

GERO 380: Diversity in Aging

Fall 2013 Syllabus

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Course Description and Learning Objectives

This course provides an overview of diversity in aging through a multidisciplinary lens. Key concepts, current research findings, and important policies concerning older adults are discussed within historical context. Drawing from the rich contributions of several disciplines (e.g., sociology, psychology, demography, & public policy), the course challenges students to consider complex issues of aging and their unique impact on diverse older populations. Social conflict will remain a consistent theme throughout the course, with particular attention given to the stark disparities within communities of older adults - as well as between generations - and their relation to physical and mental health and access to resources (e.g., social services, health care, & entitlement programs).

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Understand and be able to discuss diverse aging populations from a multidisciplinary perspective
2. Integrate and apply Gerontological theories that explain aging processes, attitudes, and experiences
3. Critically consider the distinct challenges facing many older adults of minority (e.g., racial/ethnic, sexual identity, gender, religious, non-traditional, family, etc.) backgrounds
4. Identify age-related sources of social conflict, their historical consequences, and current issues resulting from historical events and population trends
5. Summarize and critique current U.S. social policy aiming to address the needs of older minority adults
6. Successfully utilize USC Library resources to conduct comprehensive literature-based research

The primary goal of this course is for students to develop a knowledge-base that lasts well beyond their years at USC. Therefore, given the breadth of material that needs to be covered in a relatively short time, the focus of this course is on *learning* the material. Accordingly, there are relatively few written assignments and duties asked of students. As a result, students are expected to complete all readings, thoroughly review all lectures, and, most importantly, contribute comments and observations to the online discussion board.

Fulfilling the Diversity Course Requirement

GERO 380 examines social and cultural diversity in the aging process. The three primary diversity elements for this course are socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, and gender. The course also addresses language, sexual orientation, and religion, as well as other topics. Students will learn about diverse experiences in aging in several ways, including health disparities, cumulative advantage and disadvantage across the life course, access to government services and programs, and how learning about and living in a diverse society can enrich the lives of both older and younger adults.

Format of the Course

This course is delivered via Blackboard and is entirely web-based. The material covered is the same as what would be taught in a traditional classroom. However, in this web-based course you will be able to use the immense resources available on the internet - *alongside lectures* - in order to enhance your learning experience. Students are expected to read the required readings before they start each week's lecture, to participate in the discussion boards, and to complete all assignments on time. Critical thinking is a key element in this class. The discussion board is designed to help you apply what you have learned and develop your logical thinking on the course topics.

For organizational purposes, weekly course content will be updated on Wednesdays at midnight PST. At that time each week, the new lecture for the week will be posted, and the discussion board will be made available to students. To receive full credit, students must complete both the online lecture as well as participate in the discussion board prior to the start of the next lecture (see example below). Students with concerns regarding Blackboard participation (e.g., schedule conflicts) must notify the instructors during the first week of class.

Example of Discussion/Lecture Protocols:

Wed 9/4	Thur 9/5	Fri 9/6	Sat 9/7	Sun 9/8	Mon 9/9	Tues 9/10	Wed 9/11	Thur 9/12	Fri 9/13	Sat 9/14	Sun 9/15	Mon 9/16	Tues 9/17
Complete Lecture 2 and discussion board							Lecture 2 discussion board now closed unavailable for credit						
Complete readings for Lecture 3 before Wed, 9/11							Complete Lecture 3 and participate in Lecture 3 discussion board						
							Complete readings for Lecture 4 before Wed, 9/18						

Since the course moves at a fast pace, students are encouraged to schedule a specific time each week to read the required articles, "attend" the lectures, participate in the Blackboard discussion, and complete additional course requirements if necessary (see course requirements below). Lastly, students with questions regarding course requirements, content, or accommodations should contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Course Requirements and Expectations

- 1. Required Readings.** Students are expected to read all required readings prior to the corresponding class week, as indicated in the *Course Outline* (below). For clarification, all readings have been individually numbered. Only readings that are clearly marked in the *Course Outline* with "reading is provided on Blackboard" will be made available on Blackboard. All other readings must be located via USC Library Resources by the student (see "How to find an article on the web" video on Blackboard in the "Readings" section or consult a USC Librarian).
- 2. Lectures.** Students are expected to review all lecture content during the week indicated in the *Course Outline*. Please take note that Week 15 will be a short week (12/4 - 12/6).
- 3. Discussion Board.** Given that the course is offered entirely online, students are required to participate in an online discussion of each topic via Blackboard.

