

Social and Psychological Aspects of Aging
Fall 2009

Course: SWK 243 70
Credits: 4

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Course Domain:

This course will present an introduction to the scientific study of aging with emphasis on the psychological, sociological and spiritual aspects of old age. The focus of the course will be on understanding the aging process and the relationship between the elderly and society. Primary theories and frameworks are used to organize and analyze the literature in various areas of gerontological research. Each specific topic includes a description of the issue, a brief historical perspective, and a discussion on the latest research drawn from a variety of disciplines. The following issues will be covered: ageism, conscious aging, mental health, validation therapy, Medicare, elder abuse, death and dying, women as they age, care giving, demographics, sexuality and intimacy, losses in late life and bio-medical ethics. The problems and issues concerning aging will raise profound implications affecting the social, economic and political arenas of our society. This course will sensitize students to these problems, issues and provide interventive methods and approaches. At the same time, it will also examine new models of aging that go beyond current cultural stereotypes. Students will be challenged to view old age as a time of creativity, wisdom, and beauty.

Course Objectives:

Students will be able to:

1. Develop a biopsychosocial framework for assessment of functional abilities, family dynamics, community resources and appropriate interventions. Develop an understanding of how to evaluate research studies that guide practice interventions. To develop and use critical thinking skills in the application of the theory to generalist practice.
2. Use case management skills with the elderly to connect them to needed community and institutional resources while supporting their greatest possible independence.
3. Define factors that influence diversity in the aging process and work toward social and economic justice. To practice without discrimination with respect, knowledge and skills related to a client's age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, nation of origin, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation.

4. Identify current regulations and policies pertaining to the delivery of health and human services to vulnerable populations and to influence these organizations to maximize their provision of services to the elderly. To practice effectively within the structure of service delivery systems and, when necessary, to seek organizational change.
5. To understand, integrate and apply concepts of wellness, prevention, and the psychosocial and spiritual factors that effect physical health of the elderly.
6. Demonstrate the ability to gather information on mental health status, psychopathology, cognitive and sensory limitations of the elderly.
7. Apply generalist problem solving skills with elderly clients. Understand and relate the theoretical base for intervention on all levels of systems (individual, family, group and community).
8. Understand and assess agency policies, practices, hierarchy, service delivery and how they impact on the elderly.
9. Continue self-reflection and a congruent application of self to professional social work practice with the elderly. Understand and apply conscious aging.
10. Develop awareness of ageism and how it may stand in the way of effective gerontological practice.
11. Develop the ability to apply bioethical principles to medical decision making and develop an awareness of death, dying and pallative care issues.

Course Outcomes:

Students will demonstrate knowledge of generalist practice skills with elderly individuals, groups, organizations and communities.

Assessment: Student will complete a case assessment applying knowledge, values and skills in direct work with clients and agencies. This assignment will follow the bio-psychosocial framework and include a community resource analysis.

Students will demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical base for intervention at all levels of systems.

Assessment: Students will write an assessment applying the strengths perspective to a case situation involving an elderly client and family.

Student will demonstrate an ability to research and access community resources.

Assessment: Students will complete a group project that details all services available to the elderly in a certain geographic area.

Students will demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Assessment: Students will complete two exams that reflect the student's understanding of diversity, aging theory, policy and delivery of health and mental health services.

Course Requirements:

All assignments turned in late will not be accepted unless the student made prior arrangements with the instructor. The instructor reserves the right to lower the grade even if an extension was given.

The Cedar Crest Honor Code must be upheld on all assignments and exams. Any breach of the Honor Code will result in an "F" for the assignment or the course.

1. Attendance at all classes prepared to discuss the material assigned.
2. Group assignment will consist of researching community support services for the elderly in a certain geographic area and preparing a resource portfolio.
3. Case analysis (details will be discussed in class).
4. Two exams.

Grading

Interview Due 9/29 and class participation	10%
Exam, 10/20	20%
Group Project Due: 10/27	20%
Case Analysis Due: 11/10	20%
Exam 12/1	30%

Cedar Crest College Classroom Protocol

Appropriate classroom behavior is implicit in the Cedar Crest College Honor Code. Such behavior is defined and guided by complete protection for the rights of all students and faculty to a courteous, respectful classroom environment. That environment is free from distractions such as late arrivals, early departures, inappropriate conversations, cell phones, beepers, and any other behaviors that might disrupt instruction and/or compromise students' access to their Cedar Crest College education.

