Course:
Psychology 2310  Lifespan Psychology (or Psychology 2300 General Psychology)

Abstract:
This course encourages students to apply psychological concepts to the real-world issue of unplanned pregnancy. Students are assigned into three-generational groups to complete course activities and conduct classroom presentations in order to create a classroom atmosphere that illustrates the generational effects of an unplanned pregnancy. To heighten awareness of the ways in which an unplanned pregnancy makes college completion difficult, students identify biological, psychological, and sociocultural effects as they impact the child, the young parents, and the grandparents. The final activity in this course encourages students to create a life-plan to assist them in achieving their educational and personal goals.

Academic Objectives:
After completing this lesson, students will be able to
1. Illustrate the biopsychosocial theory of human development
2. Examine teratogens
3. Describe prenatal development
4. Contrast internal from external locus of control
5. Explore familial influences on human development
6. Demonstrate styles of parenting

Pregnancy Planning/Prevention Objectives:
After completing this lesson, students will
1. Understand how unplanned pregnancy can affect college completion
2. Understand the importance of healthy relationships
3. Know what campus and community resources are available to pregnant and parenting college students and their partners
4. Be familiar with a variety of birth control options and where to get them in the community (e.g., www.bedsider.org)
5. Be exposed to various electronic information sources (e.g., www.TheNationalCampaign.org)

Preparation:
To prepare for these activities, instructors should do the following:
- Visit www.thenationalcampaign.org and view “Briefly: Unplanned Pregnancy and Community Colleges (2009)” under the Publications and Fact Sheets section. Also, read The Fog Zone report and download/print the appendix to view The Fog Zone survey questions and answers.
- Visit www.bedsider.org/methods and note which forms of contraception are described as “easy to use,” “party ready,” “most effective,” and watch the videoclip describing
emergency contraception. This site also has many other tools like signing up for contraception reminders.

- Visit www.gpslifeplan.org and click on each tab to view the life-planning tools for the areas of career, education, finance, and personal. Click on the “Personal” tab and explore the “Maintaining Personal Well-Being” section. Here, you will find useful tools under “Reproductive Health” and “Personal Relationships” categories.
- Faculty will also need to have available at least 3 Flip video cameras (www.theflip.com) or similar equipment to loan to students for Activity #7 and create a process by which students can reserve the flipcams ahead of time if used off campus. Practice using the equipment.

Review the following psychological concepts:

- Erik Erikson’s biopsychosocial framework
- Common teratogens and their effects on human development
- Locus of control (internal and external)
- John Holland’s theory of career choice
- Parenting styles
- Healthy vs. unhealthy relationship dynamics

The pilot course used a pre-course/post-course survey model to assess student learning of pregnancy-related objectives. Pre/post surveys could be constructed using many of The Fog Zone survey questions from www.thenationalcampaign.org.

**Opening/Introduction:**
On the first day of class, the instructor conducting this pilot course began by describing The Fog Zone research results. She explained that the results were shocking in that many college-aged students didn’t know how to prevent pregnancy, what forms of contraception exist, and some didn’t clearly know how a pregnancy occurs physiologically. She also talked about some of the challenges a student might experience should an unplanned pregnancy occur, specifically, that college completion would likely be more difficult.

After this introduction, the students were instructed to take an online pre-course survey (using the SurveyMonkey online survey tool) before our next class session. Students were given 10 points for turning in a print copy of their survey submission confirmation page and were asked to record their login information for use on the post-course survey at the end of the semester.

**Student Activity:**
Before beginning any course activities, the instructor assigned students into one of three generational learning groups (the child group, the young parents group, or the grandparents group). The students primarily remained in these groups for the rest of the semester, sitting and working together during most class sessions. Many course assignments began with individual work, but then progressed to discussion and group presentations. Therefore, students initially completed their own work, then shared their reactions with their group members, and finally, the group presented a unified classroom presentation, fielding questions from fellow students after the presentation.
Students completed activities in class and also outside of class. They used their textbook and websites to complete the individual portion of the assignment, and then used group discussion and classroom presentations to disseminate their results within the classroom. A service learning event was held at the end of the semester to showcase student materials and to educate the college community about the extensive effects of an unplanned pregnancy and the difficulties it could bring to a student trying to complete college.