All students are required to respond thoughtfully to this discussion topic. This interaction is meant to replicate the discussion that typically occurs in a classroom setting and may lead to other avenues of discussion. Every student is expected to participate in the 10 required online blackboard discussions (see required weeks below). Please make at least 5 posts per week and make your posts during the class week period indicated in the *Course Outline* (i.e. Wednesday-Tuesday). Posts must be more than just an acknowledgement of someone else's post. Posts unrelated to the topic will not count toward your grade. Students must contribute to the discussion by expanding the content or making an insightful statement that clarifies or, even disagrees with another posting.

Posts will be graded based on quality, quantity and the level of interaction between students (3 points possible per required week). Students completing at least 5 quality posts will receive 10 points for the week. Incomplete or partially complete posts (in quality or quantity) will range from 0 to 8 points for the week.

New discussions will begin on Wednesday and will remain open for 6 days (i.e., discussions beginning on Wednesday will close at 11:34pm PST on Tuesday of the following week). Student posts made after the closing date will not receive any credit.

Discussion board participation will be required during these 10 weeks 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, & 12.

Due: Post must be made prior to the closing of each online discussion (i.e., Tuesdays at 11:34pm PST)

4. **Writing Assignments.** Three short writing assignments will be required throughout the course. Essentially, students will be asked to critically reflect on the course content. Details for each assignment (including word count requirements) will be posted with the assignment. The assignments will be posted on Blackboard one week prior to their corresponding due dates. **For full credit, the assignments must be submitted on Blackboard via Turnitin BEFORE the dates/times listed below.** Do not wait until the final hour to submit you assignments. If you miss the deadline, you will not receive any credit.
 Assignment 1: Due via USC Blackboard (Turnitin only): No later than 11:34pm PST on Tuesday 9/24/13
 Assignment 2: Due via USC Blackboard (Turnitin only): No later than 11:34pm PST on Tuesday 11/4/13
 Extra credit 15 pts. Due via Blackboard (Turnitin only): No later than 11:34pm PST on Tuesday 11/19/13
 Assignment 3: Due via USC Blackboard (Turnitin only): No later than 11:34pm PST on Tuesday 12/3/13
5. **Midterm Exam.** Students are required to complete an online midterm exam that will test their understanding of course content covered in the required readings, lectures, and online discussion board. The midterm exam will be 50 questions and will be open-book (students are free to use any course resources while taking the exam), but the exam will be timed (150 minutes). **While the exam will be available during the entire week listed in the Course Outline, once students begin the first question of the exam, they will have 150 minutes to complete the exam.** The format of the exam will be multiple choice, true/false, and short answer.

Due: No later than 11:34pm PST on Tuesday, 10/22

6. **Final Exam.** Students are required to complete an online final exam that will test their understanding of course content covered in the required readings, lectures, and online discussion board. While the test will primarily focus on the second half of the course (material covered after the midterm exam), the course will contain some cumulative questions from the first half of the course. The final exam will be 60 questions and will be open-book (students are free to use any course resources while taking the exam), but the exam will be timed (150 minutes). **While the exam will be available during the entire week listed in the Course Outline, once students begin the first question of the exam, they will have 150 minutes to complete the exam.** The format of the exam will be multiple choice, true/false, and short answer.

Due: No later than 11:34pm PST on Friday, 12/13

7. **Review Blackboard announcements and check USC email frequently.** This course will be taught entirely online and accordingly, students are expected to make themselves aware of all announcements made on Blackboard, as Blackboard announcements will serve as the primary form of communication with students. Similarly, students are also expected to check their USC email frequently (correspondence from professors will only be sent to student USC email accounts). If not familiar with Blackboard, students are expected to go through the tutorials provided online at <http://www.usc.edu/its/blackboard/support/bb9/index.html#studentguides>. Full understanding of the system will be necessary for participation in this course.

Grading

Course Requirement	Points
Weekly online discussion responses (10 points x 10 weeks)	100
3 Writing Assignments (50 points each)	150
Midterm Exam	100
Final Exam	150
TOTAL POINTS	500

Note on Technology-Related Problems

It is each student's responsibility to ensure during the first two weeks of classes that their computer can access all online course materials. Students contacting tech support (jalejand@usc.edu) with technology-related problems after the first two weeks of class will not receive special consideration if discussions/assignments/exams are missed due to the tech-related problems.