Disclosures about personal issues are not appropriate for class discussions and/or presentations.

Furthermore:

Students are expected to have prompt and regular classroom attendance in accordance with the policy stated on the syllabus.

Faculty are expected to make clear on the first day of class reasons for specific classroom decorum and repercussions for noncompliance. Faculty should be aware of setting boundaries and procedures for exceptions to expectation stated in the syllabus.

Honor Philosophy

The Cedar Crest College Honor Philosophy is based upon the principle that, as a self-governing body, students have the ability to create an atmosphere of trust and support. Within this environment, individuals are empowered to make their own decisions, develop personal regard for the system under which they live, and achieve a sense of integrity and judgment that will guide them through life.

Social Work Program Attendance Policy

Social work courses typically meet only fourteen sessions each semester. In the interests of your development as a professional social work practitioner as well as the interests of your future clients, it is vital for you to attend these class sessions. Therefore, the Social Work Program's Attendance Policy is as follows:

1. You may miss two class sessions for whatever reasons without penalty.
2. If you miss a third class session the highest overall grade you can receive for the course is a "B".
3. If you miss a fourth class session the highest overall grade you can receive for the course is a "C".
4. Five or more class absences will result in your need to retake the course.

Note: Save your two accepted absences for unforeseen circumstances such as illness, transportation problems, work and child care responsibilities, etc. These will not be acceptable excuses for absence if you have already missed two class sessions. Arriving late for class and/or leaving early will count cumulatively toward missed classes.

Students representing the college in athletic and other capacities will be excused from class for games/matches/meets, etc., only, not for practices. However, student athletes who are maintaining a less than "C" average in the course will not be excused from class.

In all cases of missed classes, it is the student's responsibility to do whatever is necessary to compensate for any missed assignments or lecture material.

F. Textbooks

Hooyman, N., & Kiyak, A. (2006). *Gerontology: A multi-disciplinary perspective* (8th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

G. Recommended Readings:

Bergeron, R., & Gray, B. (2003). Ethical dilemmas of reporting suspected elder abuse. *Social Work, 48* (1), 96-105.

Berkman, B., & Dambruoso, S. (2006). *Handbook for social work in health and aging*. New York: Oxford Press.

Bolen, J. (2001). *Goddesses in older women*. New York: Harper Press.

Butler, R., Lewis, M., & Sunderland, T. (1998). *Aging and mental health: Positive psychosocial and biomedical approaches*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Friedan, B. (1993). *The fountain of age*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Ingersoll-Daylon, B., Schroepfer, T., Pryce, J., & Waarala, C. (2003). Enhancing relationships in nursing homes through empowerment. *Social Work, 48* (3), 420-424.

Johnson, C. J., & Johnson, R. H. (2006). Alzheimer's disease as a "trip back in time". *American Journal of Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias, 15*(2), 87-93.

Kaye, L. (2005). *Perspectives on productive aging*. Washington, DC: NASW Press.

Keigher, S., Fortune, A., & Witkins, S. (2002). *Aging and social work*. Washington, DC: NASW Press.

Kirkpatrick, W., Reamer, F., & Sykulski, M. (2006). Social work-ethics audits in health care settings: A case study. *Social Work, 31* (3), 225-228.

Lacey, D. (2006). End-of-life decision making for nursing home residents with dementia: A survey of nursing home social services staff. *Social Work, 31* (3), 189-198.

Leder, D. (1997). *Spiritual passages: Embracing life's sacred journey*. New York: Penguin Putman.

Mackelprang, R. W., & Mackelprang, R. D. (2005). Historical and contemporary issues in end-of-life decisions: Implications for social work. *Social Work, 50* (4), 315-324.

- McDonald, P., & Haney, M. (1998). *Counseling the older adult*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
- Manske, J. (2006). Social work in the department of veteran's affairs: Lessons learned. *Social Work, 31* (3), 233-238.
- Meenaksh, V. (2006). Medicaid coverage of newer psychotropic medication. *Social Work, 31* (3), 229-232.
- O'Brien, G. (2003). People with cognitive disabilities: The argument from marginal cases and social work ethics. *Social Work, 48* (3), 331-337.
- Parish, S., & Lutwick, Z. (2005). *A critical analysis of the emerging crisis in long-term care for people with developmental disabilities*. Washington, DC: NASW Press.
- Quadagno, J. (2005). *Aging and the life course*. Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Rimkus, A., & McEvoy, K. (2005). *Thesaurus of aging terminology* (8th ed.). Washington, DC: AARP.
- Safford, F., & Krell, G. (1997). *Gerontology for health professionals*. Washington, DC: NASW Press.
- Schamess, G., & Lightburn, A. (1998). *Humane managed care*. Washington, DC: NASW Press.
- Schneider, R., Kropf, N., & Kisor, A. (2000). *Gerontological social work*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

