

**Lakehead University  
Department of Sociology  
Sociology 3513FA/Gerontology 3513FA  
Sociology of Aging**

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**Fall Semester: 2022**

**Class Times: Monday and Wednesday 8.30-10.00**

**Classes are held in: AT 1005**

**Office Hours: Monday 11.00 to 2.00**

**Course Description**

Sociology of Aging provides an analytical framework for understanding the interplay between human lives and changing social structures in regards to aging. This course is designed to provide students with an overview of the sociology of aging. Topics covered will include: aging as a social process, aging societies, societal views of aging, myths surrounding aging, social aging, social change and aging, understanding age and aging, leisure, seniors' groups, meaning, work and retirement, pensions, social security, older workers, intergenerational contact and kinship, family support, fictive kin, community, personal relationships, ethnicity, ageism, theory, research, environment, health care, elder care, and death and dying. By the end of the course you will have a clear understanding of intersectionality through examination of the advantages and disadvantages of aging individuals and how the experience of aging is impacted by gender, race/ethnic origins, and the cultural milieu one lives in.

**Required Texts**

Funk, Laura. 2016. *Sociological Perspectives on Aging*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Graham, Janice, E., and Peter H. Stephenson, eds. 2010. *Contesting Aging and Loss*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Additional readings can be found on the D2L site for this course.

**Course Objectives**

Examine core theoretical perspectives and sociological concepts in the study of aging.  
Develop a better understanding of aging and the elderly in Canada and cross-culturally.  
Identify social, physical, cultural and environmental factors that affect the aging process.  
Identify problems that the elderly may be faced with.  
Explore inequalities in individual and population aging and their consequences for individuals, families, communities, and societies.  
Understand the intersections of social relations including race, class, gender and aging.  
Enhance critical thinking skills.  
Enhance research skills.  
Enjoy the material!

## 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 date is set by the registrar, it is the students' responsibility to know the date, time, and place the exam is held.

### Evaluation

### Marks

### Due Dates

Midterm Examination	25%	October 19, 2022
Poster Project	35%	November 23, 2022
Participation	10%	Throughout the course
Final Examination	<u>30%</u> 100%	Set by the Registrar

Late assignments and rescheduling of examinations must be accompanied by a note from a physician or counsellor. Please refer to Lakehead University Calendar.

## Examinations

Examinations will incorporate lectures, class discussions, films and assigned readings. The midterm date is listed above and is held during a regularly scheduled class. The final exam date is set by the registrar, be sure to check the date and time of the final exam.

## Research Project

The media is a prevalent influence in North America and has a significant effect on the manner in which we view aging and old age. This assignment is designed to examine the media's portrayal of aging as it pertains to older people. For this assignment you will conduct content analysis on a media source of your choice (television, magazines, etc.). Your analysis will focus on aging and its presentation in the media you are investigating. You are to spend at least 5 to 6 hours watching movies/television shows/documentaries or going through print material. You will incorporate theory, research, and a literature review in your poster. Your literature review is to include a minimum of 6 academic sources. This is a "doing sociology" assignment, a hands-on assignment which will provide you with research experience. Going online and finding sources that are a couple of pages in length, which are not peer reviewed, do not constitute a literature review of the topic. Your reference page can be included in the poster or as a separate page. Your coding sheets are to be included as a separate document in the assignment folder. Your coding sheets can be included in rough format; there is no need to redo them for submission.

**The poster you design is to be handed in online, in the D2L site for this class.**

Google has a number of sites that tell you how to design a poster. Type in academic posters and you will find a number of examples. **If you were handing in a hardcopy of the poster, it would be on standard Bristol board, which is 22 X 28 inches; this is**

**the size your poster is to be. You will be creating your poster online, based on the instructions found in content. You are to use the site posted in the link or google docs to create your poster. There is an example of a poster in content on the D2L site.**

You are to use the American Sociological Association (ASA) style guide when formatting your poster. You must cite all your sources, a reference page is not citing sources, they must be cited in the poster.

**To be clear: you must cite direct quotes, paraphrasing, any idea or thought not your own, including any information taken from online sources. The citations are to appear in the body of the poster, for example, (Smith 1942:86). Each citation includes the author, date, and page. All sources are to appear in the reference page. Failure to cite all sources is plagiarism.**

**We will go over content analysis on September 21. Librarian, Debra Gold, will come to our class and do a presentation designed specifically to help you with this assignment.**

The due date of your assignment is listed above. Assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late assignments are penalized at the rate of 5 marks a day, including weekends and holidays. No assignments will be accepted 7 days after the due date.

### Grades

The midterm will be returned in class. Comments for the poster and the grade will be posted on the D2L site. You have two weeks, after the day the midterm is returned and the day the assignment marks/comments are posted, to come and discuss your grade.

### Participation

Your participation mark is based on your contribution to class discussions. This entails engaging in meaningful discussion and handing in signed group reports. Should you choose to chat with your fellow classmates, play games, check your emails, etc. and not to be part of your group discussion you will forfeit your participation marks for the class.

Discussion is an important part of academia. Discussions in this class will be based on principles of respectfulness for diversity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, ancestry, colour, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, disability, family status, and socio-economic status. Please refer to the Lakehead University Code of Student Behaviour.

### Office Hours

There are three 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. If these times conflict with your schedule we can find an alternative time to meet.