Course grades will be assigned as follows:

A	(94-100)	B-	(80-83)	D+	(67-69)
A-	(90-93)	C+	(77-79)	D	(64-66)
B+	(87-89)	C	(74-76)	D-	(60-63)
B	(84-86)	C-	(70-73)	F	(0-59)

Important dates to save

August 26	Fall Semester classes begin
September 13	Last day to register and add classes
September 13	Last day to drop a class without mark of 'W'
November 15	Last day to drop a class with mark of 'W'
December 10-13	Final examination week for this class

Academic Accommodations

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. *Please be sure the letter is delivered to the instructors as early in the semester as possible.* DSP is located in STU 301 and is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Academic Integrity

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *Scampus*, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00 along with information on academic integrity. Additionally, The Office of Student Conduct also has a publication on academic integrity: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/GradIntegrity.pdf> It is each student's responsibility to make themselves aware of what constitutes plagiarism. For further clarification, an optional reading has been included in the first week of class and should be reviewed.

With regard to course assignments, academic integrity violations include, but are not limited to plagiarism, turning in purchased papers, turning in papers written for someone else, turning in papers written for another class, and taking examinations with others etc. Plagiarism and other academic integrity violations will result in an F for the course (see http://scampus.usc.edu/files/2011/08/appendix_a.pdf). Academic integrity violations will be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>

Course Outline

Week 1 (8/28 - 9/3): Welcome to GERO 380 - Diversity in Aging

Required readings

1. Purugganan, M. & Hewitt, J. (2004). How to Read a Scientific Article. *Rice University*. Retrieved from <http://www.owl.net/~cainproj/courses/HowToReadSciArticle.pdf>
2. Yale College Writing Center (2012). Scholarly vs. Popular Sources. *Yale College*. Retrieved from <http://writing.yalecollege.yale.edu/scholarly-vs-popular-sources> Optional reading
3. Yale College Writing Center (2012). Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism. *Yale College*. Retrieved from <http://writing.yalecollege.yale.edu/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism>

Week 2 (9/4 - 9/10): Introduction to Gerontology and Aging

Required Readings

4. Mehorta, C.M., & Wagner, L.S. (2009). Aging and diversity. In C.M. Mehorta, & L. S. Wagner (Eds.), *Aging and diversity: An active learning experience* (2nd ed., pp. 1-29). New York, NY: Routledge. [reading is provided on Blackboard]
5. Hooyman, N.R., & Kiyak, H.A. (2011). The growth of social gerontology. In R.N. Hooyman, & H.A. Kiyak (Eds.), *Social gerontology: a multidisciplinary perspective* (9th ed., pp. 1-42). New York, NY: Prentice Hall. [reading is provided on Blackboard]
6. Fingerman, K. L., & Hay, E. (2003). Intergenerational ambivalence in the context of the larger social network. *Contemporary Perspectives in Family Research*, 4, 133-151. Optional Reading
7. Center for Disease Control and Prevention and The Merck Company Foundation. (2007). The state of aging and Health in America 2007. Whitehouse Station, NJ: The Merck Company Foundation. Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/aging/pdf/saha_2007.pdf

Week 3 (9/11 - 9/17): Diversity in Aging / Social Theories of Aging

Week 3 readings on following page

Required readings

8. Stoller, E.P. & Gibson, R.C. (2000). Advantages of Using the Life Course Framework in Studying Aging. In E.P. Stoller & R.C. Gibson (Eds.), *Worlds of Difference: Inequality in the Aging Experience* (3rd ed., pp. 19-28). Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press. [reading is provided on Blackboard]
9. Hooyman, N.R., & Kiyak, H.A. (2002). Social Theories of Aging. In R.N. Hooyman, & H.A. Kiyak (Eds.), *Social Gerontology: A Multidisciplinary Perspective* (6th ed., pp.255-275). Boston: Allyn and Bacon. [reading is provided on Blackboard]

Optional reading

10. Laditka, S.B., Corwin, S.J., Laditka, J.N., Liu, R., Tseng, W., Wu, B., Beard, R.L., Sharkey, J.R., & Ivey, S.L. (2009). Attitudes About Aging Well Among a Diverse Group of Older Americans: Implications for Promoting Cognitive Health. *The Gerontologist*, 49(S1): S30-S39

Week 4 (9/18 - 9/24): Gender and Aging First Writing Assignment due (9/24)

