In recent years, education leaders and policymakers have indicated their strong interest in assessing the learning that takes place during college, particularly inside the classroom. Are students learning the right things? Are they developing the skills that will allow them to be successful in our increasingly diverse democracy? While these are important questions, they often obscure student learning and development more generally, which can take place and be fostered as students engage in and outside of the classroom. Many argue that it is equally important to address students’ development of a sense of self and identity, moral development and cognition, and ability to engage with their peers and make meaning of the world around them. Student affairs professionals are key agents in facilitating these processes, making it important to ensure a foundation of understanding of the patterns and trajectory of college student development established by a long history of scholars and practitioners.
The purpose of this course is to begin the process of engaging and exploring various “families” of student development theory; we will focus on psychosocial, cognitive, moral, and identity development. We will consider specific theories within each family, exploring the context within which each frame was developed, to whom it is believed to apply, and the process by which development is believed to occur.

This course will be rigorous and aims to cover a great deal of ground. However, it is important to offer a few caveats as we begin. Although we will discuss many forms of development across multiple social identity groups, it is important to acknowledge that there is no way to address all theories, populations, and ideas relevant to this important topic. We also acknowledge that scholars in the last ten to twenty years have articulated new ideas to frame student development that could be considered more critical or address the intersection of multiple identities. This work is important and innovative and will certainly be addressed in the Advanced Student Development Theory course; however, this course will focus largely on the early theories which form the foundation of the field (although there will be plenty of opportunities for challenge and critique!). Finally, it is important to note what will be the mantra of this class in some ways: theories describe processes, not people. They are imperfect and will never explain everything, but they help us explain, predict, and understand why and how things happen the ways in which they do and respond.

Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The primary objective of this class is to introduce students to the foundational theories of student development and develop understanding of these theories and how they can be applied to promote work with college students. Further, students will have opportunities to develop deeper understandings of their own development and identities, and how dimensions of their own development influence their work with others.

Specific learning outcomes include developing students’:

- Understanding of the history and context within which student development theories have been developed and evolved.
- Knowledge of specific theoretical frames and how multiple theories add to our understanding of similar processes
- Competency and experience in applying student development theories to student affairs practice and research
- Emerging ability to critique and critically analyze the strengths and weaknesses of various theories
- Knowledge and understanding of how socially-constructed identity categories influence developmental processes, and influence the perceptions of those who seek to promote student development

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• Understanding of their own identity and development, and how this can shape one’s practice as a student affairs professional

Required Texts


Additional readings posted on ELMS (CANVAS) - https://umd.instructure.com/ - or distributed in class.

Evaluation & Grading

Students will be graded based on the following point structure:

Class participation (includes participation in class discussions and activities and weekly reflections) 20%
“Where I’m from” Reflection (Feb 3) 15%
“My life as a college student” Reflection (Feb 20) 15%
“My life as a college student” Analysis (April 24) 25%
Student stories and analysis project (May 5) 25%

Final Grading Scale
A = 100-94  B = 86-84  C = 76-74  D = 66-64
A- = 93-90  B- = 83-80  C- = 73-70  D- = 63-60
B+ = 89-87  C+ = 79-77  D+ = 69-67  F = < 60

Class Policies

Instructor’s Expectations
This course is designed to be an interactive experience for all participants, with frequent opportunities to discuss, reflect upon, and apply course readings and concepts. Rather than just summarizing the readings, we will be critically engaging and building on the ideas described in the work assigned. Thus, everyone must come to class prepared. All students are responsible for completing the week’s assigned readings and activities prior to class to help promote the engaging environment I hope we can create in the classroom.

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This type of classroom environment also requires that students be active participants in the learning process. Students will be graded on their engagement in each week’s lesson and classroom participation. This does not mean one has to make sure to speak at least one time in each class or that talking a lot will guarantee full credit; rather, students are expected to make thoughtful contributions, ask questions, listen attentively, and participate in class activities.

A note on the syllabus: it is intended to a living, fluid document, not a static set of rules for us to abide by. It may (and is very likely to) change based on need for greater depth, group interest in a particular topic, or time constraints. While sometimes this will mean additional assignments or work outside of the classroom that may or may not be graded, often adjustments to the syllabus will be in the students’ favor. I am open to change and adjustment and welcome discussion and feedback.

Classroom Conduct
Eating and drinking in class are totally fine – I understand that 3 hours is a long time, and that a snack can keep you focused and awake. All I ask is that students please try to avoid bringing snacks or foods that are overly loud or disruptive when eaten.

I also understand that several students like to use their laptops to take notes in class. Using a laptop for note taking is acceptable, but not for checking email, IMing or chatting with a friend, or taking a peek at the New York Times. It is distracting and disrespectful to me or whoever is leading the class at that time. This has been a problem in the past, so I am going to ask the following: if you intend to bring your laptop to class to take notes, you must submit your notes to me within three hours of the end of class.

