Course and Instructor Details

Sociology SYP3730 (0001): Aging and The Life Course

Monday/Wednesday 2:00 – 3:15 pm, Bellamy 23

Instructor: Dawn C. Carr

Office Hours: Pepper Center, Second Floor, By appointment and Mondays 3:30-4:30

Email: dccarr@fsu.edu

Course Description

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This course will introduce you to aging from a variety of perspectives, integrating information from various social science disciplines. We will focus on several important areas of theory and research, including the way older people interface with society and the tools we use to study older adults and aging processes.

Course objectives

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At the conclusion of this course, you should be able to:

- Identify the major issues shaping the study of aging
- Understand major concepts, theories, and methods that are used to examine aging at the individual and societal levels
- Describe what factors influence an individual as s/he ages over the life course
- Critically analyze major “problems” facing older adults and identify solutions
- Link personal experiences and knowledge about aging to course concepts, research, and theories
Student responsibilities and course organization

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To accomplish these objectives, we will rely heavily on class discussions and in-class engagement. In order for these activities to work successfully, you must do each reading prior to the class in which it will be discussed, attend class, and be ready to contribute any questions, comments, or ideas that you have about the readings. Attendance is MANDATORY.

****REVISED AUGUST 31, 2017****

As discussed and agreed upon in class, the official attendance consequences are as follows: individuals who accumulate more than five unexcused absences will receive an F in this course regardless of performance during the remainder of the term. I expect that you will use unexcused absences sparingly. If you are facing any personal troubles that are interfering with your ability to attend class, please let me know as soon as possible.

Course Guidelines

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- Arrive to class at least 5 minutes early, and I won’t keep you late.
- Turn off your cell phone.
- Treat your classmates with respect.
- Regularly check your FSU email account and the course Blackboard page.
- Submit your final paper online through Blackboard.
- Exams will occur at the FSU testing center, make up exams will be entirely essay form.

Required Texts

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One book is required for this course:


Other readings will be posted on Blackboard. If you have any trouble accessing any articles, please let me know well before class so I can fix the problem.

Official Copyright Notice: This course website may contain copyrighted materials that are used in compliance with U.S. Copyright Law. Under that law, materials may not be saved to your computer, revised, copied, or distributed without permission. They are to be used in support of instructional activity as part of this course only and shall be limited to the duration of the course, unless otherwise specified by the instructor or owner of the material. You may only download or print materials at the direction of your instructor, who knows which materials are copyrighted and which are not.

Assignments

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Online Discussion Board (20%) – During the course of the semester, you will be asked to write 10 short responses on the discussion board using course concepts.

Total points possible: 200

Exam #1 (20%) – Your first exam will take place October 3rd. You are required to sign up for a one-hour block to take the exam at the testing center, 12 pm – 1 pm, 1 pm – 2 pm, or 2 pm – 3 pm.

Total points possible: 200

Exam #2 (20%) – Your second exam will take place November 16th. You are required to sign up for a one-hour block to take the exam at the testing center, 12 pm – 1 pm, 1 pm – 2 pm, or 2 pm – 3 pm.

Total points possible: 200

Final exam (20%) – Your final exam will take place December 12th at 7:30 am. You are required to sign up for a one-hour block to take the exam at the testing center, 7:30 am – 8:30 am, 8:30 am – 9:30 am, or 9:30 am – 10:30 am.

Total points possible: 200

Final Paper (20%) – This paper involves you developing a family tree going back five generations. You will obtain this information by interviewing family members (i.e., speak by phone or in person). You will then write about your family tree, reflecting on how different generations within your own family moved through the life course, using course concepts to describe your family experiences. Your paper cannot be turned in any later than December 2nd.

Total points possible: 200

Grading

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Personal emergencies, mechanical failures, and illnesses affect us all, often at the worst possible times. However, I must hold everyone in the class to the same standards. Late work loses 1 grade tier per calendar day (including weekend days). Therefore, you should discuss with me ahead of time or as soon as possible any serious situation beyond your control that interferes with timely completion of your assignments. Missed exams and work not submitted by semester’s end receives a grade of zero. Every student will be graded on the same basis for the same work, so be sure to plan ahead and begin your assignments well before their due dates. If you begin to fall behind in any of the course requirements, you should take action early and come talk with me about it so we can remedy the situation before it’s too late.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>930-1000</td>
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https://campus.fsu.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContentEditable.jsp?content_id=8195138_1&course_id=6423822_1&mode=reset
Writing Rubric

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Your final paper/project and the essay portion of exams will be assessed such that grades will be awarded according to the following criteria:

A: Thesis is well developed and clearly focused. Supporting evidence or arguments are thorough and relevant. Conflicting evidence or arguments are consistently acknowledged. Appropriate sources are cited to support statements. The paper/essay is well organized, with correct grammar and spelling. The paper/essay closely adheres to the assignment.