Online students used a document submission tool in the online course to submit activities with more personal information (like contraception preferences), and the online group discussion board to share their individual work with the class. Each activity lasted about 30-40 minutes in the on-campus classroom setting.

The syllabus was not redesigned other than previously assigned personal journals were replaced with the pilot activities, which used scenarios and website materials to apply psychology to the issue of unplanned pregnancy.

**Service Learning Activity:**
The students in the course created, promoted, and presented a large-scale service learning college outreach event on-campus. This event showcased student work/knowledge and was designed to raise awareness in the college community about that numerous ways in which an unplanned pregnancy can affect a student’s ability to complete college. This event was presented in two parts.

First, the event began in the college auditorium where students performed skits, and aired a video production (which was created in Activity #7 earlier in the semester). This video also included two clips from Bedsider (www.bedsider.org/features/8). Following the video, students then held an interactive Question and Answer session, giving candy to audience attendees who could correctly answer survey questions from *The Fog Zone* report. Questions were presented using a PowerPoint slideshow, while questions were read at the front podium by students in the pilot course.

The second portion of the outreach event was a life-planning event where many students staffed tables to provide event attendees with information about life-planning resources in the areas of career, family and pregnancy planning, education, finance, and healthy relationships so attendees could create a personal lifeplan. One long table was dedicated to providing information about contraception, and pregnancy prevention; free condoms were available at this table.

Food and drinks were served to attendees and door prize raffle tickets were offered at each life-planning station to encourage attendee participation in the entire event.

The service learning event ended by having students give away door prizes. Door prizes were obtained by students (in the pilot course) who contacted community businesses for contributions.

Involvement in this event was assessed by having students maintain activity logs of their involvement, role(s), and personal reflections about the event. The instructor met with students
individually, after the event, to review student logs and assign extra credit points for the number of hours and quality of involvement of each student.

Teaching:
The purpose of this project was threefold: (1) to teach traditional psychological principles, (2) for students to apply psychological principles to the real world issue of unplanned pregnancy, and (3) for students to create a personal lifeplan, which includes a plan for pregnancy.

The vast majority of students involved in this pilot reacted very favorably to these activities, expressing to the instructor that they are much more committed to planning for pregnancy and using contraception consistently because they now believe they understand just how dramatically an unplanned pregnancy could affect their personal life goals. However, although many students in this pilot were in the traditional age range for college students (age 18-24), a few older students expressed concerns that the issue of unplanned pregnancy is not relevant in their lives. Instructors who use these materials are advised to begin the semester by encouraging older students to view these activities as tools and information that they can spread to their children, grandchildren, or the community at large, if the issue of pregnancy is not relative to their current life stage.

A lesson outline is attached that provides specific details for each week’s activity.

Reconnection to Opening/Lesson Objective:
Pregnancy-related objectives were assessed using the post-course survey, and full classroom discussions were held in the classroom using Activity #10 student feedback and reflections about the course activities and the service learning college outreach event.

Connection to the Real World:
Many students were the volunteer subjects for the videotaping exercise and were either, themselves, an unplanned pregnancy or had an unplanned pregnancy. The interviews that were videotaped all were real world, true stories that reflect current or past challenges that were the outcome/effects of an unplanned pregnancy. Many students shared stories of how an unplanned pregnancy has affected either themselves or someone they know.

In the reflection assignment (Activity 10), many students said they are much more aware and concerned about preventing an unplanned pregnancy than they were before taking this class. Many students were pleased to have learned more about types of contraception and where to obtain it. There were a few older students that stated that the topic of unplanned pregnancy did not connect with them, however, out of 168 students involved in this pilot, only 7 or 8 did not care for this topic as a means to applying psychology to a real world issue.