A similar policy applies for PDAs and smart phones. I know that many classes have policies about ringing phones in class, and I also ask that you please activate the silent ring function. I also would like to request that your phones/PDAs stay off the desk, out of your lap, and definitely out of your hands during class. To state it plainly, please no texting or playing with your phone during class. Any use of your phone will have a negative influence on your participation grade.

Your actual presence in class is considered as part of your participation grade. Each week, students are expected to be present and ready to begin class on time. If you must miss or be late for class for a legitimate reason (e.g., illness, family emergencies, work emergencies, court appearances, conferences), please contact me to discuss your absence in advance. If you must be absent from class, you will be completely responsible for the material covered and any handouts distributed during that class session. One unexcused absence or two incidences of unexcused tardiness will result in a deduction of one letter grade from your participation grade. Students

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should also be careful not to accrue too many excused absences. Three excused absences or late arrivals/early departures from class will also negatively influence a student’s participation grade.

Students must hand in all assigned work and projects in accordance with deadlines. If you must hand in work late for a legitimate reason, please contact me to discuss the situation prior to the due date (the sooner, the better!). **If you contact me 12 hours before or any time after an assignment deadline with an excuse for a late assignment, the assignment will still be considered late.** Grades on late assignments that have not been previously discussed and negotiated with me in advance will be reduced by two letter grades. Students have one week to complete a late assignment. All assignments that are more than one week late will receive a 0.

Any time that an assignment is due, the deadline will be **5 pm** unless otherwise specified. Please note, assignments that come in after 5pm will be considered late (even if it is 5:03pm).

**Re-Write Policy**

Students will be given the opportunity to re-write or re-do any assignment on which they receive fewer than 80 points. Anyone interested in completing a re-write must notify me within a week of receiving their grade, and all re-written assignments and papers must be submitted within two weeks. Re-written assignments will be re-graded, and the student’s previous grade will be replaced with the grade they are assigned on the re-written paper.

**Academic Integrity**

As scholars and practitioners, it is important for your written work and contributions to class to be your own. All acts of falsification, misrepresentation, or deception are completely unacceptable, and any assignment which has plagiarized elements will automatically receive an F (0 points).

If including sentences, paragraphs, or other portion of the work of others in papers or presentations, be sure to cite this work appropriately based on guidelines presented in the *APA Manual* (6th edition). Generally, it is safest to avoid using Control C and Control V when working on your papers and reading resources.

The University of Maryland Code of Academic Integrity outlines the university’s policies in this regard – please become familiar with it. More information is available at [http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/III-100A.pdf](http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/III-100A.pdf). On all assignments, papers, and exams (except weekly reflections), please hand write the following before submitting, “I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (or assignment).”

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Assignments and Writing Style
All formal writing assignments should be completed following the guidelines for style and citation outlined in the APA manual – evaluation of proper formatting will be included in the grading of all assignments. All assignments should be typed in Times New Roman, 12 point font with one inch margins on all sides. Please do not use alternative fonts or sizes, or adjust the margins. And yes, I really do check for these things 😊.

“Safe Space”
In order to facilitate participation and help all students feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and ideas in the classroom, it is important that we create a respectful, open environment where everyone is valued. It is more than OK to express strong feelings or disagree with classmates’ ideas, but I ask it is done respectfully. Please be thoughtful about your words and actions, and focus on critiquing ideas rather than an individual’s qualities as a person. Also, I ask that when details regarding personal matters arise in discussion, that they do not leave the classroom.

Students with Disabilities
Any student requiring academic accommodations based on a disability is respectfully asked to discuss her/his needs with me on or near the first day of class. Appropriate accommodations to facilitate student engagement, participation, and completion of coursework will gladly be provided.

Recognition of Religious Pluralism
Accommodations will gladly be made for students who must turn in an assignment late or miss class time in observance of religious holidays. It is important to notify me of your absence/need for extension at least two weeks prior to the holiday.
# Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics and Readings</th>
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| Jan 28 | **Introduction to Class**  
**Where I’m From and What Difference Does it Make**  
- Borrego & Manning – Chapters 1-7 |
| Feb 4 | **Where I’m From & The Nature and Use of Theory**  
- Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn – Part One (Ch 1 & 2) & Ch 13  
- McEwen – The nature and uses of theory (CANVAS)  
- Quaye – Voice of the researcher (CANVAS)  
- Parker – On modeling reality (CANVAS) |
| Feb 11 | **The Nature and Use of Theory & Holistic Perspectives on Student Development**  
- Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn – Ch 9  
- Baxter Magolda – Complex Lives (CANVAS)  
- Strange – Student Development (CANVAS)  
- Reynolds & Pope – The Complexities of Diversity (CANVAS) |
| Feb 18 | **Psychosocial Development**  
- Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn – Ch 3 & 4  
- Chickering & Reisser – The Seven Vectors (CANVAS)  
- Josselson – Identity (CANVAS)  
- Pope – The relationship between psychosocial development and racial development of students of color (CANVAS) |
| Feb 25 | **Cognitive Development**  
- Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn – Ch 5 & 7  
- Perry – Cognitive and ethical growth (CANVAS)  
- Clinchy – Revisiting women’s ways of knowing (CANVAS)  
- Torres & Hernandez – The influence of ethnic identity on self-authorship (CANVAS) |
| March 4 | **ACPA – NO CLASS** |

