Psychology of Aging

Psyc 520-001, Fall 2012

Dr. Mary E. McKemy
(pronounced Mc-KAY-me, but feel free to call me Mary)
Kinard 123 (down the hall from the Psychology Office)
323-2643 (Office) and 328-9978 (Home -- please call before 10 pm)
memckemy@comporium.net

Office Hours: MW 11:00 – 11:45, M 4:00-5:00
Feel free to just stop by or make an appointment.

Scheduled Dates: Class begins Monday, August 27 and ends Monday, December 3
Class meets in Owens 103


Important Rule #1: Unless I specifically say that I am changing this syllabus, follow what is written.

Important Rule #2: You are responsible for everything said in class - including any and all instances where I change this syllabus - regardless of attendance or absence!

Important Rule #3: Early assignments are always welcomed. Late assignments, however, are not. Ten percent (10%) of the assignment's points will be deducted on all late assignments for each day late (weekends are included).

Important Rule #4: You are free to agree and disagree with me, but make sure that all contact with me is done in a respectful manner.

Important Rule #5: Grammar counts in everything done outside of class.

The purpose of this course:
- to explore the nature of aging and its relevance in psychology
- to introduce you to the major issues in the aging process

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:
- Use the concepts, language, and major theories of psychology to explain aging
- Understand ethical issues as they relate to aging
- Use critical thinking to identify and evaluate the source, content, and credibility of information
- Evaluate new ideas with an open but critical mind
- Use critical reasoning to recognize, develop, defend, and criticize arguments and other persuasive appeals
- Apply aging concepts, theories, and research findings to everyday life
- Recognize that ethically complex situations can develop in the application of psychological principles
- Reflect on their own aging and find meaning in it

ATTENDANCE
- You will receive 20 points each day you participate constructively in class. Class participation points cannot be made up. If you will be out of class for any reason (including all instances of excused absences),
• **You have a maximum of 1 unexcused absence in this class.** Subsequent unexcused absences will result in a loss of 1 letter grade for each absence. Take your absence sparingly.
• Discuss cases of emergencies (e.g., hospitalization, death of a family member, etc.) with me, and we’ll see if alternate arrangements can be made. Discretion is mine.
• It is your responsibility to make sure I know you are at each class.
• Remember that you are responsible for what is said in class regardless of attendance.

**ARRIVING LATE** is disruptive to the class and to the professor. Please arrive on time. If you arrive late, you must inform me at the end of class that you came in late. Otherwise, you will not get credit for being present. You will receive five extra credit points for showing me this sentence individually within the first two days of the semester if half or more of the class points it out to me. You will receive ten extra credit points if less than half the class points it out to me.

**PROFESSIONALISM**
You are adults and emerging professionals, and you will be treated as such. What does that mean? It means:
• you have my trust until you give me reason not to trust you
• you have ideas of your own that agree and disagree with mine and your classmates
• you are expected to be tolerant of others’ ideas when they differ from yours

It also means:
• you will have read and thought about the material prior to coming to class
• you will use all resources available to you (library, internet, community, etc.)

And it means **honesty**:
• any form of cheating or plagiarism will likely result in your failing the course.
• cheating is defined as:
  • using any resources outside of those explicitly allowed
• plagiarism is defined as:
  • using someone else's work and directly or indirectly claiming it as your own
  • using someone else's ideas without giving them credit

**GRADING** in this course is based upon participation, homework, tests, paper, and presentation. The breakdown of grades is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Leadership</th>
<th>100</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>14 days @ 20 pts. each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Healthy Living Journal</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate Student Project</td>
<td>(100)</td>
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</tbody>
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The final grades will be as follows:

- A = 90-100%
- B+ = 87-89%
- B = 80-86%
- C+ = 77-79%
- C = 70-76%
- D+ = 67-69%
- D = 60-66%
- F = 0-59%

**CLASS LEADERSHIP**
You will have the opportunity to lead the class discussion for one of the class days. It will involve
• Reading the chapter and article
• Submitting a list of 5-6 discussion questions to the class the week before your chapter is to be discussed
• Leading the discussion on the night of your chapter / article(s)

CLASS PARTICIPATION
This course is discussion-based, so class participation is crucial. You will need to
• Read the chapter and article(s) for that night
• Prepare a typed response to the discussion questions
• Actively participate in the discussion
• Demonstrate a deep level of thinking about the issues
• Demonstrate a sensitivity to the needs of older people
• Demonstrate a tolerance to differing opinions within the class discussion

SERVICE LEARNING
You will engage in 20 hours of service learning at facilities that serve the older population. More information will be provided in class.

REFLECTION PAPER
You will write an 8-10 page reflection on your experiences in this course, including the readings, the discussions, the service learning, the healthy living journal, the group project, and the graduate student project (if applicable). What did you learn? What surprised you? What do you think should be done differently? Please use 14-point font, 1” margins, and staple your paper (no paper clips or folders).

