

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

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**Fall Semester: 2015**  
**Class Times: Monday and Wednesday 4.00-5.30**  
**Classes are held in: AT 1006**  
**Office Hours Fall Semester Monday 1.30-3.30**  
**Office Hours Winter Semester Monday 3.00-5.00**

**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 19, 2015  
November 23, 2015  
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 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 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 Time New Roman 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. Should you choose to use computers or other electronic devices for purposes other than recording 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 2015**

### **Monday, September 14**

Welcome to Sociology of Aging  
Introductions  
Course Outline

### **Wednesday, September 16**

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

### **Monday, September 21**

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

### **Wednesday, September 23**

**Lecture:** Dynamics of Population Aging  
**Reading:** Moody, Harry R. 2010. *Aging Concepts and Controversies*. 6<sup>th</sup> 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 28**

**Lecture:** Finish Dynamics of Population Aging

**Lecture:** Understanding Age and Aging

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

**Wednesday, September 30**

**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, October 5**

**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 7**

**Lecture:** Theory

**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

**Monday, October 12 Thanksgiving No Class**

**Wednesday, October 14**

**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.

**Monday, October 19**

**Midterm Examination**

**Wednesday, October 21**

**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 26**

**Lecture:** Work and Retirement

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

**Reading:** Aging Social Policies An International Perspective Chapter 3

**Wednesday, October 28**

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

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

**Reading:** Aging Social Policies An International Perspective Chapter 4

**Monday, November 2**

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

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

**Wednesday, November 4**

**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 9**

**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 11**

**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. 10<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: McGraw Hill Companies, Inc.

**Monday, November 16**

**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 18**

**Lecture:** Environment and Aging

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

**Research Project is Due**

**Monday, November 23**

**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.

**Reading:** Aging Social Policies An International Perspective Chapter 5

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

**Wednesday, November 25**

**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 30**

**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, December 2**

**Lecture:** Social Change

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

**Reading:** Aging Social Policies An International Perspective Chapter 10

**Monday, December 7**

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