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 11</td>
<td>Please note, class will meet 4:15 – 7pm in EDU 0202 to accommodate for Preview Cognitive, Moral, and Faith Development</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, &amp; Renn – Ch 6, 11</td>
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<td>- Love &amp; Talbot – Defining spiritual development: A missing consideration for student affairs (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>- Parks – The journey towards a mature adult faith (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>- Gilligan – Moral development (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>- King &amp; Mayhew – Moral judgment development in higher education (CANVAS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 18</td>
<td>Spring Break/NASPA – NO CLASS</td>
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<td>March 25</td>
<td>Racial and Ethnic Identity Development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, &amp; Renn – Ch 14, 15</td>
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<td>- Helms &amp; Cook – Models of racial oppression and sociorace (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>- Sirin &amp; Fine – Hyphenated selves: Muslim American youth negotiating identities on the fault lines of global conflict (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>April 1</td>
<td>Racial and Ethnic Identity Development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, &amp; Renn – Ch 16</td>
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<td>- Rockquemore, Brunsman, &amp; Delgado – Racing to theory or retheorizing race? Understanding the struggle to build a multiracial identity theory (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>- Renn – Understanding the racial identity of mixed race people through a developmental ecology lens (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>- Wijeyesinghe – Racial identity in multiracial people: An alternative paradigm (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>April 8</td>
<td>Gender Identity Development</td>
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<td>- Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, &amp; Renn – Ch 18</td>
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<td>- Davis – Voices of gender role conflict: The social construction of college men’s identity (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>- Harris – College men’s conceptualizations of masculinities and contextual influences: toward a conceptual model (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>- Beemyn – Trans on Campus</td>
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<td>- Carter – Transgenderism and college students: Issues of gender identity and its role on our campuses (CANVAS)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>April 15</td>
<td>Sexual Identity Development</td>
<td>- Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, &amp; Renn – Ch 17</td>
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<td>- D’Augelli – Identity development and sexual orientation: Towards a model of LGB identity development (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>- Bilodeau &amp; Renn – Analysis of LGBT identity development models and implications for practice (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>- Abes &amp; Kasch – Using queer theory to explore lesbian college students’ multiple dimensions of identity (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>April 22</td>
<td>Revisiting Holistic Perspectives on Identity Development</td>
<td>- Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, &amp; Renn – Ch 10 &amp; 12</td>
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<td>- Abes, Jones, &amp; McEwen – Reconceptualizing the model of multiple dimensions of identity: The role of meaning-making capacity in the construction of multiple identities (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>- King &amp; Baxter Magolda – Toward a developmental model of intercultural maturity: A holistic approach to collegiate education (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>- Weber – A conceptual framework for understanding race, class, gender, and sexuality (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>April 29</td>
<td>Applications of Student Development Theory</td>
<td>- Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, &amp; Renn – Ch 19 &amp; 20</td>
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<td>- Upcraft – The dilemmas of translating theory to practice (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>- Reason &amp; Kimball – A new theory to practice model for student affairs: Integrating scholarship, context, and reflection (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>- Rhoads &amp; Black – Student affairs practitioners as transformative educators (CANVAS)</td>
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<td>- Ortiz &amp; Rhoads – Deconstructing Whiteness as part of a multicultural educational framework (CANVAS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>Final Presentations and Reflections</td>
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Assignments

1) *Integrative Comments (Every week – posted to CANVAS by Sunday at 5pm)*: Each week, you will prepare an integrative comment (in other words, addressing more than one of the week’s readings) and post it CANVAS drop box for the week. Your comments should be approximately 250 words long.

Your integrative comment should be your reaction to and reflection on the readings for the week. The key here is to go beyond summarizing the readings, critically engaging the ideas being presented or the ways in which ideas are being approached. Your integrative comment can take multiple forms – it can address questions the readings raised for you, how multiple readings addressed a similar idea, or express your thoughts or questions about how a topic was studied.

These comments will be graded pass/fail, and will be factored into your class participation grade. *Late assignments will not be accepted.* You are allowed to skip one comment at any point during the semester – but please email me and let me know that you are using your one “get out of your reflection free” card! And in return, Stephanie and I get a “get out of responses” week, as well 😊.

