

Lakehead University
Department of Sociology
Sociology 3515WA/Gerontology 3515WA/Social Work 3515WA
Life Course Studies

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Winter Semester: 2013
Class Times: Monday and Wednesday 11.30-1.00
Classes are held in: AT 1010
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 2.00-3.00

Course Description

Sociology of Life Course will examine the social aspects of aging from birth to old age and the differences in experiences due to age, historical periods, sequencing and timing of life events, social change, cultural constructions, interdependence of individual lives and the social milieu the individual lives in, methods for the sociological study of lives, and the role of theory in shaping intellectual understanding. Life course provides an overview of the sociological approach to the study of lives focusing on the paths and turning points that socially situate individual lives.

While this course will touch upon older adults, the focus of this course will be on the earlier years of life. Exploration of childhood, teenagers, young adulthood, and middle adulthood will be accomplished using theoretical perspectives to examine life transitions. Substantive topics include: life course development, theories, challenges to the life course model, normative and non-normative shifts, childhood, adolescence and identity formation, dating, leaving home, early adulthood, entering the labour force, getting married, having children, middle adulthood, and later adulthood.

Required Texts

Green, Lorraine. 2012. *Understanding the Life Course Sociological and Psychological Perspectives*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Tilleczek, Kate. 2011. *Approaching Youth Studies Being, Becoming, and Belonging*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

There are a number of articles on reserve in the library. The dates these articles are to be read are listed in the lecture and reading list below.

Course Requirements

Students are expected to attend class regularly and actively participate in class discussions. As well, reading assignments are to be completed for the date they are assigned. The reading list is attached to this syllabus. The in-class midterm examination is listed below and is held during a regularly scheduled class. The final examination is posted by the registrar and the schedule for this can be found online. It is your responsibility to ensure you know the date and time of the final examination.

The due date of your assignment is listed below. Assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late assignments are penalized at the rate of 5 marks a day.

No Assignments will be accepted if handed in electronically.

<u>Evaluation</u>	<u>Marks</u>	<u>Due Dates</u>
Mid-term Examination	25%	February 13, 2013
Research Assignment	30%	March 20, 2013
Participation	10%	Throughout the course
Final Examination	<u>35%</u>	Set by the registrar
	100%	

Examinations

Examinations will incorporate lectures, class discussions, films and assigned readings.

Research Assignment

You are to choose an innovation, from any historical era, and explain how the innovation impacted on some aspect of the life course. For example, the drive-in movie theatre was invented in 1933 and by the 1970s and 1980s thousands had closed with the advent of television and multiplex theaters. While in operation drive-in movie theatres were popular as a form of family entertainment and a dating venue for teenagers. Today, the nostalgia of drive-in movies, by the baby boomers, has created a resurgence of this form of entertainment. Alternatively, you might choose a policy that changed the life course for numerous people. For example, during World War II, the need for women workers, in Canada, led to the establishment of day care centers. The war's end led to a closure of these day care centers. These day care centers impacted on the life course of those who utilized them and societal views of childcare. What impact did these day care centers have on the life course: working women, the children who attended them, what did their closure mean to the individuals who utilized them and to our view of working women and childcare?

Your paper is to be 8 to 10 pages in length, double-spaced, in 12 font Times New Roman.

Participation

Your participation mark is based on your contribution to class discussions.

Office Hours

There are two regularly scheduled office hours each week. Office hours are set to provide students the opportunity to stop by if they have questions, concerns, or would just like to say hello.

Please Note: I do try to answer e-mail in a timely fashion. I do guarantee a response during my regularly scheduled office hours. I do not discuss marks through e-mail.

American Sociological Association (ASA)

All assignments in the Department of Sociology are to follow the ASA (American Sociological Association) style guide. The guide can be accessed on the web.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is unacceptable and subject to various sanctions. Please see the university regulations section on academic dishonesty in the [Lakehead University Calendar](#).

Medical or Compassionate Consideration

Should you require academic consideration for medical or compassionate reasons, you will need a note from a physician or counselor. Please refer to the current [Lakehead University Calendar](#) for detailed information.

Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule Winter Semester 2011

Monday, January 7

Welcome to Life Course Studies
Introductions, Course Outline

Wednesday, January 9

Lecture: Introduction to Life Course Studies
Reading: Green Introduction
Reading: Green Chapter 1

Monday, January 14

Lecture: Understanding the Life Course
Reading: Giele and Elder Chapter 1 *Life Course Research Development of a Field* (Library Reserve)

Wednesday, January 16

Lecture: Understanding the Life Course
Reading: Cain Chapter 2 *Life Course and Social Structure* (Library Reserve)

Monday, January 21

Lecture: Childhood
Reading: Green Chapter 2
Reading: Tilleczek Chapter 1

Wednesday, January 23

Lecture: Childhood
Reading: Green Chapter 3

Monday, January 28

Lecture: Childhood
Reading: Tilleczek Chapters 2 and 3

Wednesday, January 30

Lecture: Adolescence
Reading: Tilleczek Chapters 4 and 5

Monday, February 4

Lecture: Adolescence
Reading: Tilleczek Chapters 6 and 7

Wednesday, February 6

Lecture: Adolescence and Early Adulthood
Reading: Tilleczek Chapter 8
Reading: Green Chapter 4

Monday, February 11

Lecture: Early Adulthood
Reading: Green Chapter 5

Wednesday, February 13

Midterm Examination

Monday, February 18
Reading Week – no class

Wednesday, February 20
Reading Week – no class

Monday, February 25
Lecture: Life Course Methods
Reading: O’Rand Chapter 3 *The Craft of Life Course Studies* (Library Reserve)

Wednesday, February 27
Lecture: Middle Adulthood
Reading: Green Chapter 6

Monday, March 4
Lecture: Middle Adulthood
Reading: Marshall and Mueller *CPRN Discussion Paper Rethinking Social Policy for an Aging Workforce and Society: Insights From the Life Course Perspective* (Library Reserve)

Wednesday, March 6
Lecture: Middle Adulthood
Reading: No Reading Assigned

Monday, March 11
Lecture: Middle Adulthood
Reading: Holstein, James, A. and Jaber F.Gubrium. *Constructionist Perspectives on the Life Course* (Library Reserve)

Wednesday, March 13
Lecture: Middle Adulthood
Reading: No Reading Assigned

Monday, March 18
Lecture: Challenges associated with Normative and Non-normative Shifts
Reading: Downs, Coleman, and Ganong Chapter 2 *Divorced Families Over the Life Course* (Library Reserve)

Wednesday, March 20
Lecture: Agency
Reading: Gecas Chapter 17 *Self-Agency and the Life Course* (Library Reserve)
Assignments are due.

Monday, March 25
Lecture: Old Age
Reading: Green Chapter 7

Wednesday, March 27
Lecture: Old Age
Reading: Moen Chapter 13 *Midcourse Navigating Retirement and a New Life Stage* (Library Reserve)

Monday, April 1

Easter Monday Holiday – no class

Wednesday, April 3

Lecture: Death, Dying, Grief and Loss

Reading: Green Chapter 8

Monday, April 8

This regularly scheduled time will be a catch-up class