break

## **March 3: No class! Enjoy Spring Break!**

## **March 10: Money, Part 1**

- The Monk and the Minister
- Money and Values
- Personal Finance Basics

### Assignment:

- Financial Plan assignment
- No reading—work on Financial Plan

## **March 17: Money, Part 2**

- Investments
- Loans
- Retirement stuff

### Assignment:

- No reading—work on Financial Plan

## **March 24: The Hero’s Journey**

- Discuss Campbell’s “Stages”
- Heroes in media and literature
- Separation, Transformation, Initiation, and Return

### Assignment:

- Read excerpt from “Meno”

## March 31, 2019: Navigating the Journey

- **DUE**: Financial Plan
- Discuss *Meno*
- Knowledge or True Opinion
- Making plans and embracing ambiguity
- Quarter-Life Crisis

### Assignment:

- Take “Political Compass” Quiz (Link on Canvas)

## **Part 4: “Adult” as a Responsibility**

### April 7: Civic Participation

- **DUE**: Autobiography, Chapter 3
- Cultivating a worldview
- Spectra over binaries

### Assignment:

- Worldview Statement

### April 14: Mentorship

- **DUE**: Worldview Statement
- A continuum
- How do you lead?
- How do you mentor?

Reading: “This is Water” by David Foster Wallace

### April 21: Informational Interviews, Wrap-up

- **DUE**: Informational Interview Report
- Share most salient point from informational interview
- Wrap-up—This is Water
- Complete Autobiography Due by **Noon on Wednesday, April 29**