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

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Class Times: Monday and Wednesday 10.00-11.30
Classes are held in: AT 2020
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 1.00-2.00

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


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. The in-class midterm examinations are listed below and are held in class, during a regularly scheduled class. The December examination will be a take home final. The take home examination will be emailed to you at 9.00 am, Monday, December 11, 2017. You will complete and return the final examination via email by 6 pm, December 11, 2017. No examinations will be accepted after 6.00 pm, December 11, 2017.

All readings listed in the syllabus are in the texts or the reading package.

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 and sociological concepts 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.
Understand the intersections of social relations including race, class, gender and aging.
Enhance critical thinking skills.
Enhance research skills.
Enjoy the material!

Evaluation | Marks | Due Dates
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Mid-term Examination | 20% | October 4, 2017
Research Project | 35% | November 20, 2017
Mid-term Examination | 20% | November 27, 2017
Participation | 10% | Throughout the course
Final Examination | 15% | December 11, 2017
100%

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. 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 does not constitute a literature review of the topic. We will discuss this assignment in detail in class.

Your paper is to be 8 to 10 pages in length, double-spaced, and Times New Roman 12 font, ASA (American Sociological Association) style.

Grades
The midterms and your research project will be returned in class. You have two weeks, after the day the midterms and the day the assignment is 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 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**
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 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. If these times conflict with your schedule we can find an alternative time to meet.

**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 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 2017**

**Wednesday, September 6**
Welcome to Sociology of Aging  
Introductions  
Course Outline

**Monday, September 11**
**Lecture:** Aging Societies  
**Reading:** Contesting Aging and Loss Preface and Introduction  
**Reading:** Funk Chapter 1

**Wednesday, September 13**
**Lecture:** Aging Societies  
**Reading:** Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 1

**Monday, September 18**
**Lecture:** Choices and Constraints in Aging: Theoretical Approaches and Sociological Contributions  

**Wednesday, September 20**
**Lecture:** Dynamics of Population Aging  
**Reading:** Funk Chapter 2  

**Monday, September 25**
**Lecture:** Finish Dynamics of Population Aging  
**Lecture:** Researching Aging  
**Lecture:** Discuss the Research Project  

**Wednesday, September 27**
**Lecture:** Finish Researching Aging  
**Lecture:** Understanding Age and Aging  
**Reading:** Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 2
Monday, October 2
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.

Wednesday, October 4
Midterm Examination

Monday, October 9 is the Thanksgiving Holiday and Wednesday October 11 is fall reading week; no class either day.

Monday, October 16
Lecture: Work and Retirement
Reading: Funk Chapter 5

Wednesday, October 18
Lecture: Work and Retirement

Monday, October 23
Lecture: Intergenerational Contact, Kinship, and Personal Relationships
Reading: Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 3
Reading: Funk Chapter 6

Wednesday, October 25
Lecture: Intergenerational Contact, Kinship, and Personal Relationships
Reading: Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 4
Reading: Funk Chapter 7

Monday, October 30
Lecture: Intergenerational Contact, Kinship, and Personal Relationships
Reading: Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 5
Wednesday, November 1
Lecture: Ageism, Meanings of Ageing and Old Age: Discursive Contexts, Social Attitudes and Personal Identities
Reading: Funk Chapter 3

Monday, November 6
Lecture: Ageism, Meanings of Ageing and Old Age: Discursive Contexts, Social Attitudes and Personal Identities

Wednesday, November 8
Lecture: Ageism, Meanings of Ageing and Old Age: Discursive Contexts, Social Attitudes and Personal Identities

Monday, November 13
Lecture: Environment and Aging
Reading: Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 6

Wednesday, November 15
Lecture: Environment and Aging

Monday, November 20
Lecture: Health Care and Elder Care
Reading: Contesting Aging and Loss Chapters 7 and 8
Assignments are due at the beginning of class.

Wednesday, November 22
Lecture: Health Care and Elder Care
Reading: Funk Chapter 4

Monday, November 27
Midterm

Wednesday, November 29
Lecture: Death and Dying
Reading: Funk Chapter 8
Monday, December 4
Lecture: Social Change
Reading: Contesting Aging and Loss Chapter 9

Please note: If you lose or misplace your course outline or the dog/cat/pet bird eat it you can find one online by going to the A to Z index, click on Sociology, once on the website click on courses and scroll down until you find this course.

Final Take Home Exam December 11, 2017