1. Course Designation and Identifier

1.1 Adler Graduate School
   1.2 Course #505 - Online
   1.3 Developmental Psychology
   1.4 Three (3) credits

2. Course Description

This course is an examination of selected theories of human growth and development over the life span and in multicultural contexts, with attention to the research methods which support the theories and with additional focus on developmental psychopathology and therapeutic applications of developmental psychology. Topics of investigation include theories of individual and family development, normative transitions, and developmental crises, selected issues in neurobiological areas of development, developmental issues in disability and exceptional abilities, psychopathology, and the situational and environmental factors that affect human development. Addictions and addictive behaviors are addressed as related to the field of developmental psychology. Ethical and legal considerations are considered in context of research and practice of developmental psychology.

3. Texts, Materials and Resources

3.1 Required Texts


Optional Text for additional reading but not required for this class:


3.2 Additional materials in student handouts or articles posted in Moodle.

3.3 Selected video and audio recordings will be presented in class.

4. Competencies and Learning Outcomes

- Where most theories have been based on understanding male development, we will include female development in our explorations.
• Where we had thought we understood male development, we will look at the modifying influence of today’s changing roles.

• Where the subjects of study have been middle and upper class members of a rights-based society, we will seek to understand development in various cultures.

• Where emphasis has been on the very young, we will honor and study development throughout one’s lifetime.

• Where theory has evolved out of the assumption that mothers are the primary caregivers, we will acknowledge the influence of today’s changing familial roles.

• Where morality has been understood to belong outside the sphere of secular therapists, we will examine the changing concepts of moral development.

• Where theories have been developed to understand an individual person, we will strive to understand developmental issues in multigenerational families.

• In sum, we will be continuously examining various cultural and familial factors brought to bear on a people’s lives, integrating the majority of classic developmental theories while focusing on appropriate applications of those theories.

• We will examine relationships between Adlerian theory and various phenomena of human growth and development.

• Where you have been accustomed to receiving information and training, you will be an essential part of the educational process, challenged to question the implications of the old and incorporate the new.

• Underlying the coursework will be the belief that we can make a difference for those we serve with understanding, updating, and application of human development theories.

As a result of learning from and contributing to this course, you will:

4.1 Learn more about theories of individual and family development and transitions across the lifespan and be able to evaluate the evidence for any developmental theory before applying it in the practice of therapy, child-rearing, education, or policy decisions (competences met 3a, 3b);

4.2 Be alert to the influence of the variety of cultural influences present in our workplaces, family environments, practices, and neighborhoods, including race, ethnicity, gender, language, age, and other cultural variables, and their unique impact on developmental processes; understand the effect of atypical growth and development, ability levels, and factors of resiliency on individual learning and development across the lifespan (competency met 3c);

4.3 Be ready to recognize cultural changes as they occur, influencing our understanding of developmental processes (competency met 2c);

4.4 Understand the impact of child-rearing methods on the culture at large (competency met 3c);

4.5 Be aware of unique developmental processes in multigenerational families, care giving families, blended families, families with foster and adopted children, and other families that may have not had enough attention of traditional developmental research (competencies met 3a, 3c);

4.6 Be able to apply Adlerian theories to various phenomena of human growth and development, including core concepts of Teleology: all behavior is purposive, all behavior is goal-oriented, self-determination, felt minus to felt plus, fictive/mistaken goals (competences met 3a, 10b, 10c);
4.7 Understand the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels, including:

- Theories of individual development and transitions across the life-span, including current understanding about neurobiological development; theories and models of individual, cultural, couple, family, and community resilience; theories of learning and personality development.
- The impact of crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events on people; differences between pathological and developmentally appropriate reactions during crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events; developmental crises, and situational and environmental factors that affect both normal and abnormal behavior.
- A general framework for understanding exceptional abilities and strategies for differentiated interventions.
- Theories of learning and personality development.
- Theories and etiology of addictions and addictive behaviors.
- Strategies for facilitating optimal development over the life-span.
- Ethical and legal considerations. (competencies met 3a, b, c, e)

4.8 Be alert to new discoveries pertinent to the relative influence of nature and nurture; identify theories about facilitating optimum development and wellness over the lifespan; be able to identify therapeutic implications of theories of development, normative and non-normative developmental processes, and developmental psychopathology (competency met 3d);

4.9 Be better able to evaluate the evidence for any developmental theory before applying it in the practice of therapy, child-rearing, education, or policy decisions (competency met 8e);

4.10 Be able to use research to improve counseling effectiveness (competencies met 8a);

4.11 Integrate technological strategies within the counseling and consultation process

4.12 Be open to new ways of thinking and acting.

Definition of Dialectic: The art or practice of arriving at the truth by the exchange of logical arguments
To this I would add: “The truth” necessarily involves flexibility in the study of developmental theories.