HEALTHY LIVING JOURNAL
Each week, come to class with a list of 5-10 things you can do to help your own aging process based on the topic for that week. Compile these in a Word document to form your journal to submit the last night of class.

GROUP PROJECT
In response to an aging population, Countryside Management Corporation, a construction company, has hired you to design a local living facility for people aged 65+. In groups of 3-4, design your living facility that will maximize health and well-being for this age group. In your design, consider:
• Physical environment, including structural modifications for varying physical limitations
• Physical, mental, and social needs
• Traditional and alternative forms of health treatment
• Mental health
• Living arrangements
• Needs for involvement in the larger community

As a group, you will make a 15-minute presentation “selling” your design to senior citizens (your classmates).

Consider using graphics to portray
• The blue print of your facility
• What the environment might look like
• Anything else you’d like to use in selling your design

GRADUATE STUDENT PROJECT
Graduate students (and undergraduates taking this course for graduate credit) will design a new product to help the aging population. In your life experience as well as your service learning, what needs are unaddressed that you could meet by developing a new product? Design it. And present it in class.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
I have a heart for students with disabilities, probably because I have a visual impairment and remember having to work extra hard in college. The goal of services to students with disabilities is not to give an undue
advantage or somehow make it easier or lower standards. Rather, the goal is to give all students an even playing field so that everyone has the opportunity to do well, if they work hard at it. If you have issues with a disability, make sure to contact Gena Smith in Services for Students with Disabilities at 323-3290. Once you have your letter from her, contact me, and we’ll set up a meeting where we can discuss your accommodations and how you can best succeed in this class.

COMPUTERS, CELL PHONES, ETC.
With the availability of wireless internet, laptops are more of a distraction than a help in class. Thus laptops are not permitted unless they are a disability accommodation. You may have your cell phones and other handheld electronic devices as long as they are turned off (or on vibrate) for class.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT
As noted in the Student Conduct Code: “Responsibility for good conduct rests with students as adult individuals.” The policy on student academic misconduct is outlined in the “Student Conduct Code Academic Misconduct Policy” in the online Student Handbook (http://www2.winthrop.edu/studentaffairs/handbook/StudentHandbook.pdf).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Day</th>
<th>Chapter in Book</th>
<th>Article Title(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, August 27</td>
<td>Introduction to Aging</td>
<td>Contexts of aging: assessing evaluative age stereotypes in different life domains.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, September 3</td>
<td>Theory and Research in Aging</td>
<td>A Conception of Adult Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, September 10</td>
<td>Biological Aging and Health</td>
<td>Health, Life Expectancy, and Health Care Spending among the Elderly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, September 17</td>
<td>Sensation, Perception, and Attention</td>
<td>The Role of Sensory Factors in Cognitive Aging Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, September 24</td>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>Appraisal of Memory Functioning and Memory Performance in Healthy Ageing and Early-Stage Alzheimer’s Disease</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, October 1</td>
<td>Intellectual Functioning</td>
<td>Wechsler Intelligence Scale Profiles in Alzheimer Type Dementia and Healthy Ageing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, October 8</td>
<td>Cognition and Problem Solving</td>
<td>Cognitive Changes in Healthy Older Adults</td>
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<td><strong>Monday, October 15</strong></td>
<td><strong>Fall Break</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, October 22</td>
<td>Personality and Coping</td>
<td>Personality and Health, Subjective Well-Being, and Longevity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, October 29</td>
<td>Social Interaction and Social Ties</td>
<td>1. Promoting Functional Health in Midlife and Old Age: Long-Term Protective Effects of Control Beliefs, Social Support, and Physical Exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, October 29</td>
<td>Social Interaction and Social Ties</td>
<td>2. Population based study of social and productive activities as predictors of survival among elderly Americans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, November 5</td>
<td>Employment, Retirement, and Living Arrangements</td>
<td>1. Psychological Perspectives on the Changing Nature of Retirement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, November 12</td>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>Selective Attention to Emotion in the Aging Brain. Psychology and Aging</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, November 19</td>
<td>Coping with Death, Dying, and Bereavement</td>
<td>1. Bereavement after caregiving or unexpected death: Effects on elderly spouses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, November 19</td>
<td>Coping with Death, Dying, and Bereavement</td>
<td>2. Imaging the alternatives to life prolonging treatments: Elders’ beliefs about the dying experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, November 26</td>
<td>Aging in the Future</td>
<td>Japan: Super-Aging Society Preparing for the Future</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, December 3</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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**NOTE:** At times, it may be necessary to adapt this schedule. At such times, all changes will be announced in class. It is your responsibility to keep up with all changes (whether in class or not).