H. International Readings:

- Dixon, J. E. (1999). Global overview of social security practices. Patterns and recent developments. In J. E. Dixon (Ed.), *Social security and global perspective* (pp. 81-110). Westport, CT: Prager.
- Midgley, J., & Tracey, M. (1996). *Challenge to social security. An international exploration*. Westport, CT: Auburn House
- Takamura, J. (2001). The future is aging. In F. L. Ahearn (Ed.), *Issues in global aging* (pp. 3-16). New York: Haworth Press.
- Thursz, D., Nusburg, C., & Prather, J. (Eds.). (1995). *Empowering older people: An international approach*. Westport, CT: Auburn House.

I. Readings:

Sept. 8	Hooyman, Kiyak. <i>Social Gerontology</i> . Chapters 1, 2, 8
Sept. 15, 22, 29	Hooyman, Kiyak, Chapter 4, 17
Oct. 6, 20	Hooyman, Kiyak. Chapters 5, 16
Oct. 27	Hooyman, Kiyak. Chapters 5, 6
Nov. 3, 10	Hooyman, Kiyak. Chapters 7, 9, 10
Nov. 17, 24	Hooyman, Kiyak. Chapters 11, 14
Dec. 1	Hooyman, Kiyak. Chapter 13

J. Schedule of Classes and Assignments

Aug. 25	Introduction to the course
Sept. 1, 8	Myths & Attitudes on Aging, Ageism, Media Perception of Aging. Video: <i>Aging in America</i> 9/1 Video: <i>Aging and Saging</i> 9/8
Sept. 15	Theoretical Perspectives in Gerontology, Conscious Aging, The Oldest Old
Sept. 22	Social Theory in Aging, Medicare, Demographics of Aging, Mortality Rate Video: <i>Big Mama</i>
Sept. 29	Medicare, Women as They Age Due: Interview Results
Oct. 6	Psychology of Aging Validation Therapy, Losses in Late Life Video: <i>I Can't Remember When and Living With Alzheimer's</i>
Oct. 13	Fall Break
Oct. 20	Midterm Exam

Oct. 27	Psychology of Aging & Psychopathology: Cognitive, Mood, Anxiety, Personality Disorders, Somatoform Factitus & Malingering Disorders. Separate unit on Alzheimer's Disease and Behavioral Interventions Due: Group Project 10/27 Video: <i>Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter</i>
Nov. 3, 10, 17	Elder Abuse, Sexuality in Old Age Due: Case Analysis 11/10 Video: <i>Grace</i> 11/3 Video: <i>Almost Home</i> 11/10 Video: <i>Elder Abuse: 5 Case Studies</i> 11/17
Nov. 24	Death, Dying and Hospice, Review for Final Video: <i>Beauty Before Age</i> Video: <i>And the Home of the Brave</i>
Dec. 1	Exam

Additional Assignments

Aug. 25	Begin to collect advertisements that show ageism from any media source and bring them to class each week for analysis.
Sept. 29	Interview someone over 65 and a child under 13 about aging. Interview findings will be discussed in class.
Dec. 1	Each student is required to create a fictitious older person detailing the social, demographic, economic, and health status of the person, as well as including other relevant information. Students are assigned to research policy from the perspective of their fictitious person. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit the AARP website for financial planning to complete a Monthly Expense Worksheet and a Monthly Income Worksheet • Go to the Social Security Administration website and calculate the estimated social security benefits • Next visit the Medicare website and select a Medicare Health Plan and Medicare Prescription Drug Plan

- Visit www.lvagingmatters.org and open Your Benefit Checkup, Find Benefit Program, and Apply for Medicare Rx Extra Help and Comprehensive
- Go to www.lehighcounty.org, open Live, Human Services, Adult and Aging Services. Research if you are eligible for the Attendant Care and Aging Waiver Program

Note information you will need: Local zip code, date of birth (self and spouse), type of residence (apartment, home), length of time in residence, veteran status, employment history, name of prescription medications, current income and assets (self and spouse), current estimate of expenses (mortgage, rent, utilities, out of pocket medical bills, expenses for caring for someone at home while working or in school).