5. AGS Online Course Overview

5.1 AGS on-line courses have the same total duration as residential courses – 7 weeks (5 weeks of coursework plus two weeks for completing final assignments). You should expect to spend up to 135 hours including 45 hours for SPT. Your instructor will be actively available for all class activities and individual consultations for the duration of the coursework and as needed until final grades are submitted.

5.2 Your course instructor will respond to your questions or comments within 48 hours (barring unforeseen circumstances). You will be expected to observe the same response time-- replying within 48 hours. During the class, your instructor may post specific office hours on your class webpage.

5.3 Please stay current in the class. Generally, you will be expected to complete reading assignments, submit at least two substantive postings per week (in response to the questions and/or tasks by your instructor), submit two peer response postings per unit, and – in some cases - engage in experiential activities, per syllabus. These expectations are very general, as you will find unique teaching style and specific expectations presented in each on-line class.

5.4 Although you will likely find that you have a lot of experience in the discussed topics, please remember that the most convincing position is the one supported by the most current and relevant research. You will find these sources in peer-reviewed journals. Use APA style and format requirements in referencing sources.
6. Course Outline

(In response to specific needs, minor changes may be made as this course progresses.)

All suggested readings may change. There will be additional readings and exercises added to the class in Moodle.

There will be two unit postings due each week and you are required to respond to at least two peer responses for each unit. Time deadlines will be strictly enforced and detailed in Moodle.

Week One: Unit 1: Introduction

First online posting - Introductions: yourself, your professional aspirations, and your personal goals for this course
Administration (grades, assignments, attendance, miscellaneous issues)
Review of this course outline
Chapter 1 of Burman: Origins

Unit 2: Prenatal, Infancy, and Ethical issues
Ethics and methods in developmental research
(Articles included for reading in Moodle)
Discussion from reading: ethics in developmental research

Week Two: Unit 3: Early Theorists and Childhood

Chapter 1 – Crain: Locke’s Environmentalism
Rousseau’s Romantic Naturalism
Chapter 3 – Crain: Ethological (Ethology: the study of the fundamental character or spirit of a culture; the underlying sentiment that informs the beliefs, customs, or practices of a group or society; dominant assumptions of a people or period) Theories (pages 35-46)
Chapter 4 – Crain: Montessori
Chapter 6 – Crain: Piaget’s Cognitive Developmental Theory

Watch Piaget videos
Discussion based on these chapters and videos.

Unit 4: Learning Theory and Language Development
Chapter 8 – Crain: Learning Theory
Chapter 17 – Crain: Chomsky
Chapter 12 in Burman: Piaget, Vygotsky and developmental psychology.

Discussion based on readings
Experiential assignment

Week Three: Unit 5: Moral development

Chapter 7 – Crain: Kohlberg and Gilligan on Moral Development
Chapter 14 of Burman: Morality and the goals of development
Moral development discussion from readings

Unit 6: Attachment and Adolescence
Chapter 9 – Crain: Bandura’s Social Learning theory
Chapter 3 – Crain: Chapter 3 - Bowlby and Ainsworth on Human Attachment (pages 46-70)
Chapter 7 in Burman: Bonds of Love: dilemmas of attachment

Read Time magazine’s article “What Makes Teens Tick?”
Discussion based on readings
Experiential assignment

Week Four: Units 7 & 8: Adulthood, Erikson and Jung
Erik Erikson, The Life Cycle Completed
Chapter 16- Jung’s Theory of Adulthood
Watch Stroke of Insight video

Week Five: Unit 9: Humanistic, Maslow, and Fathers
Special Project Time

Chapter 18 – Crain: Humanistic Psychology
Chapter 18 – Crain: Maslow’s Theory on Self-Actualization
Chapter 8 – Burman: Involving fathers

Special Projects Due – see guidelines below
Paper to be submitted in a two week frame after final discussion is completed.

