SOC 375: A1-LEC

SOCIOLOGY OF AGING

FALL 2017: TR, 3:30 - 4:50 PM @ TB - 95

INSTRUCTOR: Kwame Boadu. PhD
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E-MAIL: kboadu@ualberta.ca
OFFICE HOURS: TR 5:00 – 6:00 PM.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course explores the complex social process of aging from different perspectives - as a demographic phenomenon; as a social construct that varies by time and place; and as a component of diversity - intersecting with race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status and health. These are discussed broadly under individual aging (physical and psychological change across the life course, images of aging and their influence on individuals and society), population aging (median age, aging index, baby boom, variations among generations and age cohorts, demographic and epidemiological transitions), as well as problems and challenges for an aging society (Canada’s aging population and its impact on healthcare, pension funds, etc.). Other issues and topics related to aging - work and retirement, housing and living arrangements, health care, caregiving, and death and dying – will also be discussed.

Particular emphasis of the discussions will be in the context of Canadian society and aging trends past and present, but will also include global cases and examples where relevant.

COURSE OBJECTIVE:

At the end of the course, it is expected that students will be able to:

- explain aging as an individual, social, and demographic process;
- describe the influence of different factors – social, economic, cultural, ethnic, education, income, etc – on the aging process;
- understand the impact of aging on Canadian society and families, and in areas such as caregiving, healthcare, pensions, etc; and
- how all of the above inform public policy in regard to aging in Canada.

REQUIRED TEXT:

REFERENCE MATERIAL:


This and other reference materials will be made available on eclass website.

COURSE CONTENT:

EXAM SCHEDULES/COMPONENT:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXAMS</th>
<th>WEIGHTING</th>
<th>DATE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam #1</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Thursday, October 5, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam #2</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Thursday, November 9, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam (cumulative)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Monday, December 18, 2017 @ 2:00 PM*</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*This date is tentative. It is the responsibility of students to confirm on Bear Tracks.

FORMAT OF EXAMS:

There will be two midterm exams and a final exam in this course. These exams will focus on the text readings, lectures, references and videos. The midterm exams will comprise of 35 multiple-choice and true/false questions (70 points) and one short essay question (30 points) chosen from two. These exams will be 60 minutes long and each will account for 30% of the course grade. The final exam will also comprise of 60 multiple-choice and true/false questions (60 points) and one short essay question (40 points) chosen from two and will be 2 hours long. It will be worth 40% of the course grade. The first midterm exam questions will cover materials from chapters 1 – 4 including the reference materials, while the second midterms exam questions will cover material from chapters 5 – 9, also including the reference materials. The final exam is cumulative, however, for the most part the questions will be based on material from chapters 10 – 14 and the related reference materials.

Sample exam questions will be posted on the course website and also discussed in class.
GRADE EVALUATION:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>95-100</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-94</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>3.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>76-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>72-75</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>68-71</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-49</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please be advised that your grade is a reflection of your individual performance in the course, the only criterion for the final class mark. As such, there will be no rescaling (“curving”) of grades and/or adjustments except for legitimate clerical errors.

Lecture Schedule & Assigned Readings:

Chapter 1: Aging Today

a. Introduction  
b. Myths and Realities  
c. Attitudes Toward Old Age  
d. Ageism and Discrimination in the Workplace  
e. Aging as Disease  
f. Ageism and Social Policy

Chapter 2: Theories and Methods

a. Theory in the Study of Aging  
b. Research Issues and Methods  
c. Policy and Programs  
d. The Future of Gerontological Theory and Methods

Chapter 3: Aging in Canada and the World Today

a. Aging in the World Today  
b. Canada Comes of Age – immigration, death rates, birth rates, baby boom and baby bust  
c. Aging in Canada Today – age group, ethnicity, geographic mobility

Chapter 4: Aging and Ethnicity

a. The Concept of Ethnicity
b. Ethno-cultural Diversity of Seniors in Canada
c. Ethno-cultural Diversity in Experiences of Aging


