Instructor: Mark Williams, PhD, MSW, MDiv
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Phone: (414) 229-4735
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1-4 pm
Email: williame@uwm.edu

Class Schedule: Thursdays, 12:30 – 3:10 pm,
Location: Lapham 253
Course Website Access: www.d2l.uwm.edu (requires log-in with PantherID)

Course Description

Course Prerequisites: Students enrolled in this course must have achieved junior standing and one prior course in social work or graduate student standing.

Social Gerontology: This course explores the dynamic relationships between aging as an experience that is both individual and influenced by social structures and institutions. The goal is to help students understand patterns of individual aging experiences as causes and consequences of patterns within social structures and social systems. At the individual level this course will focus on changing social roles and competencies. At the societal level this course will focus on the full range of social institutions including: family, economic systems, religion, health institutions, and broad concepts of inequality and stratification.

Learning Outcomes: This course is designed to enable students to think critically about the experience of growing old within the social context, and by the end of the course, students will be able to:
1. Apply interdisciplinary perspectives on aging to gerontological social work knowledge and practice.
   - Explain why understanding the biological, psychological, and social changes of aging is important for effective social work practice.
   - Use the life-course perspective to identify ongoing developmental processes and the implications of these processes on life transitions for older adults.
2. Explain why understanding the heterogeneity of older adults is important for social work practice.
   - Evaluate the impact of diversity associated with socio-demographic variables, (e.g., gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and sexual orientation) on older adults as individuals and on their relationships with social institutions.
3. Examine one's own beliefs and values regarding older adults and take action to dispel these myths about aging at interpersonal, institutional, and societal levels.
   ▪ Demonstrate an awareness of values, conflicts and ethical dilemmas that occur in providing services to older adults.

4. Identify empirically supported interventions for practice with older adults.
   ▪ Use knowledge of established research methods to critically evaluate studies supporting interventions and best practices in gerontological social work.
   ▪ Communicate research findings in written and oral form to social work and interdisciplinary audiences.

5. Identify strengths of older adults and resources that support their strengths at individual, family, and community levels.
   ▪ Identify contributions older adults make to families and society.

6. Analyze the reciprocal impact of existing age-related social and health policies and programs on older adults and their families.
   ▪ Demonstrate knowledge of federal, state, and local programs and agencies that create and support services/policies for older adults.
   ▪ Identify the intergenerational implications of social policies and programs.
   ▪ Demonstrate familiarity with services provided in urban and rural communities for older adults and their families.

Learning Environment: Students with physical, learning, psychological or other visible or non-visible disabilities wishing to request accommodations must consult with the Student Accessibility Center (SAC) and submit documentation of a disability. If you have documented such a disability to SAC that requires accommodations or an academic adjustment, please arrange a meeting with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.

Information regarding University policies related to: religious observances, academic conduct, complaint procedures, grade appeals procedures, sexual harassment policy, safety policies and other standing policies/procedures is available at the following website:
http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf

The classroom is a professional environment, and behaving in a professional and ethical manner is mandatory. In this course, you are expected to behave as a professional social worker would in the workplace, including conforming to the NASW Code of Ethics. Engaging in unprofessional conduct in the class will be addressed by the instructor with each student on a case-by-case basis.

Academic Misconduct
Communicating effectively is a core professional skill we will practice extensively in this course. Plagiarism is an example of both academic and professional misconduct and is grounds for a failing grade. Providing full citation for the words or ideas of another author is an essential component of academic honesty and professional ethics. Please refer to the following if you have further questions:
http://www4.uwm.edu/osl/dean/conduct.cfm
Work Load and Credit Hours
Students will need to plan to commit to six hours per week of course-related work beyond the classroom time. This time outside of class will be required to complete the assigned readings and course assignments.

Assignments
Specific instructions for each assignment will be posted on the course website and handed out in class. You are strongly encouraged to refer to the assignment instructions often. If you do not understand the instructions for any of the assignments, please contact me for clarification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments to be Completed by Undergraduate Studentsa</th>
<th>% of Final Gradeb</th>
<th>Assignment Overview (Details will be provided for each assignment)</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exercises</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Students will apply concepts from lectures, discussions, and readings in brief reflective papers and exercises completed before or during each session.</td>
<td>Each Session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Three unannounced reading quizzes consisting of brief, multiple choice questions will be administered over the course of the semester, reviewing basic concepts from readings.</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Life Course Timeline and Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Students will construct a graphic presentation of their life course as projected into the future, and give an oral presentation of their work.</td>
<td>12:30 pm October 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>A mid-term exam will consist of 30 multiple-choice, true/false, and short answer questions, which will be derived from assigned readings, lectures, and discussions.</td>
<td>12:30 pm October 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>A final exam will consist of 50 multiple-choice, true/false, and short answer questions, which will be derived from assigned readings, lectures, and discussions. The exam will cover material across the entire course, however it will emphasize topics covered in the later half (post mid-term) of the course</td>
<td>As Scheduled</td>
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</table>
Undergraduate students may opt to complete the graduate requirements for this course, rather than the above undergraduate requirements, if they notify the instructor in writing by September 19, 2013.