Required Readings

11. Harrington-Meyer, M., & Parker, W.M. (2011). Gender, Aging, and Social Policy. In R.H. Binstock, & L.K. George (Eds.), *Handbook of aging and social sciences* (7th ed., pp. 323-335). San Diego, CA: Academic Press. [reading is provided on Blackboard]
12. Moen, P., & Spencer, D. (2006). Converging divergences in age, gender, health, and well-being: Strategic selection in the third age. In R.H. Binstock & L. K. George (Eds.), *Handbook of aging and the social science* (6th ed., pp. 129-145). San Diego, CA: Academic Press. [reading is provided on Blackboard]

Optional Reading

13. Harrington-Meyer, M., Wolf, D., & Himes, C. (2006). Declining eligibility for social security spouse and widow benefits in the United States? *Research on Aging*, 28(2), 240-260.

Week 5 (9/25 - 10/1): Altruism and Religion in Later Life

Required readings

14. Brown, W.M., Consedine, N.S., & Magai, C. (2005). Altruism Relates to Health in an Ethnically Diverse Sample of Older Adults. *Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences*, 60B, (3): P143–P152.
15. Matcha, D.A. (2007). Religion and Aging. In D.A. Matcha (Ed.), *The Sociology of Aging: An International Perspective* (pp. 328-348). Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY: Sloan Publishing. [reading is provided on Blackboard]
16. Rozario, P.A. (2006). Volunteering Among Current Cohorts of Older Adults and Baby Boomers. *Generations* 30(4): 31-36.

Week 6 (10/2 - 10/8): Mental Health, Cognition, and Aging

Required Readings

17. Charles, S.T. (2011). Emotional experience and regulation. In R.H. Binstock, & L.K. George (Eds.), *Handbook of the psychology of aging* (7th ed., pp. 295-310). San Diego, CA: Academic Press. [reading is provided on Blackboard]
18. Hess, T.M., (2006). Attitudes toward aging and their effects on behavior. In J.E. Birren, & K.W. Shaie (Eds.), *Handbook of the psychology of aging* (6th ed., pp. 379-406). Burlington, MA: Elsevier Academic Press. [reading is provided on Blackboard]

Optional Reading

19. Knight, B.G., & Sayegh, P. (2010). Cultural values and caregiving: Updated sociocultural stress and coping model. *Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences*, 65, 5-13.

Week 7 (10/9 - 10/15): Education and Economics in Aging

Required Readings

20. Novak, M. (2009). Finances and Economics. In M. Novak (Ed.), *Issues in Aging* (2nd ed., pp. 218-244). San Francisco: Pearson Publishing. [reading is provided on Blackboard]
21. Crimmins, E.M., Kim, J.K., & Seeman, T.E. (2009). Poverty and Biological Risk: The Earlier "Aging" of the Poor. *J Gerontol A Biol Sci Med Sci.*, 64A(2), 286-292.

Optional Reading

22. Seeman, T., Merkin, S.S., Crimmins, E., Koretz, E., Charette, S., & Karlamangla, A. (2008). Education, Income and Ethnic Differences in Cumulative Biological Risk Profiles in a National Sample of US Adults: NHANES III (1988–1994). *Soc Sci Med*, 66(1): 72–87.

Week 8 (10/16 - 10/22): Midterm Week (no assigned readings)

Week 9 (10/23 - 10/29): Language and Aging

Required Readings

23. National Institute on Aging, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities. *Diverse voices: The inclusion of language-minority populations in national studies: challenges and opportunities*. Retrieved from http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs/upload/Diverse_Voices.pdf
24. Burr, J.A., Mutchler, J.E., & Gerst, K. (2010). Patters of residential crowding among Hispanics in later life: immigration, assimilation, and housing market factors. *Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Science and Social Science*, 65(B), p. 772-782.

Optional Reading

25. Kobayashi, K.M., & Prus, S.G. (2012). Examining the gender, ethnicity, and age dimensions of the *healthy immigrant effect*: factors in the development of equitable health policy. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 11(8), p. 1-6.

