

# Psychology of Aging

Psyc 517-001, Spring 2016

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## Dr. Mary E. McKemy

(pronounced Mc-KAY-me, but feel free to call me Mary)  
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**Office Hours:** MW 7:00 – 7:45 and 11:00 – 11:45  
Feel free to just stop by or make an appointment. I am also available by email.

**Scheduled Dates:** Class begins Monday, January 11 and Monday, April 25  
Class meets in Owens 201

Aging and Older Adulthood by Joan Erber, Published by Wiley-Blackwell, 2011

**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

### The process of this course:

- This course is based on class discussions, service learning, and projects. Your active participation is necessary to succeed.

### 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 10 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), plan your grade around not having those points.
- **You have a maximum of 2 unexcused absences 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.

## 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

## 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.

## 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>).

## 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. 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.

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

Class Leadership		100
Class Participation	27 days @ 10 pts. each	270
Service Learning Journal		100
Chapter Questions		130
Journal Article Questions		240
Project		100
Community Project		100
Reflection Paper		100
(Graduate Student Project)		(100)

The final grades will be as follows:

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

## CLASS LEADERSHIP

You will have the opportunity to lead the class discussion for one of the chapters. It will involve

- Reading the article
- Leading the discussion of your article
- It helps to do something creative and enjoyable with your article rather than just answering the questions.

## CLASS PARTICIPATION

This course is discussion-based, so class participation is crucial. You will need to

- Read the chapter(s) and article(s)
- 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 a 4-6 page reflection on your experiences in this course. What did you learn? What surprised you? What do you think should be done differently? Please use 14-point font, 1" margins, and double spaced. Please submit your paper to [memckemy@comporium.net](mailto:memckemy@comporium.net) with your name, Psyc 517, and Reflection Paper in the subject line.

# Schedule

Class Day	Chapter in Book	Article Title(s)
Monday, January 11	Introduction to Class	
Wednesday, January 13 Friday is the last day to drop a class	Presentation Skills	
<b>Monday, January 18</b>	<b>MLK, Jr. Day</b>	
Wednesday, January 20	Introduction to Aging Theory and Research in Aging	
Monday, January 25 Tuesday is the last day to select S/U		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Contexts of aging: assessing evaluative age stereotypes in different life domains.</li> <li>2. A Conception of Adult Development</li> </ol>
Wednesday, January 27	Work Day 1	
Monday, February 1	Biological Aging and Health	
Wednesday, February 3	Sensation, Perception, and Attention	
Monday, February 8		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Health, Life Expectancy, and Health Care Spending among the Elderly</li> <li>2. The Role of Sensory Factors in Cognitive Aging Research</li> </ol>
Wednesday, February 10	Work Day 2	
<b>Monday, February 15</b>	<b>Service Learning Day - No Class</b>	
Wednesday, February 17	Memory	
Monday, February 22	Intellectual Functioning Cognition and Problem Solving	
Wednesday, February 24		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Appraisal of Memory Functioning and Memory Performance in Healthy Ageing and Early-Stage Alzheimer's Disease</li> <li>2. Wechsler Intelligence Scale Profiles in Alzheimer Type Dementia and Healthy Ageing</li> <li>3. Cognitive Changes in Healthy Older Adults</li> </ol>
Monday, February 29	Work Day 3	
Wednesday, March 2	Personality and Coping	
Monday, March 7	Social Interaction and Social Ties	
Wednesday, March 9 Last day to withdraw		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Personality and Health, Subjective Well-Being, and Longevity</li> <li>2. Population based study of social and productive activities as predictors of survival among elderly Americans</li> </ol>
<b>Monday, March 14</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>	
<b>Wednesday, March 16</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>	
Monday, March 21	Work Day 4	
	Employment, Retirement, and Living Arrangements	
Wednesday, March 23 Advising begins for Fall		

Monday, March 28	Mental Health	
Wednesday, March 30		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Living Arrangements, Social Integration, and Change in Functional Health Status</li> <li>2. Selective Attention to Emotion in the Aging Brain</li> </ol>
Monday, April 4	Work Day 5	
Wednesday, April 6 Early Registration begins	Coping with Death, Dying, and Bereavement	
Monday, April 11	Aging in the Future	
Wednesday, April 13		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bereavement after caregiving or unexpected death: Effects on elderly spouses</li> <li>2. Imagining the alternatives to life prolonging treatments: Elders' beliefs about the dying experience</li> <li>3. Japan: Super-Aging Society Preparing for the Future</li> </ol>
Monday, April 18	Student Presentations	Email presentations by midnight Sunday, April 17
Wednesday, April 20	Student Presentations	Service Learning Journal Due
Monday, April 25	Student Presentations	
Wednesday, April 27	<b>Reflection Paper Due via email by 5:00</b>	

- At times it may be necessary to adapt this schedule. If so, all changes will be announced in class and/or email.