



Gerontology Interdisciplinary Program Course Syllabus

Course Number:	GERON 5001/6001
Title:	Introduction to Aging
Current Semester:	Spring
Total Credits:	3
Didactic Credits:	3 (3 hrs/wk)
Clinical Credits:	
Academic Terms Offered:	Fall, Spring or Summer Semesters
Faculty:	Leilani Jackson, MS Adjunct Instructor leilani.jackson@utah.edu Skype: leilanijackson21 Office Hours – By appointment – via Skype or email

Course Description:

This introductory course is designed to present a broad overview of the field of gerontology by examining some of the major issues, problems, and solutions related to an aging society. We will also investigate research methodology, theories of aging, and future implications of an aging society at local, national and international levels. The value of interdisciplinary and life course perspectives will be emphasized.

Please note: This is a course where all identities are respected.

Course Objectives:

The student will:

1. Understand and indicate competency for the interplay of biological, psychological and social factors as they influence the life-long course of aging.
2. Appreciate and apply the value of the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary nature of the field of gerontology.
3. Describe and use several prominent theories of aging in written assignments.
4. Identify several specific demographic trends and discuss the implications for individuals, communities, states, nations and the world.
5. Identify a broad range of issues and concerns of older adults and make recommendations for improving their quality of life.
6. Explain the functions of various service and professional organizations that are part of the aging network.
7. Understand some of the unique features of doing gerontological research.
8. Understand their own attitudes and beliefs about aging and older adults and make their views more consistent with information gained from the course.
9. Become more familiar with career opportunities related to aging.
10. Meet their own personal goals for the course, particularly to recognize the value of engaging in community service as a method of gaining knowledge while helping others.

Teaching Methods:

Lectures, discussions, videos, assigned readings, case studies.

Evaluation:

Evaluation includes the quality and depth of participation in discussions, assigned exercises, and written assignments. On line attendance is gauged by CANVAS analytics, where individual student participation is assessed through such means as participation in discussion boards and accessing CANVAS modules. Participation may be evaluated in additional ways as specified by the individual faculty's syllabus. Dismissal from a course and/or the college can result from unprofessional behavior.

Grading Scale:

Letter Name	Range	
A	100%	to 93%
A-	92%	to 90%

B+	89%	to 87%
B	86%	to 83%
B-	82%	to 80%
C+	79%	to 77%
C	76%	to 73%
C-	72%	to 70%
D+	69%	to 67%
D	66%	to 63%
D-	62%	to 60%
E	59%	to 0%

Topical Outline of Major Areas to be Covered:

1. We are growing older
2. The evolution of aging
3. Physical changes and the aging process
4. Health, wellness, and sexuality
5. Mental health and mental abilities
6. Death, dying and bereavement
7. Living environments of older adults
8. Economics of aging: Work and older persons
9. Retirement
10. Primary support systems – family and other
11. Formal support systems
12. Medical care, Medicare, and medications

13. Assisted living/ Long-term care; elders at risk; elder abuse

14. The policies and politics of aging: A new paradigm

Course Assignments:

Journal Article:

The purpose of the Research article analysis assignment in the Introduction to Aging course is based on the following reasons (or the overarching rationale):

To prepare students to learn about the importance of peer-reviewed journal articles in the field of aging as the optimal experience to discover scientific findings about aging issues.

To have student appreciate the importance of data-driven (empirical-based) research in the field of aging so that evidence-based policies, programs and services, and interventions can be implemented to better serve older adults and their families.

To facilitate the understanding of the role of theory, methodology, and practical applications (and implications) of scholarship in the field of aging.

To have students realize and discern the strengths and limitations of research in the field of aging. Why? Students must be able to become "consumers" of research; that is, to be able to acknowledge and discover that virtually all publications have facets of good and "not so good" dimensions of research activity (if compared to an ideal). Some research is lacking in theory; some research is weak in methodological structure, some research is lacking in any practical or applied aspects. Our goal here is to have students take a critical role in evaluating all research so that they (we) are careful in our interpretation of what is being published as "science" or research or "facts."

Students will know that our knowledge on aging issues is incremental, evolving, and to some degree provisional. The process of knowledge is an ongoing activity. We must be careful and to some degree skeptical - as to the validity and reliability of findings. We proceed with caution and robust diligence to what we know - and do not know.

Requirements: Students will select a total of 2 journal articles from an approved list of gerontological journals (see list), and write a minimum 2-page summary (typed, double spaced) of each. Pick research based articles that are of interest to you personally or that relate to your major field of study and your research articles MUST be associated with KEY TERMS found in the textbook and module overview pages. Please analyze each article separately in terms of: What is (are) the key term(s)? What are the research questions? What is the reason for conducting the study? What was the sample size or profile? Identify major findings and conclusions. Are there implications for the future? What were the limitations and weaknesses of the each article? And, what was your opinion about the study or what did you learn?

I suggest using the AgeLine or Academic Search Premier database to help locate, identify, and select your research articles. You can find out more about AgeLine or Academic Search Premier by going to the database home page. at the Marriott library. The articles must come from different journals. The journal articles should be published in the last 2 years or so (2015 to present) and students must provide the full

reference in APA format (e.g., author(s), year, title, journal, volume, number, and pages) to the article along with the summary. Simply replicating or using the abstract of the article, or any part of it, for the assignment is plagiarism and this would result in no credit for the assignment. Further sanctions would be pursued as necessary including a failing grade for the entire course.