7. Assessment/Evaluation Process

- Active participation in online discussions/exercises/demonstrations is part of your grade; please plan on creating your best grade. The instructor doesn’t “give grades.” You create them.
- 54/100 points are used for participation (36 points total for regular postings and 18 for peer feedback postings).
- Exercises that will be detailed as the class begins will count for 6 points. These exercises will be provided in the Moodle course room.
- There will be an SPT project that will include the writing of a final paper on a research topic of your choice. This paper will be worth 40 points.

(Detailed descriptions of these assignments are available on Moodle)

7.1 Assignment Overview

There will be original postings in each unit, 3 experiential assignments, and a SPT final paper.

7.2 Grading

A  90-100 points
B  80-89 points
C  70-79 points
R  Retake- Needs more time or instruction to master the requirements of the class
NC  Quality of work or participation falls below minimum expectations, including:
    • Not attending class.
    • Not properly notifying registrar of a withdrawal
    • Missing class periods in excess of the number allowed by AGS’s course attendance policy (see section 9 below)
    • Not resolving a grade of incomplete within 45 days after the last class meeting (not the assignment due date) and an agreed upon extension has not been arranged by the student
and instructor. The Incomplete turns to No Credit (NC) and the course must be repeated at full price.

7.3 Original Forum Posting Submissions
Original posts are graded on a scale of 0-4 points. Responses posted after the deadline will have two points deducted for every late post. You can earn a maximum of 36 points in this required activity.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pts.</th>
<th>Interp.</th>
<th>Grading Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Comments a) are accurate and relevant; b) demonstrate original thinking; c) use appropriate scholarly support; d) are well written, with no significant grammar and punctuation errors and no violation of “netiquette”. Four point comments contribute substantially to the course discussions and stimulate additional thought and further discussions about the topic discussed in the particular unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
<td>Comments lack at least one of the above qualities, but are above average overall, with regard to their content, and make a good contribution to our understanding of the issue being discussed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Comments lack two or three of the required qualities. Comments which are based upon personal opinion but not supported by scholarly research or personal experience and/or comments violating important “netiquette” rules often fall within this category.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Comments present little or no new information, lack three or more of the above qualities. However, one point comments may provide important social presence and contribute to a collegial atmosphere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
<td>The comment lacks all four qualities or in violation of AGS academic integrity policy</td>
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7.4 Peer Responses

Peer responses can earn 1.0 point per each peer response (with the total of 2 points per unit, and a maximum of 18 points per course). Peer responses are graded on accuracy, relevance, presence of scholarly support, and delivery (including compliance with major grammar and punctuation rules and netiquette). Peer responses posted after the deadline will be not be graded.

In these responses, you will a) bring another aspect to the discussion, add a new insight to already offered ideas; b) find additional scholarly support for your classmates’ position and demonstrate that you have done some good additional reading on the issue; c) reply to a group of your classmates by comparing or contrasting their stated positions, or probing, offering a counter-thought; or d) integrate your classmates’ observations into your original position (whether supportive or not).

In meeting at least one of the above (a-d) requirements, a good peer response will bring the discussion to an advanced level and will parallel what you might observe in a live scholarly debate. While offering a good challenge in your peer responses, please don’t forget that validation and respect are two integral rules in any scholarly conversation.
7.5 SPT description, timeline, and assessment

The SPT is a final paper and those guidelines and expectations will be provided in the courseroom.

7.6 Final course assignment, timeline, and assessment

Your final paper will be a result of the research that you complete with a topic of your choice. It should be at least 10 pages in content in APA format. It is due two weeks after completion of the class. The final paper is discussed in the Moodle coursepage. It is due two weeks after the last week of class.

7.7 Other assignments

There will be experiential assignments and activities added to some of the units. The specific details will be found in Moodle.

7.8 Summary of points

Final grades will be available no later than two weeks after the due date for the final paper. Upon submission of a grade, course papers will be returned to a student’s mail number in the lateral file in the library or via electronic means. Students will have no more than six months to pick up paperwork from the library file. Papers left after six months will be shredded.

8. On-Line Discussions or Activities

On-line classes provide an opportunity for open and insightful dialogue. As in any dialogue, these discussions demonstrate many facets of diversity, including diversity of values, opinions, and experiences. We view these differences as welcomed and needed attributes of a scholarly discussion. Acknowledgement of and respect for these differences is a sign of mature scholarly debate.