2) “*Where I Am From*” Reflection Essay – *February 3*: Using the book *Where I Am From* as a template, write your own “Where I Am From” essay. You may write this in any style you would like – you can write in prose or poetry, an essay or narrative, whatever makes the most sense to tell your story. What is important here is to note how your own experience will serve as a lens and a means of understanding student development theory and working with your students. This isn’t meant to be informed by theory or be related to any kind of framework – just a reflection of who you are and how you see the world. Please bring your essays to class on February 4 and be prepared to share all or some of it with the class – it will help us get to know each other. Stephanie and I will also prepare “Where I’m From” essays to share.

3) *My Life As A College Student Reflection – February 20*: In this 6-8 page paper, please carefully and intentionally consider your own development over your college years. Please do not worry or focus on reflecting or incorporating particular theories in this paper. Rather, think about how you grew and changed during college across specific dimensions of your life. In particular, please reflect on/consider the following as you craft your response:

   a. Where were you during your college years, how were you spending your time, and what was most important to you?
   b. What people were important in your life and how did you relate to them?
   c. What were the most transformational moments during your college years and how did they change you?

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d. How did who you are and where you are from influence your experiences, growth, and change?
e. To what do you attribute your growth in change? Please consider a wide range of factors, including friends, family, faculty, in-class experiences, co-curricular experiences, etc.

4) *My Life As A College Student Analysis – April 24:* In this 12-15 page paper, revisit your preliminary reflections on your life and experiences as a college student, this time incorporating the formal student development theories that we have learned throughout the semester.

In this analysis, you will re-write your *My Life As A College Student Reflection*, structured by themes you identify from the theories as they relate to your original narrative.

Please be sure to accomplish the following tasks as you complete your analysis:

- Identify 4-5 theories that do or do not (because they do or do not apply) to your development as a college student
- Describe the theories and how you are applying them
- Discuss the commonalities and differences between your college experiences and what the theories outline/suggest
- Explain the benefits and limitations of the applications of applying these theories to explain your experiences and development, offering critique where appropriate
- Offer recommendations to student affairs educators about how to best promote college students’ development using theory as a guide, given your own learning throughout this assignment and the course in general.

5) *Student Stories and Analysis – May 5 (please see below for in-process deadlines):* The purpose of this assignment is to learn the stories of a particular group of students and then to generate theories grounded in their stories. Working in groups of two or three, choose a particular population of students to study that has something in common with each other (for example – a social identity group, or a group that shares a common experience). Choose wisely – this is the group on which your project will be based! You will be both assessing students’ experiences in comparison to extant theory, and developing your own theory based on what you learn. *[We will pick teams and groups February 11]*

This assignment has several components:

- Data collection: Each group member will interview at least two students who fit into the population you have chosen. You will want to prepare a list of interview questions prior to your interviews, which should be based upon some knowledge, however cursory, of that population. Also, group members should each attend and observe at least one social event or organization meeting that targets members of the group you’ve chosen. You will need to take careful notes during the interviews and observation so that you can complete the rest of the assignment. *[Identify from where you will recruit students to interview and submit a list of potential interview questions – Due Feb 25]*
- Theory Development: Once you have completed your data collection, your group will come together to share the stories and information that you have learned. Compose a summary and begin to develop an emerging theory of development for this group of student which reflects the emerging themes from your interviews and observations.  

*Complete all interviews and write a draft summary of your students’ stories. You will exchange your summaries with each member of your team so you can begin to put the stories together – Due March 25*

Organize your themes into a core story of development, using your data to explain and support the themes you present. Your theory can take any form as along as a) it is based on your themes, b) you include relevant dimensions of development and c) you can explain what each dimension means.

- Theory Critique: Compare your emerging theory to three theorists of your choosing, considering the following questions:
  o How do these existing theories help you describe your themes and findings? What is missing?
  o What are the similarities and differences between your emerging theory and the existing theories you are using to analyze your data? What accounts for the differences?
  o What critique of existing theories would you make given what you have learned from students about their experiences?

- Presentation: *(Due in class May 5)* Your group will present the final results of your project in a scholarly poster format, similar to posters at a scholarly conference. Examples will be shared in class as the presentation date approaches. The purpose of the poster presentation is to share the findings from your interviews, your emerging theory, and your comparison of how your theory relates to existing theories. Each group must prepare a handout (this is not meant to be a full paper – rather, 1-2 pages), with copies for class members, which includes:
  o Title of your project
  o Brief description of your samples and findings/themes from your interviews
  o Your theory presented in a way you deem the most appropriate (figure, table, chart, narrative, etc.)
  o Overview of comparison between your theory and existing theories
  o References

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