This syllabus is subject to changes. These changes will be relayed to you via email and during class. Please make sure you check your email daily. If you are absent from class, please contact me and/or check with a classmate to determine if there were any assignment changes.

INTRODUCTION

The Sociology of Aging course provides students with a comprehensive understanding of the process of aging and older people. This course reflects the multidisciplinary field of gerontology, which includes the historical, cultural, biological, physiological, psychological, and social aspects of aging. Our focus is the sociology of aging with an emphasis on “aging well.”

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

On a practical level, students will acquire knowledge and be able to apply techniques about how making certain choices can improve your longevity and quality of life. You will also acquire information that you can share with your parents and grandparents about how they can age well. Finally, the knowledge that you gain in this course will be useful to you professionally, regardless of your occupation.

On an academic level, the text and instruction will provide knowledge of core methodological and theoretical issues as well as the interdisciplinary perspectives of aging. Social aspects, economics, health, dying and death, and politics of aging are also covered in the course.

Aging and The Life Course (Transitions Across The Life Span) will be an important learning experience as it applies to the field of social gerontology.

Evaluation of student performance will include tests, quizzes, a group project and presentation, writing assignments and a research paper.

As your instructor I hope to provide a connection of your personal concerns about aging to larger structural issues such as care of frail elderly, political decisions, societal resources for the aging and careers in gerontology.

GRADUATE STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

1. Graduate students will meet all requirements of undergraduates in the course as outlined in the syllabus.
2. Graduate students will be required to give (during class) a 20 minute presentation on a related aging topic pre-approved and scheduled with instructor.
3. Graduate Students’ research paper will be 12 pages with 10 resources.
4. Graduate Students’ tests and final exam will be essay intensive.
COURSE ORGANIZATION AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
Course information is presented through readings (textbook & assigned articles), lectures, homework assignments, in-class exercises, discussions, and videos.
The learning environment consists of:

Students - whose responsibilities include:
- attending class
- completing all writing assignments by due date
- completing all readings by the assigned dates,
- participating in class discussions, group projects
- completing Research Paper by due date
- taking tests and quizzes
- showing respect for others.

Instructor - whose responsibilities include:
- attending class
- facilitating classroom discussions
- acting as a resource for course information
- providing feedback on student ideas and learning
- showing respect for others.

Classroom Behavior Expectations
- All students should consider the classroom a safe environment.
- You will be treated with respect regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability.
- Diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged.
- You should pay attention by discussing and listening. No sleeping, reading newspapers, or doing work that is not part of the class.
- No use of cell phones or hand held technology will be allowed. You will receive a Zero if using during test, other times will result in point deductions.

An appropriate use of hand-held technology has been approved by the college of Arts and Sciences. You will be responsible for adhering to this policy and may view it at http://www2.winthrop.edu/artscience/AppropriateUseApprovedPolicyMar2010.pdf.

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). More explicit policies relative to a specific discipline/department may also be posted in a syllabus.
REQUIRED READINGS
2. Each chapter should be read by the date listed on the syllabus. You will be tested on material in the text
3. Assigned Readings (see below)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
1. **Reading Assignments**: All readings should be completed on the assigned dates. The readings will be sent to you via an email attachment ([SOCL504001@class.winthrop.edu](mailto:SOCL504001@class.winthrop.edu) or [GRNT504001@class.winthrop.edu](mailto:GRNT504001@class.winthrop.edu) listservs) usually on Friday of each week, to be read for the following week’s classes. Please make sure you are subscribed to the listserv. Discussion can only take place when everyone is familiar with the topic.

2. **Tests**: There will be three tests and the final exam, consisting of multiple-choice, short answer and essay questions. (Each test is worth 100 points)

3. **Final Exam** will be worth 100 points

4. **Quizzes**: There may be frequent announced or unannounced quizzes (multiple choice, short answer, or fill-in the blank).

5. **Assignments**: There will be three (3) writing assignments (3 pages typed - 60 points each).
   
6. **Research paper on Aging Well**: Your topic will be related to age or aging issues discussed during the course. A minimum of 8 typed pages, excluding references, title page, and abstract. A minimum of 8 professional references required. (See handout for detailed requirements). 100 points. **Graduate students** will be required to have 12 pages and 10-12 references for their papers.

