

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

**Dr. Laurie Forbes**

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**Winter Semester: 2010**

**Class Times: Monday and Wednesday 1.00-2.30**

**Classes are held in: RB 3044**

**Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 3.30-4.30**

**Course Description**

Sociology of Life Course will examine the social aspects of aging from birth to middle 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 we 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**

Giele, Janet, Z. and Glen H. Elder Jr. *Methods of Life Course Research*.

Hendry, Leo, B. and Marion Kloep. *Lifespan Development Resources, Challenges and Risks*.

Tilleczek, Kate. *Approaching Youth Studies Being, Becoming, and Belonging*.

**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 in class, 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 handed in electronically.**

<u>Evaluation</u>	<u>Marks</u>	<u>Due Dates</u>
Mid-term Examination	25%	February 9, 2011
Research Project	30%	March 23, 2011
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 Project

You are to choose an area of exploration within a stage of the life course. Be sure to narrow your exploration choice to one specific topic. This assignment has three components.

1. You will use a minimum of six refereed journal articles focusing on the topic you have chosen. In 3 to 4 pages write an annotated bibliography of each article. Attach the articles to the paper you submit for grading.
2. Using the articles you have chosen, in 2 to 4 pages, discuss the shortcomings of the research in this area of study.
3. In 3 to 5 pages devise a research proposal that would overcome the shortcomings you have identified. Explain why your theoretical and methodological choices will overcome the deficiencies in the current literature.

Your paper is to be 8 to 13 pages in length, double-spaced, and 12 font.

### 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. Type in ASA Style Guide and a number of examples will be available for you to choose from.

### 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**

#### **Wednesday, January 5**

Welcome to Life Course Studies. Introductions, Course Outline

#### **Monday, January 10**

**Lecture:** Introduction to Life Course Studies

**Reading:** Hendry and Kloep Chapter 1

**Reading:** Giele and Elder Chapter 1

#### **Wednesday, January 12**

**Lecture:** Theories of Development

**Reading:** Hendry and Kloep Chapter 2

**Reading:** Giele and Elder Chapter 2

#### **Monday, January 17**

**Lecture:** The Craft of Life Course Studies

**Reading:** Giele and Elder Chapter 3

#### **Wednesday, January 19**

**Lecture:** Data Organization and Conceptualization

**Reading:** Giele and Elder Chapter 4

**Discuss Research Assignment**

#### **Monday, January 24**

**Lecture:** Life Histories

**Reading:** Giele and Elder Chapter 5

#### **Wednesday, January 26**

**Lecture:** Life Histories

**Reading:** Giele and Elder Chapter 7

#### **Monday, January 31**

**Lecture:** Challenges to the Lifespan Model and Challenges associated with Normative and Non-normative shifts

**Reading:** Hendry and Kloep Chapters 3 and 4

#### **Wednesday, February 2**

**Lecture:** Divorce and Economic Crises

**Reading:** Hendry and Kloep Chapter 5

**Monday, February 7**

**Lecture:** Childhood

**Reading:** Hendry and Kloep Chapter 6

**Reading:** Tilleczek Chapter 1

**Wednesday, February 9**

**Midterm Examination**

**Monday, February 14**

**Lecture:** Childhood

**Reading:** Tilleczek Chapters 2 and 3

**Wednesday, February 16**

**Lecture:** Childhood

**Reading:** Hendry and Kloep Chapter 7

**Monday, February 21**

**Reading Week – no class**

**Wednesday, February 23**

**Reading Week – no class**

**Monday, February 28**

**Lecture:** Adolescence

**Reading:** Tilleczek Chapters 4 and 5

**Wednesday, March 2**

**Lecture:** Adolescence

**Reading:** Tilleczek Chapters 6 and 7

**Monday, March 7**

**Lecture:** Adolescence and Early Adulthood

**Reading:** Tilleczek Chapter 8

**Wednesday, March 9**

**Lecture:** Early Adulthood

**Reading:** No Reading Assigned

**Monday, March 14**

**Lecture:** Middle Adulthood

**Reading:** Hendry and Kloep Chapter 8

**Wednesday, March 16**

**Lecture:** Middle Adulthood

**Reading:** Giele and Elder Chapter 6

**Monday, March 21**

**Lecture:** Middle Adulthood

**Reading:** Giele and Elder Chapter 8

**Wednesday, March 23**

**Lecture:** Middle Adulthood

**Reading:** Giele and Elder Chapter 10

**Research Assignments are due.**

**Monday, March 28**

**Lecture:** Linking History and Human Lives

**Reading:** Giele and Elder Chapter 11

**Wednesday, March 30**

**Lecture:** Older Adults

**Reading:** Hendry and Kloep Chapters 9 and 10

**Monday, April 4**

**Lecture:** Emerging Themes in Lifespan Development

**Reading:** Hendry and Kloep Chapter 11