Materials about Unplanned Pregnancy:
- The Fog Zone (available from www.thenationalcampaign.org)
- Getting Started at Community Colleges (available from www.thenationalcampaign.org)
- www.thenationalcampaign.org
- www.bedsider.org and bedsider.org/methods
- www.Gpslifeplan.org
- “Fact or Fiction” video vignettes from www.bedsider.org/features/8
- A developmental psychology textbook to review the following psychological concepts: Erik Erikson’s biopsychosocial framework, teratogens, locus of control, John Holland’s theory of career choice, parenting styles, healthy vs. unhealthy relationship dynamics

Assessment:
Unplanned pregnancy-related course objectives were assessed using a pre/post survey (using SurveyMonkey). Psychology-related objectives in this course were assessed using weekly activities, exams, classroom assessment techniques, and pop quizzes. Each pilot activity was assigned a value of 10 points, therefore, the total of 10 assignments represented approximately 23% of the student's total grade for this course.

Student Engagement:
Classroom Activities: There were varied reactions to the activities in this pilot course. Many students submitted reflections (at the end of the semester) that indicated that they learned a great deal about the effects of an unplanned pregnancy, about contraception, and that these activities made them much more aware of the many ways an unexpected pregnancy could impact their career and educational goals. Some of the older students, however, indicated that this topic was not relevant to their lives. They seemed not to mind having a few of these activities, however, felt there were too many assignments focused on pregnancy-related issues, even though those assignments were also linked to the psychology objectives for the course. One student expressed how hard it was for her to face some of the issues she had kept unconscious about her own unplanned pregnancy. She said these activities resurfaced emotions she had buried and that she felt as if she were reliving some of those issues throughout the semester.

Service Learning Event: Many students commented in their reflections that they really loved participating in the large-scale college outreach event. Many students used the word “pride” when referring to their reactions to their participation in the service learning event. Many students commented that they enjoyed attending the event and felt a closer connection to their fellow classmates because of this unified class project.

Recommendations: I would recommend that future instructors pick and choose topics and activities that seem to fit the demographics of their student population and reduce the total number of activities to 3 or 4, rather than the complete number of 10. It would be interesting to evaluate student reflections from a semester where students only complete 3-4 activities rather than 10.

General Comments/Advice:
Instructors may elect to pick and choose from the complete listing of activities and then gather student feedback about the level of assignments that will be most beneficial in pregnancy-related outcomes, but with the least amount of assignments so this lesson doesn’t impede learning core psychological outcomes. The instructor in the pilot course noted that the numerous pregnancy-related activities left less classroom time to cover the more traditional developmental psychology course materials. In the future, the pilot instructor plans to discontinue the required service learning event, at least at the extensive level to which it was run for the pilot. Maybe an optional
service learning component could be offered to students rather than a whole class event, which was difficult to coordinate and plan for with many various student schedule conflicts.

The instructor may find it helpful to start the course out by making a statement that pregnancy prevention might not directly affect all students in the class, but indirectly as a family member, a parent, a friend, a professional, or even a community member, the effects of unplanned pregnancy impact us all.

It was also noted that during the pilot, the three-generational group discussions were very engaging, but this level of engagement and familiarity with fellow group members made it more challenging to then have students return to lecture and post-discussion activities. There seemed to be more side discussions than in previous class sessions where groups were not in semester-long cohort groups. Students did seem to love this level of connection with fellow group members, so this could be a beneficial way to encourage college student retention in addition to the retention gained from pregnancy prevention awareness in the course activities.

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Lesson Outline

Tawnda Bickford, MA, LP
PSYC2310 Lifespan Psychology  (or PSYC 2300 General Psychology)
Make It Personal:  College Completion

Lesson Objective: To increase awareness about the ways in which an unplanned pregnancy can impact college completion.

Semester Activities: (Directions for each activity are attached):
- Activity #1: The Biopsychosocial framework.
- Activity #2: Three Generational Group Discussions/Poster Creation.
- Activity #3: Child, Parent, and Grandparent Group Poster presentations.
- Activity #4: Teratogens, Contraception, & The Fog Zone Survey.
- Activity #5: Group discussion/prepare group presentations.
- Activity #6: Group presentations.
- Activity #7: 3-Generational Interviews, Videotaped.
- Activity #8: Locus of Control (Take-home assignment)
- Activity #9: Parenting Styles (Online Discussion Activity).
- Activity #10: Create a Personal Life-plan.
- Activity #11: Student Reflections about Semester’s Activities.