7. **Group presentations**: group assignments (See handout for more details) 100 points

This course will require organization and a commitment to excellence in order to meet the requirements set forth in the course. This is a 500 level course and the bar is set high, but I know each of you will meet the expectations and enjoy the process - if you stay focused. I encourage you to not procrastinate on any assignments. I encourage you to come to class prepared and willing to discuss topics related to aging and social gerontology. You will be amazed at how much knowledge you will gain about the aging process. Hopefully, you will develop an eagerness to learn even more.

I will be available to assist you whenever you need assistance. I can always be reached by telephone 323-4922 or in my office at 101 Sims or via email at millerl@winthrop.edu . Communication is important to your success. Enjoy the class.
GRADES
Grades are determined by calculating the percentage of the total points you earn (i.e., dividing the points you earn by the total possible points.) There are a total of 800 points to be earned.

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<td>Research Paper</td>
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<td>Outline</td>
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<td>Rough Draft</td>
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<td>Quizzes</td>
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<td>Class Participations</td>
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**TOTAL** 800

CLASS ATTENDANCE:
Attendance to all classes is recommended and encouraged. If you miss more than THREE (3) days of class, I will deduct 5 points from your total points for every absence after the 3. You may miss extra credit opportunities and important in-class discussions. Official documentation may be provided for absences due to family death or personal illness.

**Tardiness:** You may be considered absent if you come to class more than 5 minutes late. Repeated tardiness will lead to deduction in grade.

**Leaving Early:** You will be considered absent if you leave class early without my permission.

Make up tests will only be given with authorized excused absence documentation. No quizzes will qualify for make-up.

**Students with Disabilities**
Winthrop University is dedicated to providing access to education. If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact Gena Smith, Coordinator, the Office of Disability Services at 323-3290, as soon as possible. Once you have your Professor Notification Form, please tell me so that I am aware of your accommodations well before the first {test/paper/assignment}.

If you have questions about accessibility statements or other accommodation issues, please contact ODS. Information about services and accommodations is also available on the ODS website: [www.winthrop.edu/hcs/DS.htm](http://www.winthrop.edu/hcs/DS.htm)
Winthrop’s Academic Success Center is a free resource for all undergraduate students seeking to perform their best academically. The ASC offers a variety of personalized and structured resources that help students achieve academic excellence, such as tutoring, academic skill development (test taking strategies, time management counseling, and study techniques), group and individual study spaces, and academic coaching. The ASC is located on the first floor of Dinkins, Suite 106. Please contact the ASC at 803-323-3929 or success@winthrop.edu. For more information on ASC services, please visit www.winthrop.edu/success.

IMPORTANT DATES

ADD/DROP January 9-13
MLK Holiday January 16- no class
Course Withdrawal deadline March 7
Spring Break – no classes March 12-March 16
Last Class April 23
Final Exam May 2, 2012 6:30 pm Sims 112
COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Jan 9  Introduction & Course Expectations
       Chapter 1 – The Field of Social Gerontology-
       Ageism

Jan 11  Chapter 1 cont’d
       Profile of Older Americans and Careers in Social Gerontology
       Selection of Group Presentation 1st and 2nd choices

Jan 16  NO CLASS Please read chapter 2 and outline
       Chapter 2 – Life Course Transitions
       Chapter 2 – continued

Jan 18  Chapter 3 – Theories of Aging

Jan 23  Chapter 3 – continued

Jan 25  Chapter 4 - Demography: 1st writing assignment due

Feb 1   EXAM # 1 chapters 1-4

Feb 6   Chapter 5 – Old Age and the Welfare State

Feb 8   Discussion of research paper

Feb 13  Chapter 6 – Biological Perspectives on Aging

Feb 15  Chapter 6 – continued
       Selected topic for research paper

Feb 20  Chapter 7 – Psychological Perspectives on Aging

Feb 22  Chapter 7 – Exam # 2 chapters 5, 6, 7
       Group Presentation assigned

Feb 27  Chapter 8 Family Relationships and Social Support Systems

Feb 29  Chapter 8 – continued
       Second writing assignment

Mar 5   Chapter 9 Living Arrangements
       Literature Review Due

Mar 7   Chapter 9 cont’d

Mar 12-16 Spring Break

Mar 19  Chapter 10 Work and Retirement

Mar 21  Test #3 Chapters 8, 9, 10
Mar 26  Chapter 11 Health and Health Care
Outline for research paper due

