Syllabus: Fall 2020
UNCP5501.01 Authenticity and Human Development
Prof. Elizabeth Bracher and Prof. John Dacey

Mondays 4:30 -6:50 pm
Stokes Hall S117

Contact Information
Dacey: By phone 339-223-2337 or 781-861-1072 (7- 8pm for really important calls only)
  • Zoom Office hours APPOINTMENT ONLY
Bracher: By phone: 617-552-1749 (BC office); 617-775-1346 (emergencies only)
  • Zoom Office hours: Tuesdays 3-5 pm https://bccte.zoom.us/j/92293497360
  • In-person Office hours: Tues. 9:30 am to 11:30 & Wed. 3-4:30 pm APPOINTMENT ONLY

Erik Erikson’s definition of an authentic person is twofold. You should:
  • Come to know who you are and who you are not, in great detail and accuracy.
  • Be willing to share this information with (almost) anyone it wants to know it. WYSIWYG

As you make progress toward these two states, you cannot help but become more authentic, because
consciously and unconsciously, you will be rewarded for doing so.

Why should anyone want to? Well for one thing, it's just easier. Misrepresenting some aspect of
yourself, either because you are mistaken or you feel you need to lie, costs synergy. Also, you'll need
to remember what you said the last time, if you're not telling the truth. Most importantly, people just
seem to know intuitively who is authentic. If you are, you will be seen as more likable, more
trustworthy, more deserving of help, and more skilled as a leader.

BUT . . .

From where does this true self come? Many famous psychologists disagree with Erickson. They feel
that the development of a person as a result of three factors: biology (mainly your genes), psychology
(mainly early experiences), and social pressure (all of the various contacts you have with society).
The idea that you invent yourself through the use of your free will is just plain wrong. You are what you are because you have to be. Scholars who support this point of view are called “determinists.”

If you disagree with their point of view, what is your explanation of the source of free will? We will begin the semester trying to reach some kind of rapprochement between these two apparently dichotomous beliefs. You will grapple with what authenticity means and how it might limit and open possibilities for change and mutuality. If you care about this dilemma, this is the course for you!

We will be studying 10 models of human development and considering how the development of authenticity is inherent in each of these models. As we examine what it means to be authentic, you will note the ways in which you believe you are showing your authentic self and at other times the ways in which you are hiding or compensating for your lack of authenticity. We believe the main culprits to being one’s authentic self are the eight kinds of anxiety syndromes that seem to be plaquing our society. Several of our classes will be devoted to an understanding of what these maladies are, how they develop, and a brief examination of how they may be allayed.

**Evaluation and Grading:**

- **Participation**: Each student is expected to be prepared to participate actively and thoughtfully in every class and online discussion board. Please refrain from coming to class if you are not feeling well and certainly not if you are in the process of being tested for or have recently been tested positive for COVID-19. This course is designed to be a hybrid and if you are sick, you may attend through Zoom. If you must miss a class (both in the classroom and on Zoom) because of illness, please let us know prior to that class so that we can arrange for you to have access to any recorded lectures, in-class materials, etc. While you will not be penalized for missing class due to health
concerns, you will be awarded for active, intentional, and insightful participation whether that be in the classroom, on Zoom, or on class discussion boards.

- **The Prospective Paper: Living an Authentic Life**
  - Due Oct. 19 = 30 points

- **The Retrospective Paper: “A Letter to Dad”**
  - Due Mon., Dec 7= 30 points

- **Final Presentation: My Credo**
  - Due during the final two classes= 40 points
  - You will give a 7-10 minute presentation of your credo to the class, explaining how it informs and guides your personal quest toward authenticity.

**Required Texts (available for purchase in the bookstore):**


**Supportive Texts and Selected Chapters Available on Canvas:**


Dacey, J. (2019). *Why don't you just relax? Solutions for the anxiety epidemic*


Levine, M. (2012). *Teach your children well: Why values and coping skills mean more than grades, trophies, or fat envelopes.* NY: Harper


**Schedule and Assignments:**

**Aug. 31**  
*Class topics for discussion*  
Introductions and course expectations  
Determinism v. Free Will  
Nature of Human Nature (Canvas)  
Watch TED Talk: *The Power of Vulnerability* by Brene Brown (IN CLASS)  
Watch TED Talk: *Do Schools Kill Creativity?* by Sir Ken Robertson (IN CLASS)  
Discuss course assignments: Prospective Paper, Retrospective Paper, and Personal Credo

**Assignments for next class:**  

**Sept. 7**  
Labor Day - NO CLASS

** Sept. 14**  
LISTENING TO YOUR LIFE  
*Class topics for discussion:*  
Questions regarding course papers  
Exercise: 10 Things in Common  
Freud and Mead (Canvas)  
Brown, B. (2012). *Daring Greatly* (xii - Chapter 2)  
Dinsmore, S. Ted Talk: What is the work you cannot NOT do?

