

# SLS3226 – The Art of “Adulthood” in the Liberal Arts and Sciences

Spring 2023 – Wednesdays, Period 7: 1:55-2:45 in Matherly 0015

| Instructor | Email  | Office Location & Hours   |
|------------|--|---|
| Ryan Braun | <a href="mailto:ryanbraun88@ufl.edu">ryanbraun88@ufl.edu</a> | Tuesdays, 2-4pm, Farrior 1025 OR<br><a href="https://ufl.zoom.us/j/3903577877">https://ufl.zoom.us/j/3903577877</a> |

## 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
- Distinguish between various representations of markers of adulthood in media and society
- Utilize effective strategies for time management, career development, and financial responsibility
- Describe 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 – 50%
- Financial Plan – 30%
- Informational Interview Report – 15%

- Participation – 5%

## Media Options for Autobiography Chapters

- Written paper, 3 double-spaced pages
  - Clear and effective writing. Does not have to be “academic-level” formal.
  - Appropriate citations
- PowerPoint Presentation, 6-8 Slides
  - **Use the medium.** Good slides combine concise text with evocative images to convey the point.
  - Appropriate citations
- Voice or Video Recording, 5-7 Minutes
  - **Use the medium.** Speak clearly and with dynamism.
  - To cite, simply verbally reference the works you are using to support our points.
- Comic Strip, 8-10 Panels
  - **Use the medium.** Be creative. Tell a story.
  - If you are not able to integrate citations into the strip, simply note in the text-box of the assignment submission the ways in which the texts informed your work.

You may choose the same medium no more than twice

## 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 11: 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
- Read “The Real Reason Young Adults Seem Slow to ‘Grow Up’” by Hill & Redding

## **January 18: Defining Adulthood**

- Discuss Beck and Hill & Redding readings
- Social Construction of Adulthood
- Signifiers and Markers

### Assignment:

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

## **January 25: History of Adulthood**

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

### Assignment:

- Read “The Efficiency Trap” By Oliver Burkeman

## **Part 2: “Adult” as a Verb**

## **February 1: Time Management and Productivity**

- **DUE:** Autobiography, Chapter 1
- Discuss Allen Reading
- Energy, organization, and time management

### Assignment:

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

## **February 8: Priorities, Balance, and Focus**

- Discuss Hansen Reading
- Worker archetypes
- Productivity strategies

### Assignment:

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

## **February 15: 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 22: Career, Part 1**

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

**March 1: Career, Part 2**

- Negotiation practice
- The nuts and bolts of a paycheck

Assignment:

- Read “Taking Stock of Your Financial Life” by Beth Koblner
- Keep a “spending journal” this week

**March 8: Money, Part 1**

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

Assignment:

- Keep a spending journal during Spring Break
- Financial Plan assignment
- No reading—work on Financial Plan

**March 15: No class! Enjoy Spring Break!**

## March 22: Money, Part 2

- Investments
- Loans
- Retirement stuff

### Assignment:

- No reading—work on Financial Plan

## March 29: Money, Part 3

- Small group discussions
- Share resources and approaches
- Preparation for Financial Plan submission

### Assignment:

- Read “Meno” by Plato

## Part 4: “Adult” as a Responsibility

## April 5: The Hero’s Journey

- **DUE:** Financial Plan
- The Narrative Arc of Adulthood
- Knowledge, True Opinion, and Virtue

### Assignment:

- Take “Political Compass” Test

## April 12: Civic Participation

- Discuss the cultivation of worldview

Reading: “This is Water” by David Foster Wallace

## April 19: Mentorship/Menteeship, Adulthood in daily life

- **DUE:** Informational Interview
- Wrap-up—This is Water
- Complete Autobiography Due by **Wednesday, April 27, by 11:59pm**