Class Session 1 –Activity #1 (30 minutes or Take-home activity)
- Activity #1: The Biopsychosocial framework. Read about Erik Erikson’s biopsychosocial framework in textbook and complete Activity #1 independently.
  Activity 1.1 is assigned to the Child group
  Activity 1.2 is assigned to the Parents group
  Activity 1.3 is assigned to the Grandparents group

Class Session #2 – Activity #2 (50 minutes)
- Activity #2: Three Generational Group Discussions/Poster Creation Form generational groups. Share/discuss individual responses from Activity #1, and create a group poster which illustrates the biopsychosocial effects of an unplanned pregnancy. Prepare for poster presentations next week.

Class Session #3 –Activity #3 (40 minutes)
- Activity #3: Child, Parent, and Grandparent Group Poster presentations. Group members present posters depicting the biopsychosocial effects of an unplanned pregnancy as it relates to their assigned generational perspective. Q and A. after each group presentation.
Class Session #4 – Activity #4 (5 minutes of class time to explain take-home assignment).

- Activity #4: Teratogens, Contraception, & The Fog Zone Survey. Individuals in each generational group receive a take-home, activity.
  Child Group is assigned Activity 4.1 (Teratogens)
  Young Parent Group is assigned Activity 4.2 (Contraception)
  Grandparents Group is assigned Activity 4.3 (The Fog Zone Survey)

Class Session #5 – Activity #5 (50 minutes).

- Activity #5: Group discussions/prepare group presentations
  Form generational groups and share/discuss individual responses from Activity 5.
  Create/Prepare group’s “Top 3” Presentations for assigned topics for next week.

Class Session #6 – Activity #6 (35-45 minutes).

- Activity #6: Group classroom presentations.
  Child group presents their “Top 3” Teratogens and Teratogen Effects
  Parents group presents their “Top 3” forms of Contraception
  Grandparents group presents their “Top 3” Fog Zone questions

Class Session #7 – Activity #7 (35 minutes of in-class time).

- Activity #7: 3-Generational Interviews, Videotaped
  In-Class Portion of Activity #7 (35 minutes):
  - Prepare for videotaped interviews by: reviewing the “Videotaping Tips handout”
  - Form generational groups and create a list of questions to ask during the interview.
  Out of Classroom Portion of Activity #7 (1 hour) (group communication via email)
  - Identify subjects which have been impacted by an unplanned pregnancy and also fit your generational perspective.
  - Schedule an appointment to videotape the interview.
  - Reserve a Flipcam for the scheduled interview appointment time.
  - Conduct videotaping of interviewee, using the questions that were created by your group.
  - Upload your video to Youtube.com and share URL with class next week.

Class Session #8 – Activity #8 (Take-home activity).

- Activity #8: Locus of Control.
  - Define Locus of Control
  - Using the given scenarios on Activity #8, create two response examples which correctly demonstrate an internal and also an external locus of control.
Class Session #9 –Activity #9 (Online Discussion Activity)

- Activity #9: Parenting Styles.
  - Read about the three primary styles of parenting in your textbook.
  - Read the scenario provided on Activity #9.
  - Choose a parenting style that you would like to demonstrate in your script.
  - Create a script showing parent-child dialogue about the importance of using contraception.
  - Upload your script to the online discussion area.
  - Read at least one fellow student’s parenting script and provide feedback about whether or not that script is an accurate reflection of their chosen parenting style.

Class Session #10 –Activity #10 (Take-home activity)

- Activity #10: Create a Personal Life-plan
  - Visit gpslifeplan.org
  - Create a Personal Life-plan document using the resources listed on the gpslifeplan.org website.
  - Submit at least one goal for each of the following areas: career, education, pregnancy, family, finance, and healthy relationships.

Class Session #11 –Activity #11 (Student Reflections about Semester’s Activities)