Following are guidelines governing on-line discussions:

8.1 Faculty members monitor discussions and intervene when requested or deemed necessary.

8.2 NEVER post to the courseroom content:
   o That is known to be illegal,
   o That is potentially harassing, threatening, or embarrassing,
   o That might be offensive and might be received as disrespectful in any way.
   o That is vulgar or sexually explicit

8.3 The tone of the exchange is one of respect for individual differences. If you disagree with an opinion expressed by a classmate or instructor, respond in a scholarly manner, arguing about the subject of discussion vs. the person who posted it.

8.4 Students are encouraged to not overuse exclamation marks!!!!!, CAPITAL LETTERS, or other marks of emotional reaction that may be received as yelling, etc.

8.5 On-line communication presents a significant level of ambiguity, as verbal content of communication is not well supported by its non-verbal (including contextual) components. If a student feels threatened or offended by a statement made by another student during on-line portion of a class, please address the issue immediately with the other student(s) to clarify their position and your reaction. If this does not work, contact your class instructor so actions can be taken if necessary.
8.6 During on-line discussion, follow the same rules concerning protection of confidential information as you would follow in face-to-face discussion. Confidential client information is not appropriate in forum postings. Further, mental health related issues pertaining to you or your family members must be used with caution, if at all.

8.7 Be aware that some agency-specific information, such as descriptions of programs that have been developed or specialized treatment approaches, may potentially be a subject of copyright law. Although it is not always possible to know whether information is protected, the minimum expectation is to always identify and credit the source of information.

8.8 If the expectations in professional communication or other expectations specific to the unique nature of online scholarly activities are not met, the concerning issue will be addressed with involvement of the Program Director (or Academic VP, if needed or determined by the PD as requiring higher level of intervention). A student or a faculty member may raise the issue.

8.9 Any off-list communication between student and faculty will be conducted through Moodle, or redirected to Moodle if a student starts that communication via conventional private e-mailing.

9. **Special Project Time (SPT) – 40/100 points**

Special Project Time (SPT) allows students the opportunity to integrate course materials. SPT is meant to be a self-contained experience, requiring 30 hours to complete.

SPT experiences may be constructed in such a way that they pertain to students’ unique degree plans. For example, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist students, Licensed Professional Counselor students, and Licensed School Counselor students may construct a SPT experience unique to their chosen disciplines. This is done in consultation with the course instructor.

SPT specifics for this course are posted on Moodle. As for this class, the SPT involves a research paper on a topic of your choice related to the field of developmental psychology which will be due two weeks after the end of class.

Ideally, the topic you choose will be consistent with your chosen discipline or special interest, and new to you. The project includes research that is explained in a final paper.

Whatever you choose to research, you will provide that information and any interpretation or hypothesis that you were able to conclude in the paper in typical research paper format with the following areas:

- Introduction
- Review of literature
- Conclusions from your review
- How related to Adler ideas (minimum of one paragraph)
- Personal reflections such as how you will use this in your career or personal life (minimum of one paragraph)
- Conclusions
- References

**Final paper (minimum of 10 pages)**
Final paper is worth 40 points as noted in the syllabus. 30 points dependent on content of paper and how organized
10 points based on APA format, grammar and such

Please note that you will be expected to cite research-based and/or established literature when using the Internet or other sources for this project. Do not use Wikipedia, as it is created by its readers, some of whom have good information, and some who don't.

**Suggested Special Project Topics**

*Please note that you will be expected to cite research-based and/or established literature when using the Internet or other sources for this project. Just Google “Is My Child Gay?” for an illustration of the wide range of possibilities, legitimate and otherwise.*

Developmental challenges in children from “split custody”, foster, or adoptive households

Developmental challenges in children whose parents are disabled or chronically ill

Children of chemically dependent parents (adult children or childhood experiences)

Development of bi-lingual children (see Anna Wierzbicka’s *Semantics, Culture, and Cognition*, 1992)

Child care and multicultural populations (see Janet Gonzalez-Mena’s *Multicultural Issues in Child Care*, 2001 and Ellen Bialystok’s *Bilingualism in Development*, 2001)

Giftedness and developmental challenges (one foot in adulthood and one in childhood) for boys and for girls

Generation of baby-boomers as a developmental phenomenon: past, present, and future

Parenting styles and personality development for boys and for girls

Aging and sexuality (the influence of Viagra and the high divorce rate in later life)

Common parental concerns about sexual identity development and sexual behavior in early childhood for boys and for girls

Developmental disabilities and typical developmental tasks: challenges and solutions (may focus on ADHD, autism, Asperger’s Syndrome, Down Syndrome, or others)

Adlerian theory as a guide for parents and teachers of children with developmental disabilities and cognitive delays

Aggressive behavior in males and females over the lifespan: nature or nurture? (*See Jane Hit* by James Garbarino is a resource for this topic.)