Mar 28  Chapter 12 Caring for the Frail Elderly

Apr 2   Chapter 13 dying death and bereavement
Apr 4   Chapter 13 continued
Third writing assignment

Apr 9   Chapter 14 – The Economics of Aging
April 11  Chapter 15 Poverty and Inequality
Rough draft due

Apr 16  Chapter 16 Politics of Aging
Apr 18  Presentations Groups 1, 2, 3

Apr 23  Last class – Presentations Groups 4 and 5
Research Paper can be turned in during class or delivered to my office
between 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

EXAM    Chapters 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16
May 2   Monday 6:30 pm Sims 112 Final Exam
This is the only time this exam will be given.

May 2   6:30 pm  Final date for Research Paper. There will be no extensions.
WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

All writing assignments are to be 3 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt font, Times New Roman, 1 inch margins. The 4th page of this assignment should be a cover page with your name, date, your email address and the title of the assignment. The 5th page should be your Works Cited page in APA format.

1. Go to the library and review two research articles, from two major gerontology journals (e.g. The Gerontologist, The Journal of Gerontology, see your list). Both articles should deal with a single topic that interests you (e.g. family, housing, ageism, recreation,). Report should include description and explanation of the methods used, the findings, and conclusions, a synopsis of the abstract. These items will be used in your research paper so play close attention to the format in the articles. Use critical thinking!!!

2. Write an essay. “What Will I Be Like When I am 75?” Describe/discuss your physiological and psychological state: self, environment, social world activities. What caused you to be in that state? How will you adapt to the states you have described? How do you think you will adapt to your condition at that time? Discuss how you might improve the outcome you have described. What resources will be available for you?

3. Write your own obituary and tombstone epitaph. You will also write your Ethical Will (see handout). Discuss why you deserve that epitaph. Are you doing things now that will lead to an epitaph or obituary like this? Discuss the link between how one lives and one’s legacy. Discuss what theories may come to play in this exercise for an older adult as well as yourself.
TOPICS FOR GROUP ASSIGNMENTS

1. Imagine a new rock group that is composed of older people and called “the Rock of Ages.” Design an album cover (both sides) for the group. Write one of the group’s songs and develop a marketing plan for the group. How would you overcome problems with their image, their physical abilities, their looks, transportation, etc. Book some venues/gigs for the group.

2. Design a new type of retirement center or community to meet the needs of the “new older person.” Provide a rough sketch of the floor plan, state the goals of the center, list the type of staff members and professionals that will be available. Create a mission statement, specify the target group, (economic, class, ethnic group, age). Sketch out the programs offered, etc. Be aware of the problems current centers face and of the preferences of younger old people.

3. Discuss the challenges caregivers face and the supports that are available to family caregivers. Visit a local Alzheimer’s facility. Interview the director, and a caregiver if possible, also a staff member. Look at the resources offered by the center.

4. Invent a Seniors Liberation movement with slogans, a list of demands, bumper-stickers, a policy platform, a strategy for national action, etc.

5. Describe the structure and function of the aging network. What weakness plagues the system and what suggestions do you have to improve the system? Compile a resource list for York County that will include contact information and description of the services provided. You may want to create a service-learning project. (contact the Catawba Area Agency on Aging)

6. Compare and contrast the influences of the three types of life events studied by the life course perspective. Give examples of each type of life event and show how it can shape a person’s life. In summarizing the life course perspective present the strengths and weaknesses of this view.

7. Discuss/Describe at least three kinds of support older people give to their families. What roles do grandparents play in their families and why do certain types of people choose certain grandparenting roles? How do men and women differ in the way they play the grandparent role? What new challenges will face grandparents in new types of family structures (e.g. divorced, broken and blended families)?

8. Develop a community outreach program involving Leisure Activities, Education and Recreation. This would include nutrition, physical and health prevention programs, and life-long learning opportunities. Make sure you give a detailed
description of each facet, costs, access, staff, result anticipated just to mention a few.

9. Please provide procedures to recognize and report Elder Abuse. Provide resource contact information

10. You may submit a topic of your own for my approval.

During the second class you will select and turn in the topic you would like to work on for a group presentation. Please select two 1st and 2nd choices. I will then try to honor that selection when placing you with a group of 4 students. Placement may be based on your major. Your group will meet and prepare a presentation of 30 to 45 minutes. You will be assigned a time slot for your presentation.