B: Thesis is well developed, but may not be as clearly focused as in the top category. Supporting evidence or arguments are less thorough and/or relevant than in the top category, but are still substantial. Conflicting evidence or arguments are usually acknowledged. Appropriate sources are cited to support statements. The paper/essay is well organized and clearly, if not elegantly, written. The paper/essay fairly closely adheres to the assignment.

C: Thesis is adequate, but may need further explication or definition. Supporting evidence or arguments are adequate but somewhat sketchy, or their relevance is not always made clear. Conflicting evidence or arguments are given little acknowledgment or are not dealt with successfully. Appropriate sources are not always cited. The paper/essay is adequately organized, but may contain enough structural flaws or mechanical errors to significantly distract from the content. The paper/essay does not adhere to all aspects of the assignment.

D: Thesis is unclear or missing. Supporting evidence or arguments are irrelevant or missing. Conflicting evidence or arguments are missing or not clearly developed. Appropriate sources are not cited. The paper/essay is not adequately organized and has many mechanical errors. The paper/essay does not adhere to the assignment.

F: No content appears or is largely incorrect in addressing the subject matter.

Contact

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The best way to contact me is via email. My address is dccarr@fsu.edu. I can be reached during my office hours (Mondays 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm). If you'd like to meet in person, I am happy to set up another time that works better for you. I encourage you to raise specific questions or concerns you
have about the class as they arise. Don’t wait until it’s too late! Also, feel free to chat about anything that’s on your mind or that you would like to learn more about in class. We will be using Blackboard regularly, so please familiarize yourself with this resource and check it out regularly. If you need help learning about how to use Blackboard, please let me know as soon as possible so I can direct you to someone who can help tutor you on this program.

### Academic Honor Policy

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The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University’s expectations for the integrity of students’ academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "... be honest and truthful and ... [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at [http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy](http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy))

### Student Conduct Code

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Students are expected to adhere to the principles described in the FSU Student Conduct Code, available at: [http://srr.fsu.edu/conduct_code.html](http://srr.fsu.edu/conduct_code.html). You are expected to maintain the highest professional standards of conduct in class. Violation of the conduct code carries a range of penalties that can range from a reduced grade to expulsion.

### Americans with Disabilities Act

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Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

1. register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
2. bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type.

Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the Student Disability Resource Center has been provided. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center
874 Traditions Way, 108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice), (850) 644-8504 (TDD), sdrc@admin.fsu.edu
[http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/](http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/)

### Free Tutoring from FSU

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On-campus tutoring and writing assistance is available for many courses at Florida State University. For more information, visit the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) Tutoring Services’
comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options - see http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring or contact tutor@fsu.edu. High-quality tutoring is available by appointment and on a walk-in basis. These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.

Reading-Writing Center

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The Reading-Writing Center (RWC) offers free one-on-one reading and writing tutorials for all FSU students. To make an appointment, visit this website: www.fsu.mywconline.com or call them at (850) 644-6495 to register by phone. The RWC is not a proofreading/editing service where staff members simply correct students' work. Rather the RWC staff offer guidance, feedback and encouragement to: 1) help students understand what options, strategies and techniques are available to them at every step of the writing process, 2) help students become more aware of the influence of words and images, and 3) help students build confidence in their work.

University Attendance Policy

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Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Excused Absences

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The following and only the following absences are eligible to be excused: Religious holidays, as specified in FSU policy; absences due to representing FSU at official functions, including intercollegiate debating or varsity sports events; verified emergencies and/or medical illness. Medical illness refers to conditions that are serious in nature and require treatment by medical professionals and/or surgical or other treatments. Documentation from a physician is required for an absence to be excused.

Religious Holidays

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Students are allowed to miss class due to observance of religious holidays, but they are still responsible for all materials assigned outside and covered in class on the day(s) missed. You must talk with your instructor in advance of missing a class for religious holiday observance reasons.

Incomplete Grades
Missing work or uncompleted assignments are insufficient reasons for a grade of Incomplete. An Incomplete grade will not be given except under extenuating circumstances at the instructor’s discretion. Guidelines require that students seeking an “I” must be passing the course.

**Syllabus Change Policy**

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

**Schedule**

Week 1: August 29, 31

Course introduction: syllabus and expectations

Read prior to class on August 31:

- [https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-third-age/201402/how-old-are-you-really-and-does-it-matter](https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-third-age/201402/how-old-are-you-really-and-does-it-matter)

• **Discussion Board Assignment #1 (Due September 5th at 11:59 pm)**

Week 2: September 7 (No Class on September 5, Labor Day)

Chapter 1: Aging and Society

Week 3: September 12, 14

Chapter 1: Aging and Society, cont.