Language development and academic success in children of first generation non-English speaking immigrant families

Dealing with chronic illnesses over the lifespan: patterns of adjustment, coping, and psychopathology (focus can be on mental illness, such as personality disorder; or physical illness, such as cerebral palsy)

Overindulgence and its affect on development (*How Much is Enough?* by Jean Illsley Clarke, et al, is a good resource for this topic.)

Developmental tasks of care giving with the elderly: challenges, solutions, and resources
Adoption as a developmental task (may focus on the child, mother or father)

Cognitive changes in adulthood (brain injury or dementia)

Family influences on development: Adlerian understanding

Challenges in completing developmental tasks in families with deployed, incarcerated, or deported parents (may focus on children and/or adults)

Midlife: a developmental perspective (60 is the new 40)

Development of racial and ethnic identity in inner city and suburban public schools: implications for school counselors

Chinese, Native American, Muslim, Indian, Christian, agnostic, gay, lesbian, transgender, single parent, etc., parenting and the effect on boys and/or girls

Other topics of interest

10. Writing Guidelines including APA Format

10.1 All written assignments in courses at the Adler Graduate School, including those submitted in on-line courses, must be in APA format unless specifically noted by the course instructor (Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition), 2010, American Psychological Association. ISBN 1-4338-0561-8).

10.2 Strict APA publication rules in Online Peer Discussions might prove difficult, if not impossible, to maintain. Following the “letter” of the Manual (i.e., not using “I”, or passive voice, keeping proper margins, or complying with headings requirements) may be either difficult or counterproductive in forums such as peer discussions. However, it is still important to adhere to the “spirit” of the APA Manual (i.e., grammar, orderly presentation of ideas, reducing bias in language, and presenting scholarly statements and arguments).

10.3 Prior to submitting a response, please proofread carefully. Grammar and spelling errors may make your response difficult for other students to appreciate.

10.4 Please keep in mind that, while the internet offers a lot of exciting and up-to-date information, not all internet sources are considered scholarly. For example, Wikipedia is not an academically peer-reviewed source. Rather, it is an “anybody-reviewed” source and, therefore, can’t be used in presenting your argument in AGS classes-related tasks.

11. Attendance and Participation Policy

11.1 At the beginning of each course, please complete or update your student profile on Moodle and get familiar with your classmates and the instructor by visiting their profile information.

11.2 You are expected to attend all the course learning activities. In the AGS asynchronous on-line courses, you attend the class by complying with posting and other submission deadlines.

11.3 In most of the courses, you will have two deadlines per week during the five weeks of coursework. For each week, and in conjunction with on-line instruction and other learning activities, your course instructor will announce two discussion questions or topics corresponding with two of the units in the course.
The questions will appear in Moodle each Monday morning at least two weeks in advance for the five weeks or coursework. You will have until Tuesday night (11:59 PM CST) for the first question and Friday night (11:59 PM CST) for the second question to submit your original response.

12.4 Your original response will be at least 350 words, with at least one scholarly reference. Through discussions supported by in-text citations and other references, your response will reflect critical thought related to the topic and specific assignments for that unit.

12.5 You will then have until Wednesday night (11:59 PM CST) and Saturday night (11:59 PM CST) to respond to at least two of your classmates’ postings for each question (four responses per week). You will see occasional variations from that common practice, depending on specific needs in your classes. Your course instructor will provide you with more specific information.

12.6 You can post your peer responses at any time between Monday and Wednesday (for discussion topic one) and between Friday and Saturday night (for discussion topic two), but not before you post your original response. Your course instructor will acknowledge your participation and will grade the quality of it by responding to your original posting, whether individually or in a summary format.

12.7 It is the AGS attendance policy that students attend at least 80% of the class sessions in order to be eligible for a letter grade. Online attendance is posting on time. Not complying with posting deadlines or not posting at all will be counted as a missed class.