You may use a variety of presentation techniques from power point, Venn diagrams, mind maps, Inspiration, video, pod or video cast, brochures. Be creative.

All presentations will be evaluated using the following 4 criteria

Theoretical Ideas - application and usage
Creativity - uniqueness of Approach and novelty of ideas
Organization - clarity and sequencing
Class Involvement - ability to get the class to share your excitement and talk about issues.

All group members are required to perform their fair share of the work needed to have a quality presentation. I will need description of each member’s responsibilities.

Use the form below to enter your group’s information and maintain with your syllabus.

Topic # & Title______________________________________________________________

Date of Presentation__________________________________________________________________

Group Members and Contact Information
1.________________________________________________________________________
2.________________________________________________________________________
3.________________________________________________________________________
4.________________________________________________________________________

Meeting Time Available for group members to meet.
1.________________________________________________________________________
2.________________________________________________________________________
3.________________________________________________________________________
4.________________________________________________________________________

If groups need to meet after class in Sims 112 or in the computer lab Sims 211, I will make these spaces available to you. Please reserve ahead of time if you can.
SOCIOLOGY OF AGING (SOCL/GRNT 504)
CLASS PRESENTATION EVALUATION FORM

(All presentations will be evaluated using the following 4 criteria.)

1) **Theoretical Ideas** (25 points)
   
   **Application** (13 points)  Application of theoretical concepts
   **Usage** (12 points)  Appropriate use of terms

2) **Creativity** (25 points)
   
   **Uniqueness of Approach** (13 points)  Handling ideas originally
   **Novelty of ideas** (12 points)  Combining diverse concepts to shed light on a problem or analyzing facts to reach a unique solution or conclusion

3) **Organization** (25 points)
   
   **Clarity** (10 points)  Information presented concisely and precisely
   **Sequencing** (15 points)  Order of ideas and information, points enumerated, conclusions made

4) **Class Involvement** (25 points)  Ability to get the class to share your excitement and talk about relevant issues

Comments:  Total Points _______

**Topic:** ____________________________

**Presenters:**

1. __________
2. __________
3. __________
4. __________
5. __________
6. __________
In the past, most research in gerontology reflected a “problem oriented approach” to the study of aging and older people. While many older people experience disability, institutionalization, poverty, and even abuse, most older people maintain a satisfactory quality of life. Consequently, recent research has focused on positive, adaptive aspects of aging, using such terms as “aging well,” “successful aging,” or “optimal aging.”

Use an aging well approach for this paper. Choose an aging or gerontology-related topic that is of personal or professional interest to you. You may address an age or aging related problem but also consider how it might be overcome personally and/or socially through programs, policies, or services. You will develop the paper through the following process:

1. **Statement of the Topic:** Describe the topic of your paper in one or two sentences. Then write a one-page statement in which you explain the topic in more detail. You will discuss why the topic is of interest to you and also why it is an important issue for society. Use examples. Describe exactly what you want to research. For instance, if you are interested in elder abuse, identify the specific aspects of abuse you will discuss in the paper, such as the causes of abuse or ways to prevent abuse. You will hand in your statement of the topic by **February 16**. I will review and approve your topic and provide suggestions.

2. **Literature Review:** Review the current research literature on your topic. You will need at least 10 articles and books for this paper. (No more than half the references can be books.) Your sources must be professional journals/books and not popular press. Hand in copies of the articles with the final paper. I must approve your references before you write the paper. Literature Review is due **March 7**.

3. **Outline** is due March 28.

4. **Rough Draft and Peer Edit** is due April 13.

5. **The Paper:** The final paper should include an introduction, body, and conclusion. The introduction is a more fully developed discussion of issues described in Item #1 above. In the body of the paper, you should summarize and critique findings from professional sources (articles and books) from your literature review. Describe what you thought was good about the research, bad about it, and how you would improve upon it. For example, discuss the types of research methods used to study the topic. Based on what you have learned from your professional sources, make suggestions for future research, policies, and/or programs. (Use APA Documentation Style)

   **The Paper is due no later than May 2 at 6:30 pm (The day of final exam). You may turn it in during the last lecture on April 25 or you may deliver it to my office 101 Sims on the last day of classes April 25 between the hours of 8:30a.m. – 5p.m.**