

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

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Fall Semester: 2014
Class Times: Wednesday and Friday 1.00-2.30
Classes are held in: AT 2021
Office Hours: Tuesday 2.00 to 4.00

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.

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, including weekends and holidays. No assignments will be accepted 7 days after the due date.

No Assignments will be accepted if handed in electronically.

<u>Evaluation</u>	<u>Marks</u>	<u>Due Dates</u>
Mid-term Examination	25%	October 17, 2014
Research Assignment	30%	November 14, 2014
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, it can be 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. This entails engaging in meaningful discussion and handing in 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.

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.

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.

Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule Winter Semester 2011

Wednesday, September 10

Welcome to Life Course Studies
Introductions, Course Outline

Friday, September 12

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

Wednesday, September 17

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

Friday, September 19

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

Wednesday, September 24

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

Friday, September 26

Lecture: Childhood
Reading: Green Chapter 3

Wednesday, October 1

Lecture: Childhood
Reading: Tilleczek Chapters 2 and 3

Friday, October 3

Lecture: Adolescence
Reading: Tilleczek Chapters 4 and 5

Wednesday, October 8

Lecture: Adolescence
Reading: Tilleczek Chapters 6 and 7

Friday, October 10

Lecture: Adolescence

Reading: Tilleczek Chapter 8

Wednesday, October 15

Lecture: Life Course Methods

Reading: O'Rand The Craft of Life Course Studies (Library Reserve)

Friday, October 17

Midterm Examination

Wednesday, October 22

Lecture: Agency

Reading: Gecas Self-Agency and the Life. Course (Library Reserve)

Friday, October 24

Lecture: Early Adulthood

Reading: Green Chapters 4 and 5

Wednesday, October 29

Lecture: Middle Adulthood

Reading: Green Chapter 6

Friday, October 31

Lecture: Middle Adulthood

Reading: Yoshihama Application of the Life History Calendar Approach. (Library Reserve)

Wednesday, November 5

Lecture: Middle Adulthood

Reading: No Reading Assigned

Friday, November 7

Lecture: Middle Adulthood

Reading: Holstein, James, A. and Jaber F.Gubrium. 2007. *Constructionist Perspectives on the Life Course*. Sociology Compass. 1. Pages 1-18.

Wednesday, November 12

Lecture: Middle Adulthood

Reading: No Reading Assigned

Friday, November 14

Lecture: Challenges associated with Normative and Non-normative Shifts

Reading: The popular media is full of stories of celebrity divorces. You are to find one story or news report of a celebrity divorce and bring the story/news report to class for discussion.

Reading: Guerrero, Andersen, and Afifi Ending Relationships Disengagement and Termination (Library Reserve)

Assignments are due.

Wednesday, November 19

Lecture: Old Age

Reading: Green Chapter 7

Friday, November 21

Lecture: Old Age

Reading: No Reading Assigned

Wednesday, November 26

Lecture: Death, Dying, Grief and Loss

Reading: Green Chapter 8

Friday, November 28

This regularly scheduled time will be a catch-up class