



# Study Guide

## SASS 441. Human Development In Context II: Adult

### Course Description

This course builds on SASS 440 Human Development I (child and adolescent) by comparing the general themes of feeling (emotion), thinking (cognition), and acting (behavior) with adult emotional, cognitive, and behavioral development. Students will understand the differences and similarities between earlier (child and adolescent) and later (adult, including older adult) emotional, cognitive, and behavioral development by examining, across the life-span, the ideas/concepts of: (1) adult development as gains/losses, (2) adult development as plasticity and variation (i.e., development can take many forms and can change), (3) adult development as risks, conflicts, protective factors, and resilience and coping, and (4) adult development as context (e.g., family, society, gender, culture, ethnicity, social class, discrimination, sexual orientation/gender identity, and socio-historical [i.e., cohort] contexts).

This course adds new content and perspectives to Human Development I by beginning with the debates about the transition from adolescence to adulthood, what some scholars have called “late adolescence,” “emerging adulthood,” or “young adulthood” (ages 18-24), and ending with death. The course is not organized by assuming that a person’s chronological age is a predictor of developmental achievements -- for example, training and education (ages 18-24), work/career (ages 24-35), intimacy/marriage/domestic partnership (ages 24-35), family/parenting (ages 35-55), retirement (age 65-85), and death (age 85 +). Instead, it assumes that gains/losses, plasticity, resilience, and context matter throughout adult life, regardless of age or developmental task. Emphasis is placed on variation in developmental task challenges, conflict, and change, not prescriptive, normative, or linear progressions from one developmental task to another, leading up to, for example, the “good” or “perfect” death. Overall, the course is designed to provide students a model for thinking about and assessing adult life-span development so that an adult client’s dysfunction, disorder, disease, or problems (social and/or psychological) can be situated in the context of a person’s developmental achievements, conflicts, and strengths.

### Course Objectives

1. To understand the differences and similarities between child/adolescent and adult development
2. To understand and critically evaluate major theories and controversies regarding adult development.

3. To use developmental theory as a model for assessment of adult achievements, conflicts, and strengths
4. To communicate effectively, either orally or in writing, by presenting an adult developmental assessment.
5. To understand and identify how adult development is affected (positively and negatively) by contextual factors such as cohort, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, discrimination, socioeconomic status, and culture.

## Texts: Required

Hutchison, Elizabeth D. and contributors. (2015). *Dimensions of human behavior: The changing life course*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.