Week 10 (10/30 - 11/5): U.S. Hispanic/Latino and Black Aging Experiences

Second Writing Assignment due (11/4)



Required readings

26. Hooyman, N.R. & Kiyak, H.A. (2005). The Resilience of Elders of Color (Part 1 or 2). In N.R., Hooyman & H.A. Kiyak (Eds.), *Social Gerontology: A Multidisciplinary Perspective* (7th ed., pp. 525-542). San Francisco: Pearson Publishing. [reading is provided on Blackboard]
27. Torres, S. (2011). Cross-cultural differences in ageing. In I. Stuart-Hamilton (Ed.), *An Introduction to Gerontology* (pp. 340-362). New York: Cambridge University Press. [reading is provided on Blackboard]
28. Hanchate, A., Kronman, A.C., Young-Xu, Y., Ash, A.S., & Emanuel, E. (2009). Racial and Ethnic Differences in End-of-Life Costs: Why Do Minorities Cost More Than Whites? *Arch Intern Med.*, 169(5): 493-501.

Week 11 (11/6 - 11/12): U.S. Asian and Pacific Islander Aging Experiences

Required Readings

29. Hooyman, N.R. & Kiyak, H.A. (2005). The Resilience of Elders of Color (Part 2 or 2). In N.R., Hooyman & H.A. Kiyak (Eds.), *Social Gerontology: A Multidisciplinary Perspective* (7th ed., pp. 543-563). San Francisco: Pearson Publishing. [reading is provided on Blackboard]
30. Lackan, N.A., Eschbach, K., Stimpson, J.P., Freeman, J.L., & Goodwin, J.S. (2009). Ethnic Differences in In-Hospital Place of Death Among Older Adults in California: Effects of Individual and Contextual Characteristics and Medical Resource Supply. *Medical Care*, 47(2): 138-145.

Optional Reading

31. Smith, A.K., Earle, C.C., McCarthy, E.P. (2009). Racial and Ethnic Differences in End-of-Life Care in Fee-for- Service Medicare Beneficiaries with Advanced Cancer. *J Am Geriatr Soc.*, 57(1): 153–158.

Week 12 (11/13 - 11/19): Sexuality and Aging **Extra Credit Assignment due (11/19)**

Required Readings

32. Witten, T.M. (2012). The aging of sexual and gender minority persons: An overview. In T.M. Witten, & A. E. Eyler (Eds.), *Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, & Transgender Aging: Challenges in Research, Practice, and Policy* (pp. 1-58). Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press. [reading is provided on Blackboard]
33. Garnets, L., & Peplau, L.A. (2006). Sexuality in the lives of aging lesbian and bisexual women. In D. Kimmel, T. Rose, & S. David (Eds.), *Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender aging* (pp. 70-89). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. [reading is provided on Blackboard]

Optional Reading

34. David, S., & Knight, B.G. (2008). Stress and coping among gay men: age and ethnic differences. *Psychology and Aging*, 23(1), 62-69.

Week 13 (11/20 - 11/26): Thanksgiving Week no assigned readings



Week 14 (11/27 - 12/3): The Political Power of Elders / Changing Family Forms

Third Writing Assignment due (12/3)

Required readings

35. Karasik, R.J., & Hamon, R.R. (2007). Cultural Diversity and Aging Families. In B.S. Trask, & R.R. Hamon (Eds.), *Cultural Diversity and Families* (pp.136-153). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. [reading is provided on Blackboard]
36. Quadagno, J. (2005). Family Relationships and Social Support Systems. In J.Quadagno (Ed.), *Aging and the Life Course: An Introduction to Social Gerontology* (3rd Ed., pp.176-204). San Francisco: McGraw Hill. [reading is provided on Blackboard]

Optional Reading

37. Silverstein, M., & Giarrusso, R. (2010). Aging and Family Life: A Decade Review. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 72(5): 1039-1058.

Week 15 (12/4 - 12/6; SHORT WEEK): Community and Government Resources for Older Adults / Future of Diversity in Aging

Required Readings

38. Stanford, E.P., Yee, D.L., & Rivas, E.E. (2009). Quality of life for communities of color. In L. Rogne et al. (Eds.), *Social insurance and social justice: social security, medicare, and the campaign against entitlements* (pp.179-189). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company. [reading is provided on Blackboard]
39. Olson, L.K. (2010). The Medicaid story. In L.K. Olson (Ed.), *The politics of Medicaid* (1-13). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. [reading is provided on Blackboard]
40. Bengtson, V. L., & Roberts, R. E. (1991). Intergenerational solidarity in aging families: An example of formal theory construction. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 53(4), 856-870.

Optional Reading

41. Angel, J.L., & Angel, R.J. (2006). Minority group status and healthful aging: Social structure still matters. *American Journal of Public Health*, 96, p. 1152-1159.

Week 16 (12/10 - 12/13): Finals Week (no assigned readings)

Final Exam scheduled 12/10-12/13