12. Participation Disclaimer

Active participation in class discussions/exercises/demonstrations is encouraged.

As with other AGS courses, in this course, individual students must determine for themselves the level of disclosure/intimacy that is appropriate for them.

Faculty members and students do not disclose confidential, personally identifiable information concerning their clients, students, research participants, organizational clients, or other recipients of their services.

Whenever confidential information/material is used in any AGS course, students and faculty members are expected to observe AGS policy concerning the handling of confidential information/material. Full descriptions of these policies are readily available on the Moodle main page.

13. Academic Integrity Policy

Honesty and trust among students and between students and faculty are essential for a strong, functioning academic community. Consequently, students are expected to do their own work on all academic assignments, tests, projects, and research/term papers. Academic dishonesty, whether cheating, plagiarism, or some other form of dishonest conduct may result in failure for the work involved. Academic dishonesty could also result in failure for the course and, in the event of a second incident of academic dishonesty, suspension from the Adler Graduate School. Here are examples of academic dishonesty:

- Cheating - Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit.

- Fabrication - Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
- Facilitating academic dishonesty - Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of academic integrity.

- Plagiarism - The deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas or words or statements of another person as one's own without acknowledgment.

14. **Nondiscrimination Clause**

The Adler Graduate School is an equal opportunity educator and employer. The Adler Graduate School does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, or physical disability in the employment of faculty or staff, the admission or treatment of students, or in the operation of its educational programs and activities. The institution is committed to providing equal education and employment opportunities in accordance with all applicable State and federal laws.

15. **Learning Accommodations (including students with disabilities)**

If a student in this course has a documented learning disability, tell the instructor during the first week of class. The instructor needs to know on the front end so that he or she can work with you. The Adler Graduate School is committed to helping all students be successful, as best as can be reasonably accommodated. Documenting a learning disability occurs at the student’s expense. When documented appropriately, the Adler Graduate School makes all reasonable accommodations.

16. **Instructor Contact Information**

Louise Ferry, PhD, LP, LMFT  
Cell: 320-766-3554  
Office: 320-843-3454  
Home: 320-843-2477  
Email: louise.ferry@alfredadler.edu
Writing requirements: check your SPT paper against these tips before you hand it in.

1. Make your subject and verb match! Do not hand in a paper that states: “The child (singular) has many choices in deciding their (plural) play activity.”

2. It’s fine to use either feminine or masculine pronoun, or to switch from paragraph to paragraph. If you start a paragraph with “he” and “him,” use it throughout the paragraph. If you want to be inclusive, use “she” and “her” throughout the next paragraph.

3. Keep the tense the same throughout the paper. Do not hand in a paper that goes from past to present to pluperfect tense. “Adler had hypothesized that children are subject to the influences of parents who will make a difference in their lives.” Past tense is the smoothest to read. It’s fine to switch tenses if you are talking about something current, but just not within the same sentence.

4. Use “their” (possessive) and “there” (place) correctly. If you have a question, use grammar check.

5. Use “its” (possessive) and “it’s” (contraction for “it is”) correctly.

6. Use commas to separate lists and phrases. Read your sentence out loud and if you pause, it may need a comma.

7. Re-read your sentences aloud to make sure they make sense. If the meaning starts to get fuzzy, try making your sentence into two sentences.

8. Avoid repeating the same word in a sentence. Use a variety of synonyms so that the reader doesn’t get hung up on the repetition.

9. Erik Erikson has no ‘c’.

10. Check your use of “affect” and “effect.”

11. Avoid the use of “different” if you mean “various.” If something is different, it must be compared to something else. If you are referring to “the various theories put forth by Crain”, “various” is the word you want.

12. Be aware of the difference between “compliment” and “complement.”

13. Avoid starting sentences or phrases with “there are.” Another way of phrasing the sentence will make it flow more smoothly and help you to tighten it up.

14. Watch your preposition use. Don’t use “to” if you mean “of” or “over” if you mean “from.” This is where reading your work out loud can really help.

15. Avoid the use of “do” as a verb. You can find a better word.

16. Take a good final look at your paper to see if spell-check or grammar check is indicating that something needs attention.

17. Consider taking Adler’s writing course if you need help. Not knowing how to write at the graduate level is not a judgment on you. Just take advantage of Adler’s wonderful class to bring your skills up, so your papers reflect graduate level work.
All assignments and exercises are subject to change as the course begins and progresses.