

SOCIOLOGY OF AGING - SOCIOLOGY 202-OL, Summer 2011

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COURSE OVERVIEW: Examining the *social process* of aging is the primary focus of sociologists. This course will look at various theoretical perspectives associated with this process including; sociological, historical, biological and psychological frameworks. We will also examine the various social concerns or problems associated with the aging process (i.e. healthcare needs), transitions the elderly face (i.e. work to retirement), and the social attitudes and policies directed towards the elderly (i.e. poverty).

COURSE OBJECTIVES: Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to;

1. Understand aging as a social process.
2. Dispute common misconceptions about aging.
3. Have an understanding of the dynamic relationship between historical and cultural forces and the individual life course in their understanding of aging.
4. Have an understanding of the social policies and programs that impact the elderly.
5. Deal more effectively with professional and personal issues related to aging.

COURSE OPERATION: The following are regular or scheduled activities related to the course that students are expected to complete:

1. Weekly discussions around questions posed by the instructor which are related to the assigned reading to further enhance and broaden the student's understanding of chapter material. (See Grading Rubric below)
2. Five tests, one for each section of the text. See both the table of contents in your text as well as the course syllabus to see how these sections have been divided.
3. Viewing videotape(s) which is/are easily obtained at local video stores and applying the information from the text to the content of the film(s).
4. Group project, to be completed online. (See Grading Rubric below)

REQUIRED TEXT: Quadagno, J. *Aging and the Life Course* (4th Ed.) 2008 McGraw Hill.

TECNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS:

MAC

Mac* OS 8.1 or later
 128 MB RAM
 65MB virtual memory
 604 PowerPC* (200 MHz or better)
 Internet connection, Web browser
[Microsoft Internet Explorer](#)* 5.5 or later
 or [Netscape](#)* 4.7 or later
 SOME classes might require CD-ROM

PC

333MHz Intel Pentium processor or equivalent,
 128MB of RAM,
 56Kbps modem,
 16-bit sound card and speakers
 65,000-color video display card (video)
 Windows 98 operating system or newer
 Internet connection and either [Internet Explorer](#) 5.5 or [Netscape](#) 4.7 or later
 SOME classes might require CD-ROM

DISCUSSION/RESPONSE/POSTING RUBRIC

POINTS	DESCRIPTION
Quality	
Critical Thinking and Application	
3	Demonstrates critical thinking and ability to apply concepts to material read, using examples from text or other sources (cited)
2	Demonstrates some critical thinking and application of concepts
1	Shows minor or incorrect application of concepts
Mechanics	
2	Well written, clear organization, few to no spelling or grammatical errors
1	Inadequate due lack of organization, grammar and spelling errors
Completeness	
Follows Directions	
3	Follows all directions
2	Follows most directions
1	Follows few directions
Timely	
2	Posted by due date
1-0	Posted after due date

GRADING RUBRIC FOR GROUP ASSIGNMENT

POINTS	DESCRIPTION
Group Elements	
Critical Thinking and Application	
0-15	Finished product demonstrates a high degree of critical thinking and the ability to apply the concepts in a meaningful and organized way.
Group Cohesion and Effectiveness	
0-15	Members work as a group, practice consensus building, most actively participate in asynchronous discussion, timely logins, and product creation. The product created is exceptional and creative.
Mechanics	
0-15	Product is well designed, written, and organized. Uses standard English grammar, contains minor if any spelling errors. Any hyperlinks used work. Citations/references used.
Follows Directions	
0-5	Follows all directions.
Timely	
0-5	Posted on or before due date.
Individual Participation	
45	Actively participates in group process, assumes roles that benefit the group, strives for consensus, logs in and posts necessary replies approximately every 24 hours.
35	Actively participates in group process, assumes roles that benefit the group, strives for consensus, logs in and posts necessary replies approximately every 48 hours.
25	Participates in group process, rarely assumes useful roles, logs in and posts necessary replies within approximately 48 hours.
10	Occasionally participates in group process, does not actively support group or completion of task through collaboration but completes assigned task, logs in and posts necessary replies within approximately 72 hours.
5	Rarely participates in group process, does not support group and collaboration, contributes little to task, logs in sporadically and rarely posts.