• **Discussion Board Assignment #2: based on video shown in class on September 14th (Due September 18th at 11:59 pm)**

Week 4: September 19, 21

Chapter 2: Studying Aging

• **Discussion Board Assignment #3: based on video link provided (Due September 27th at 11:59 pm)**

Week 5: September 26, 28

Chapter 3: An Aging World: Demographic Perspectives
• Discussion Board Assignment #4: based on video link provided (Due October 2\textsuperscript{nd} at 11:59 pm)

\textbf{Week 6: October 3, 5}

Chapter 4: The Aging Individual in Social Context

• Exam #1 – 12:00; 1:00; 2:00 (October 3)

\textbf{Week 7: October 10, 12}

Chapter 4: The Aging Individual in Social Context, cont.

Chapter 5: Aging and the Family: Personal and Institutional Contexts

• Introduction of Final Paper

• Discussion Board Assignment #5: based on Psychology Today reading (Due October 16\textsuperscript{th} at 11:59 pm)

\textbf{Week 8: October 17, 19}

Chapter 5: Aging and the Family: Personal and Institutional Contexts, cont

Chapter 6: Work and Retirement in the Life Course

• Discussion Board Assignment #6: (Due October 23\textsuperscript{rd} at 11:59 pm)

\textbf{Week 9: October 24, 26}

Chapter 6: Work and Retirement in the Life Course, cont

*****International programs presentation*****

• Discussion Board Assignment #7: (Due October 30\textsuperscript{th} at 11:59 pm)

\textbf{Week 10: October 31, November 2}

Chapter 7: Economics and the Aging of Society

\textbf{Week 11: November 7, 9}

Chapter 8: Aging and Health

• Discussion Board Assignment #8: (Due November 11\textsuperscript{th} at 11:59 pm)

\textbf{Week 12: November 14, 16}

Study Session/Exam #2 Prep (November 14th)

• Exam #2 – 12:00; 1:00; 2:00 (November 16) -- in class or in testing center, your choice

\textbf{Week 13: No Class}
Focus on completing your final paper (reminder, it's due on December 2) and your discussion board post.

- **Discussion Board Assignment #9: (Due November 22nd at 11:59 pm)**

**Week 14: November 28, 30**

Chapter 11: Baby Boomers and the Changing Landscape of Aging

*** In place of class on November 30, we will attend a lecture for students: "Aging 3.0: Jobs, Opportunities and the New Frontier"

We will meet in Broad Auditorium, Pepper Center, 636 W. Call St., and I will have an attendance sheet for you to sign.

Please arrive early if at all possible. It starts at 2 pm.

- **Turn In Final Paper: (Due December 2nd at 11:50 pm)**

**Week 15: December 5, 7**

Chapter 11: Baby Boomers and the Changing Landscape of Aging, cont

Chapter 12: The Dynamics of Aging in Our Future

The last day of class, we will spend a short amount of time discussing any questions related to the study guide in preparation for the final exam.

- **Discussion Board Assignment #10: (Due December 8th at 11:59 pm)**

****Final Exam: December 12 (7:30; 8:30; 9:30 am at testing center, or in class from 7:30 am to 9:30 am)****

**Final Paper Assignment**

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**Part 1,** create a family tree going back five generations. If your family history prevents you from covering five full generations, you will be able to explain the generational history for your family in your written portion. This assignment will require you to make some phone calls to family members or meet in person to get as much information as you are able, talking with parents, aunts and uncles, and grandparents.

**Part 2,** for each person in your family tree, describe their lives using the following characteristics:

- Educational attainment
- Primary career
- Race/Ethnicity
- Date of birth
- Age first married (if married)
- Age at birth of first child (if they had children)
- Age at death and cause of death (if died)
- Important life events and timing of those events
- Important historical events that they lived through and their age at the time of the event
**Part 3**, create a timeline from the birth of the first family member in your tree to today in a separate document. Under the timeline, write in major historical events. For example, write down when women got the right to vote, the year of the Great Depression, various wars, 9/11, etc. You must include at least one historical event per each 15 years. Because this assignment will be submitted electronically, feel free to modify the page size to fit your needs.

**Part 4**, answer the following questions in short answer form. Remember to use 1” margins all around, double spacing, and 12 inch, Times New Roman font. Make sure to reference your course materials in your response.

- What factors influenced the outcome and make up of your nuclear and extended family as it exists today? (consider period effects (historical events), cohort effects (changes in sizes of families), and personal decisions/cultural factors)
- What aspects of your family seem to be “typical” to what other families have experienced and what aspects seem to be “distinct” compared to other families during similar historical periods (e.g., number of children, life span length, years of education).
- How will social policies impact on how you navigate the life course, and in what ways? (e.g., how long you think you will work, what you plan to do in retirement, your health in later life)
- Taking into consideration what you learned about the factors that shape the aging process, and the goals you have for your own future, describe how you will structure your own life course so that you have the greatest likelihood of having an “ideal” later life. Make sure to take into consideration how long you think you are likely to live.

Grading: this assignment is worth a total of 200 points. Part 1 and 2 are together worth 50 points, Part 3 is worth 30 points, and Part 4 is worth 120 points.

Examples of Part 1 and Part 3.