**Assignments:**  
Erikson, Part 1 (through Stage Four – Canvas)  
Frost, R. *The Road Not Taken* (Canvas)  
Orr, D. *The Most Misread Poem in America* (Canvas)  
Sept. 21  Authenticity Theory

*Class topics for discussion:*
Meditation: Finding your Guiding Spirit
Erikson, Part 1 (through Stage Four)
Frost, R. *The Road Not Taken* (Canvas)

*Assignments:*
Erikson Part 2 (Stage 5 through Stage 8: Canvas)

Sept. 28  Parenting Matters

*Class topics for discussion:*
Exercise: Tell Your Story Redux
Erikson Part 2 (Stage 5 through Stage 8: Canvas)

*Assignments:*
Piaget (Canvas)
Turkle, S. (2012). *Connected, but alone?* TED Talk
Burge, K. (2014). *Overblown Facebook Persona Can Leave Friends Deflated* (Canvas)
Prospective Paper: Authenticity Action Plan (Due Mon., Oct., 21)

Oct. 5  Your Social Milieu

*Class topics for discussion:*
Exercise: Empathy Cards
Piaget (Canvas)
The Goldilocks effect

**Assignments:**  
Skinner (Canvas)  
Headlee,C. (2017). *We need to talk. * (Chapters 1&2: Canvas)

**Oct. 13 Fall Break- Monday Classes moved to Tuesday Oct. 13**

**Class topics for discussion:**  
Skinner (Canvas)  
Headlee, C. (2017). *We Need to Talk. * (Chapters 1&2: Canvas)  
Exercise: Haiku poem

**Assignments:**  
Bandura lecture (Canvas)  
Exercise: The Daily Examen

**Oct. 19 Importance of Reflection and Discernment**

**Class Topics Discussion**  
Bandura lecture (Canvas)  
Exercise: The Daily Examen

**Due:**  
Prospective Paper: Authenticity Action Plan
Assignments:
Frankl (Canvas)

Oct. 26  Our Search for Meaning

Class Topics Discussion
Frankl (Canvas)

Assignments:
Maslow (Canvas)

Nov. 2  Class topics for discussion:
Maslow (Canvas)
Exercise: "The Neutron Bomb"

Assignments:
Jung (Canvas)

Nov. 9  Anxiety

Class topics for discussion:
Jung (Canvas)
Foster Wallace, D. *This is Water* (watch in class)
Exercise: Two Sides of a Coin

Assignments:
Parks, S. (2000). *Big Question, Worthy Dreams* (Canvas)
Albom, M. (1997). *Tuesdays with Morrie*
Nov. 16  
**Conversation Partners**

*Class topics for discussion:*

Parks, S. (2000). *Big Question, Worthy Dreams* (Canvas)

Albom, M. (1997). *Tuesdays with Morrie*

Exercise: A Visit to the Doctor

**Assignments:**

Fromm (Canvas)


Nov. 23  
**Class topics for discussion:**

Fromm (Canvas)


**Presentations of Projects**

10 minutes (sharp!) per person. Turn in a one-page description of how this project leads you to authenticity. Project grade= 20% presentation + 80% content of ideas

**Assignment:**


Prepare 2-3 questions for alumni panel

Nov. 30  
**Presentations of Projects (first hour of class)**

10 minutes (sharp!) per person. 6 students will present

Project grade= 20% presentation + 80% content of ideas

**Class topics for discussion: Second half of class**


Young Alumni Panel: The First Decade Out of College
Dec. 7  

**Presentations of Projects**

10 minutes (sharp!) per person. 8 students will present

Project grade= 20% presentation + 80% content of ideas

Exercise: The Daily Examen

**Academic Integrity** [https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/academics/sites/university-catalog/policies-procedures.html#academic_integrity_policies](https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/academics/sites/university-catalog/policies-procedures.html#academic_integrity_policies)