Chapter 5: Personal Health and Illness

a. Biological Aging - Theories
b. The Effects of Aging
c. Seniors’ Health Status
d. The Compression of Morbidity Hypothesis
e. The Impact of Income and Health on Quality of Life


Chapter 6: The Psychology and Social Psychology of Aging

a. Normal Changes in Psychological Functioning
b. Intelligence
c. Personality Development
d. Personality and Social Context
e. Psychological Disorders: Abnormal Aging

Chapter 7: Health Care

a. The Models of Health Care
b. Challenges to the Healthcare System; Cost
c. The Healthcare System and older People’s Healthcare Needs
d. Long-term Care: New Approaches to Community Care
e. Health Promotion
f. Issues for the Future – availability, accessibility, and coordination

Chapter 8: Finance and Economics

a. Historical Developments in Canada’s Pension System
b. The Canadian Retirement Income System Today
c. Inequality in Later Life
d. Pension Reform
e. The Cost of Reform

Chapter 9: Retirement and Work

a. Retirement as a Social Institution
b. Why Do People Retire?
c. Alternatives to a Fixed Retirement Age
d. Women and Retirement
e. The Personal Experience of Retirement

Chapter 10. Leisure, Recreation and Service

a. What Do Older People Do?
b. Senior Centres
c. Education
d. The Use of Technology by Older People
e. Community Service Through Volunteer Work

Chapter 11. Housing and Transportation

a. An Ecological Model of Housing
b. Living Arrangements
c. Types of Housing
d. Homelessness
e. Transportation

Chapter 12. Family Life

a. Marital Status in Later Life
b. Sexuality and Aging
c. Older People as Contributors to Family Life
d. Future Research on Family Life

Chapter 13. Social Support

a. Informal Supports for Older People – sources
b. The Future of Informal Support
c. Elder Abuse and Mistreatment
d. Future Research on Social Support


Chapter 14. Death, Dying and Bereavement

a. Defining Dying and Death
b. Experiencing Dying and Death in Old Age


STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Students who miss a mid-term exam should contact the instructor within two working days from the date of the exam, or as soon as they are able to, in regards to the circumstance. Students who are not able to write the mid-term exam on the scheduled date due to medical illnesses should present one of the following:

- "University of Alberta Medical Statement" signed by a doctor (this cannot be required but will be accepted if provided in lieu of other documents)
- "Medical Declaration Form for Students" (for Faculty of Arts students)
- "Statutory Declaration" (for students in Faculties other than Arts, to be obtained from home Faculty or the Office of the Registrar)

For other acceptable absences, such as domestic afflictions or religious convictions, the student should submit appropriate documentation to the situation. This could include the following:

- For a death in the family – a copy of the death certificate
- For a religious conflict – a letter from the church or pastor
- For a car accident – a copy of the accident report

For other serious afflictions – consult with Instructor about appropriate documents. Please note that approval is not automatically granted for missed exams. The exam must be written and approved at the discretion of the professor. Under no circumstances will the weight of a missed midterm exam be transferred onto the final exam.

Students who miss the final exam should contact their home Faculty Student Services office within two days of the missed exam, or as soon as they are able to, with regards to the circumstance, to apply for a deferred final exam. A deferred final examination will not be approved if a student (a) has not been in regular attendance where attendance and/or participation are required, and/or, (b) excluding the final exam, has completed less than half of the assigned work, as stated in the University Calendar.
Please note the instructor cannot approve requests to grant deferred exams. The deferred exam date for Fall 2017 is January 13, 2018 at 9:00 am in BUS 1-10.

Plagiarism and cheating within the examination sittings will be dealt with in accordance with University of Alberta regulations as specified in the *Code of Student Behaviour* (refer to University Calendar). Further information about avoiding cheating and plagiarism can be found on the Office of Student Judicial Affairs website at [http://www.osja.ualberta.ca/Students.aspx](http://www.osja.ualberta.ca/Students.aspx).

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

"Policy about course outlines can be found in [Course Requirements, Evaluation Procedures and Grading](#) of the University Calendar."

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at [www.governance.ualberta.ca](http://www.governance.ualberta.ca)) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

“Audio or video recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).”