**Please Note: I check and respond to emails during my working hours of Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. I will not regularly see or respond to emails outside of these hours. I do not discuss marks through email.**

### **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. Search or Google 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 counsellor. Please refer to the current Lakehead University Calendar for detailed information.

### **Technology**

The use of phones during class is prohibited. Please turn your phone off and put it away during class. Use of computers is fine, as long as they are used for class work and not to play games, check emails, look at photographs, etc. Should you choose to use computers or other electronic devices for purposes other than taking lecture notes your use of such devices will be curtailed and paper and pen/pencil will be the means to take lecture notes.

## **Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule Fall Semester 2022**

### **1. Sept. 07**

Welcome to Sociology of Aging  
Introductions  
Course Outline

### **2. Sept. 12**

**Lecture:** Aging Societies  
**Reading:** Sociological Perspectives on Aging Chapter 1  
**Reading:** Contesting Aging and Loss Preface and Introduction

### **3. Sept. 14**

**Lecture:** Aging Societies  
**Reading:** Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 1

### **4. Sept. 19**

**Lecture:** Choices and Constraints in Aging: Theoretical Approaches and Sociological Contributions

**Reading:** Cox, Harold, G. 2005. "Theoretical Perspectives on Aging." Later Life The Realities of Aging. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Pp. 38-63. New Jersey: Pearson

**5. Sept. 21**

**Lecture:** Researching Aging and Discussion of the Research Project

**Reading:** Del Balsom Michael and Alan D. Lewis. 2008. "Chapter 8: Indirect or Nonreactive Methods." Pp. 180-194. *First Steps A Guide to Social Research*. Canada: Thompson Nelson.

**Librarian visit.**

**6. Sept. 26**

**Lecture:** Dynamics of Population Aging

**Reading:** Sociological Perspectives on Aging Chapter 2

**7. Sept. 28**

**Lecture:** Understanding Age and Aging

**Reading:** Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 2

**8. Oct. 3**

**Lecture:** Understanding Age and Aging

**Reading:** Yarnal, Mackay, Careen, Garry Chick, and Deborah L. Kerstetter. 2008. "I Did Not Have Time to Play Growing Up... So This is My Play Time. It's the Best Thing I Have Ever Done For Myself": What is Play to Older Women?" *Leisure Sciences* 30: 235-252. (This is an e-journal that can be downloaded from the library.)

**Reading:** Zimmerman, Lillian. 2016. *Did You Just Call Me An Old Lady A 90-Year-Old Tells Why Aging is Positive*. Pp. 1-12. Nova Scotia: Fernwood Press.

**9. Oct. 5**

**Lecture:** Work and Retirement

**Reading:** Sociological Perspectives on Aging Chapter 5

**10. Oct. 10 Fall Study Week – No Class**

**11. Oct 12 Fall Study Week – No Class**

**12. Oct. 17**

**Lecture:** Work and Retirement

**Reading:** Katz, Stephen and Debbie Laliberte-Rudman. 2005. "Exemplars of Retirement: Identity and Agency Between Lifestyle and Social Movement." Pp. 140-160. in *Cultural Aging Life Course, Lifestyle, and Senior Worlds*. edited by Stephen Katz. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press.

**13. Oct. 19**

**Midterm Examination**

**14. Oct. 24**

**Lecture:** Intergenerational Contact, Kinship, and Personal Relationships

**Reading:** Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 3

**15. Oct. 26**

**Lecture:** Intergenerational Contact, Kinship, and Personal Relationships

**Reading:** Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 4

**16. Oct. 31**

**Lecture:** Intergenerational Contact, Kinship, and Personal Relationships

**Reading:** Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 5

**17. Nov. 2**

**Lecture:** Ageism, Meanings of Ageing and Old Age: Discursive Contexts, Social Attitudes and Personal Identities

**Reading:** Roszak, Theodore. 2009. *The Making of An Elder Culture Reflections on the Future of America's Most Audacious Generation*. Pp. 253-277. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers.

**18. Nov. 7**

**Lecture:** Ageism, Meanings of Ageing and Old Age: Discursive Contexts, Social Attitudes and Personal Identities

**Reading:** Sociological Perspectives on Aging Chapter 3

**19. Nov. 9**

**Lecture:** Ageism, Meanings of Ageing and Old Age: Discursive Contexts, Social Attitudes and Personal Identities

**Reading:** Roy, Carole. 2004. *The Raging Grannies Wild Hats, Cheeky Songs, and Witty Actions for a Better World*. Pp. 207-2016. Montreal: Black Rose Books.

**20. Nov. 14**

**Lecture:** Ageism, Meanings of Ageing and Old Age: Discursive Contexts, Social Attitudes and Personal Identities

**Reading:** Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 7

**21. Nov. 16**

**Lecture:** Environment and Aging

**Reading:** Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 6

**22. Nov. 21**

**Lecture:** Environment and Aging

**Reading:** Counts, Dorothy Ayers and David R. Counts. 2004. *Over the Next Hill An Ethnography of RVing Seniors in North America*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Pp. 185-217. Toronto: Broadview Press.

**23. Nov. 23**

**Assignments are due at the beginning of class.**

**Lecture:** Health Care and Elder Care

**Reading:** Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 8

**24. Nov. 28**

**Lecture:** Health Care and Elder Care

**Reading:** Sociological Perspectives on Aging Chapter 4

**25. Nov. 30**

**Lecture:** Death and Dying

**Reading:** Sociological Perspectives on Aging Chapter 8

**26. Dec. 5**

**Lecture:** Social Change

**Reading:** Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 9

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