One optional, extra credit exercise may be completed for class credit above and beyond the required assignments. Choosing not to complete an extra credit assignment will not count against a student. This option is available for students completing either the undergraduate or graduate student course requirements. Details on an extra credit exercise will be handed out in class.

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<tr>
<th>Assignments to be Completed by Graduate Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of Final Grade</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 25%                                         | Exercises  
Students will apply concepts from lectures, discussions, and readings in brief reflective papers and exercises completed before or during each session. | Each Session        |
| 15%                                         | Quizzes  
Three unannounced reading quizzes consisting of brief, multiple choice questions will be administered over the course of the semester, reviewing basic concepts from readings. | TBD                 |
| 15%                                         | Life Course Timeline and Presentation  
Students will construct a graphic presentation of their life course as projected into the future, and give an oral presentation of their work. | 12:30 pm October 17 |
| 10%                                         | Annotated Bibliography  
Students will select a topic in social gerontology that personally interests them and/or has relevance to their current and/or future profession. An annotated bibliography should include at least 6 peer-reviewed scholarly articles relevant to understanding the selected topic. | 12:30 pm November 7 |
| 35%                                         | Final Paper  
Based on the topic selected for the annotated bibliography, students will interview an older adult and write an 8-10 page paper reviewing relevant literature, theory, and practical implications of the topic for the lives of older adults. | 12:30 pm December 12 |
Policy for late assignments: Students must be present in class in order to complete class Exercises for credit. For all other written assignments, late work will be accepted only upon prior approval of the instructor, and a minimum 5% penalty will be deducted automatically for each day late. Late work without prior approval or more than 3 days late will not be accepted in other than catastrophic circumstances (as determined by the instructor). When an emergency prevents a student from giving an oral presentation (e.g., the Life Course Timeline) the presentation may be rescheduled only if time allows in the semester (as determined by the instructor). Missing exams without notification of emergency circumstances will result in an automatic zero, and under emergency circumstances, exams must be taken within 3 days of when they are scheduled.

Grading Policy: Grades will be based on the student’s demonstration of achievement of the objectives for each assignment. Points will be assigned for the students’ performance on each assignment. At the end of the semester, points for each assignment will be weighted per the assignment descriptions above, and the course grade will be assigned based on work completed. The grading scale is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Incompletes: Incompletes are not encouraged but may be arranged if a student has completed two-thirds of the work of the course and experiences an emergent situation at the end of the semester. Students wishing to negotiate an incomplete must schedule an appointment with the instructor to discuss reasons for, and terms of the incomplete.

Student Participation and Responsibility: This course is designed to incorporate extensive student participation. Students will be given several opportunities to participate in classroom sessions, including in-class exercises, formal presentations, and discussions. In order to participate fully, students are expected to read all assignments prior to the session in which the materials will be discussed. Students are expected to actively reflect on the course content and apply it to their professional and life experiences.
Course Outline and Assigned Readings

Required Text*:


*Additional required and suggested readings are available on the course website.

Session 1
September 5
Introduction to Social Gerontology


**Suggested Reading (Required for Graduate Students):**


Session 2
September 12
Physical Aging within the Social Context


**Suggested Reading (Required for Graduate Students):**


Session 3
September 19
The Psychological Context of Social Aging


**Suggested Reading (Required for Graduate Students):**

**Session 4**  
**September 26**  
**Love, Intimacy and Sexuality in Old Age**


**Suggested Reading (Required for Graduate Students):**

**Session 5**  
**October 3**  
**Social Support and Growing Old**


**Suggested Reading (Required for Graduate Students):**
Session 6
October 10
Aging and Place


Suggested Reading (Required for Graduate Students):

Session 7
October 17
Life Course Timeline Student Presentations

Session 8
October 24
Mid-Term Exam
Social Theories of Aging


Suggested Reading (Required for Graduate Students):

Note that undergraduate students should meet in our regular classroom at 12:30 to sit for the mid-term exam. All graduate students (and undergraduate students opting to take the graduate student requirements for this course) should arrive for class at 1:45 this day.
**Session 9**
**October 31**
**Resilience and Disparities among Elders of Color**


**Suggested Reading (Required for Graduate Students):**

**Session 10**
**November 7**
**Resilience of Older Women**
**Annotated Bibliography Due**


**Suggested Reading (Required for Graduate Students):**

*Only for those completing the graduate student requirements of this course.*

**Session 11**
**November 14**
**Productive Aging**


Suggested Reading (Required for Graduate Students):

Session 12
November 21
Death, Bereavement, Religion and Spirituality in Old Age


Suggested Reading (Required for Graduate Students):

Session 13
December 5
Old Age Social Policies


Suggested Reading (Required for Graduate Students):

Session 14
December 12
Health and Long-Term Care
Final Paper Due*

Suggested Reading (Required for Graduate Students):

*Only for those completing the graduate student requirements of this course.*

Exam Week – Specific Time to be Announced
Final Exam¹

¹Undergraduate students only (excluding undergraduate students opting to complete the graduate student requirements for the course).