This assignment allows students to individualize the course readings to meet their own personal and professional interests and will help students become more familiar with the professional gerontology literature.

*Please view the Library Tutorials and Help learning module prior to beginning this assignment. Also, there is a list of acceptable journals. The use of any other journal will require permission.

Older Adult Interview:

Each student will conduct three interviews with ONE (1) person (the same person) age 65 or over (preferably 85+) using a semi-structured guide prepared by the instructor. The interviews will take about 30-45 minutes each and deal with the elder's sense of subjective well-being, self-concept, attitudes about aging, predictors of optimal aging and life satisfaction, and specific needs and concerns of the elder.

Interview Guide and Forms for Older Consultant Assignment

Interview guide and Forms: OA Interview Guide.docx

Students will complete the interview forms and write a 5-page paper (double spaced) describing the circumstances of the interview and their reactions to what was learned through the experience of conducting the interview. The paper should integrate class lecture and/or text reading with the interview experience. You will receive a higher (better) grade if you weave in class concepts and issues. The completed interview/reaction paper will be graded on a scale up to 60 points. No record of the interviewee's names will be kept to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. This assignment is due by the end of the semester.

Quizzes

Each week you will take a five question multiple choice quiz based on the textbook readings. These weekly quizzes take the place of a multiple choice final exam at the end of the course.

Cumulative Essays

This is the final assignment of the course. These are not discussion questions, nor are they something quick to dash off an answer to. These are full questions and require full answers. The bad news, and the good news, is that there are only two questions.

Please consider your entire semester, remember what you have learned and discovered, and provide a comprehensive, detailed, insightful answer to each of these. Use examples from the text, the course, the video lectures, and the supplemental assignments.

These are not opinion pieces. You must be able to support your answers.

Your question 1 answer should be a page at minimum and your question 2 answer should be two pages minimum. Limit your submission to six pages

Required Textbooks:

The text for this class will be Introduction to Aging: A Positive, Interdisciplinary Approach, by Sugar, Riekse, Holstege & Faber, first edition, published by Springer Publishing Company, ISBN-13: 978-0826108807.

You may purchase this book at the Campus Store or online

Learning Resources:

Canvas

Canvas is where the course content, grades, and communication will reside for this course.

<http://utah.instructure.com>

Your username is your U#, and your password is your global password (the same one you use for CIS or UMail).

For Canvas questions, contact the Teaching and Learning Technologies Help Desk.

801 581-6112 Option 2

classhelp@utah.edu

For passwords, or any other computer-related technical support contact the IT Help Desk.

801 581-4000

<http://it.utah.edu>.

helpdesk@utah.edu

Course Policies

Canvas Notification Preferences

Please make sure your Canvas notification preferences are set so that you will receive course announcements ASAP or Daily (click the appropriate link to set your preference).

Instructor Feedback/Communication

I will be in the course several times a week. Please allow 48 hours during the week for turnaround time on questions, requests, or feedback. I do not expect you to be available on weekends and ask you for the same courtesy.

Late Policy:

Please notify me in advance when you have a situation that will affect your timeliness in submitting assignments. It is understood that emergencies can arise that may require special arrangements with the instructor. To receive any partial credit, all work must be turned in by the final project due date and time.

Assignments are due the dates and times specified in the syllabus. The course does not have extra credit. You may, however, turn in work after the due date, or re-submit substandard work, for a single grade deduction (i.e., a B instead of an A, a C+ instead of a B+).

Interactive Video Conferencing:

Any dialogue you engage in on interactive video conferencing sites that the University of Utah supports, such as ACANO, is publicly available. This is true even in "private" chat rooms or while "instant messaging." Professional dialogue and behavior is expected at all times.

University of Utah Student Code:

The Student Code is spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the code. The code also specified proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. Students will receive sanctions for violating one or more of these proscriptions. The faculty will enforce the ^[1]_{SEP} code. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee.

Plagiarism:

Refer to University Regulations- Policy 6-400 - Code Of Student Rights and Responsibilities. *Plagiarism* means the intentional unacknowledged use or incorporation of any other person's work in, or as the basis for, one's own work offered for academic consideration or credit, or for public presentation. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, representing as one's own, without attribution, any other individual's words, phrasing, ideas, sequence of ideas, information or any other mode or content of expression. While students may not realize they are plagiarizing, the consequences may be significant and may affect program progression. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with these and other official documents.

Students with Disabilities:

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you have physical or mental health disabilities

that may compromise your success with program progression and will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

If you are struggling with mental health concerns, please contact the University Counseling Center at 801-581-6826 during business hours. For after-hours urgent concerns, contact the 24/7 Crisis line at 801-587-3000.

Syllabus Changes:

The syllabus is not a binding legal contract. It may be modified by the instructor when the student is given reasonable notice of the modification, particularly when the modification is done to rectify an error that would disadvantage the student.

Dismissal from a course and/or the College can result from unprofessional behavior