

Spring Semester 2004

EDUC 399 - 4

Susan O'Neill

ST: Positive Youth Development

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Tuesdays
16:30-20:20**E01.00****PREREQUISITE:**

60 credit hours and Educ 220 or Psyc 220 or Psyc 355

This course will provide students with the opportunity to examine the processes involved in positive youth development. Increasingly, educators are focusing their attention on frameworks that strengthen protective factors, build competencies, focus on indicators of thriving, and promote positive outcomes among youth in diverse contexts. The course will consider the multiple pathways that facilitate individuals' healthy development, well-being, ability to navigate in multiple cultural settings, and make successful transitions from childhood, through adolescence, and into adulthood. In particular, the course will examine a number of consistent themes in the research literature on positive youth development, and the ways in which educators can help develop young people's sense of industry and competency, initiative and planfulness, feelings of connectedness to others and to society, beliefs in their control over their life, and a positive sense of their identity.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- To advance students' knowledge and understanding of the key constructs and frameworks associated with positive youth development
- To critically evaluate the theories and evidence associated with the key processes and outcomes involved in positive youth development approaches
- To develop an understanding of the ways in which educators can contribute to positive youth development and promote positive pathways of growth and success

ASSIGNMENTS:

Students will be required to prepare a brief (single page) summary of the weekly readings (together worth 20% of the final grade). Students will also undertake one presentation each and lead a group discussion a on topic that is related to the course readings (worth 20% of the final grade). Students will also be required to submit one major paper (20-25 pages, double-spaced pages) on a topic relevant to the course and agreed in consultation with the course instructor (40% of the final grade), and to give a brief presentation based on their ideas for the major paper to the class (20% of the final grade). The major paper will be due on the last day of classes.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Noam, Gil, G., Lerner, Richard, M., Taylor, Carl, S., and von Eye, Alexander (Eds.) (2002). *Pathways to Positive Development Among Diverse Youth*. (Issue 95 in New Directions for Youth Development). Wiley.

Villarruel, Francisco, A., Perkins, Daniel, F., Borden, Lynne M., and Keith, Joanne G. (Eds.) (2003). *Community Youth Development: Programs, Policies, and Practices*. Sage Publications.