

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

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Fall Semester: 2014

Class Times: Monday and Wednesday 2.30- 4.00

Classes are held in: AT 1007

Office Hours: Tuesday 2.00 to 4.00

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.

Required Texts

Wacker, Robyn, R. And Karen A. Roberto. Eds. 2011. *Aging Social Policies An International Perspective*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

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

Reading Course Pack designed for this course. This is on sale in the book store.

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. It is your responsibility to ensure you know the date and time of the December examination. The in-class midterm examination is listed below and is held in class, during a regularly scheduled class. The December examination is posted by the registrar and the schedule for this can be found online.

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 handed in electronically.

Course Objectives

Examine core theoretical perspectives in the study of aging.
Develop a better understanding of aging and the elderly in Canada.
Develop a better understanding of aging 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.
Enhance critical thinking skills.
Enhance research skills.

Evaluation

Mid-term Examination
Research Project
Participation
Final Examination

Marks

25%
30%
10%
35%
100%

Due Dates

October 8, 2014
November 12, 2014
Throughout the course
Set by the registrar

Examinations

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

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. 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 will incorporate theory, research, and a literature review in your paper. We will discuss this assignment in detail in class.

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

Grades

The midterm and your research project will be returned in class. You have two weeks, after the day the midterms and the day the assignments are handed back in class, 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 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 email in a timely fashion. I do guarantee a response during my regularly scheduled office 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. 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 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.

Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule Fall Semester 2014

Monday, September 8

Welcome to Sociology of Aging
Introductions
Course Outline

Wednesday, September 10

Lecture: Aging Societies
Reading: Contesting Aging and Loss Preface and Introduction
Reading: Aging Social Policies An International Perspective Chapter 1

Monday, September 15

Lecture: Aging Societies
Reading: Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 1
Reading: Aging Social Policies An International Perspective Chapter 2

Wednesday, September 17

Lecture: Dynamics of Population Aging
Reading: Moody, Harry R. 2010. *Aging Concepts and Controversies*. 6th ed. Pp.429-437. Los Angeles: Pine Forge Press.
Reading: Harper, Sarah. 2006. Chapter: 2 “The Dynamics of Population Ageing.” *Ageing Societies*. Pp. 36-65. New York, NY: Hodder Arnold.

Monday, September 22

Lecture: Finish Dynamics of Population Aging

Lecture: Understanding Age and Aging

Reading: Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 2

Wednesday, September 24

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.

Monday, September 29

Lecture: Understanding Age and Aging

Reading: Peace, Sheila, Dittman-Kohli, Freya, Westerhof, Gerben, J., and John Bond. 2007. "The Aging World." Pp. 1-14. in *Ageing in Society*. edited by Bond, John, Peace, Sheila, Dittman-Kohli, Freya, and Gerben, J. Westerhof. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Wednesday, October 1

Lecture: Theory

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

Monday, October 6

Lecture: Researching Aging

Lecture: Discuss 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.

Wednesday, October 8

Midterm Examination

Monday, October 13 Thanksgiving No Class

Wednesday, October 15

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.

Monday, October 20

Lecture: Work and Retirement

Reading: Cox, Harold. 2011. "Work /Retirement Choices and Lifestyle Patterns of Older Americans." *Annual Editions*. Pp. 83-91. 10th ed. New York: McGraw Hill Companies, Inc.

Reading: Aging Social Policies An International Perspective Chapter 3

Wednesday, October 22

Lecture: Intergenerational Contact, Kinship, and Personal Relationships

Reading: Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 3

Reading: Aging Social Policies An International Perspective Chapter 4

Monday, October 27

Lecture: Intergenerational Contact, Kinship, and Personal Relationships

Reading: Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 4

Wednesday, October 29

Lecture: Intergenerational Contact, Kinship, and Personal Relationships

Reading: Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 5

Reading: Aging Social Policies An International Perspective Chapter 9

Monday, November 3

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.

Wednesday, November 5

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

Reading: Cox, Harold. 2011. "Society Fears the Aging Process." Annual Editions. Pp. 36-39. 10th ed. New York: McGraw Hill Companies, Inc.

Monday, November 10

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

Reading: Aging Social Policies An International Perspective Chapter 8

Wednesday, November 12

Lecture: Environment and Aging

Reading: Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 6

Research Project is Due

Monday, November 17

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*. 2nd ed. Pp. 185-217. Toronto: Broadview Press.

Reading: Aging Social Policies An International Perspective Chapter 5

Wednesday, November 19

Lecture: Health Care and Elder Care

Reading: Contesting Aging and Loss Chapters 7 and 8

Reading: Aging Social Policies An International Perspective Chapter 6

Monday, November 24

Lecture: Death and Dying

Reading: DeSpelder, Lynne Ann and Albert Lee Strickland. 2005. *The Last Dance Encountering Death and Dying*. Pp. 218-265. Boston: McGraw Hill.

Wednesday, November 26

Lecture: Social Change

Reading: Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 9

Reading: Aging Social Policies An International Perspective Chapter 10

Monday, December 1

This is a regularly scheduled class we will use as a catch-up class