GRADING:

Ice Breaker and Introduction: 10 points

Weekly postings/replies/discussions: One to two questions per chapter (may include viewing a video, etc..) @ 10-20 points per question (if two questions, 10 points each; if one question, 20 points)= 20 points X 17 = 340 points total

Five Exams @ 50 points each = 250 points total

Group Project @ 100 points total (This includes "Critical Friends".)

SCALE: 700-630 = A, 629-560 = B, 559-490 = C, 489-420 = D, Below 420 = F

SOME MORE INFORMATION:

1. WEEKLY POSTING/RESPONSES AND DISCUSSION: Each week you will be assigned chapter/s to read, and questions to answer. You are to read the assigned topics and answer the questions in the discussion section of Blackboard. I expect detailed answers. After posting your answer, you are required to respond to at least two answers posted by other students. You are required to post an answer to the assigned question by Wednesday, and after that engage in discussion (replies to others). Answers posted after Wednesday will automatically receive points deducted. If you have posted your answer earlier, you are of course free to engage in discussion. All discussion of postings and responses must take place by Saturday, midnight. Responses after Saturday night will not be counted towards your grade. Responses that simply praise other students' posts are not acceptable. Remember that your grade depends on the quality and quantity of your posts. Late posts/responses will not be accepted.

2. FIVE EXAMS: During the semester a total of 5 tests will be given. These will be based on the chapters assigned to read for each of the sections (divided in the text). Details of the Exams will be discussed further.

3. GROUP PROJECT: About the third week of class (or, after you have mastered the ability to post and respond to class members) you will be assigned to a group and asked to work with your group members in choosing a research topic from one of the several suggested by the instructor. You will have a group space on Blackboard where you will be able to communicate with your group members only. You will then generate a research proposal that must be approved by the instructor before continuing. After your proposal has been approved your group will prepare a final research project that you will present to the rest of the class. (A rough draft of your final project will be posted prior to the finished product.) All of this work will be done online. (If group members desire to do so, alternative methods to communicate with each other may be employed, i.e. face-to-face meetings, telephone conversations, etc...). There are deadlines (see Syllabus) for the completion of each step of the process. The deadlines help move the group work forward and allows the project to be completed and presented (posted) by the end of the semester. Your project will be evaluated by the rest of the class members using a "Critical Friends" evaluation tool (to be provided you later).

Late projects will not be accepted.

A NOTE ABOUT GROUPS: Successful group work depends on each member actively participating and contributing an equal and balanced share of the work. There are ways to ensure this occurs. Some groups work best when group roles are assigned early on with tasks divided from the very beginning. Active and regular communication between group members is most important. Having equitable input in the decision making process is also an important way to create a sense of community among group members. I will monitor your work and if I feel your group is stalled, I will intervene to get you back on task. The important part of group work that acts to sustain it is what is referred to as "synergy". This is the collective energy that results from coordinated group activity. Strive for synergy!

COURSE CALENDAR: Weeks begin on Monday with individual postings due by Wednesday, midnight and responses/discussions due Saturday, midnight.

Note: The instructor will routinely respond to postings/responses on the Discussion Board.

Week of June 6: Introductions
Chapter 1 The Field of Gerontology
Chapter 2 Theories of Aging
Think about research topics that interest you.

Week of June 13: Chapter 3 Life Course Transitions
Chapter 4 Demographics of Aging
Groups assigned, proposal of two to five possible research topics due (instructor's discretion).
Examination #1 (Chapters 1-4)

Week of June 20: Chapter 5 Historical Perspectives
Chapter 6 Biological Perspectives
Chapter 7 Psychological Perspectives
Instructor confirms/okays one research topic for each group.
Examination #2 (Chapters 5-7)

Week of June 27: Chapter 8 Family
Chapter 9 Living Arrangements
Chapter 10 Caregiving
Research proposal due.
Examination #3 (Chapters 8-10)

Week of July 4: Chapter 11 Welfare State
Chapter 12 Work and Retirement
Rough draft of project due.

Week of July 11: Chapter 13 Healthcare
Chapter 14 Death and Dying
Final draft of project due.
Examination #4 (Chapters 11-14)

Week of July 18: Chapter 15 Economics

Chapter 16 Poverty
Chapter 17 Politics

Critical Friends due

Week of July 25: Examination #5 (Chapters 15-17)

Note: This examination will open on June 26, 7am, and close June 27, midnight.