

**SPRING 2009**  
**SYLLABUS FOR SOCIOLOGY 353**  
**SURVEY OF SOCIOLOGY OF AGING**

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Hours: 10:30-11:30 TTH

GTA:  
E-Mail:  
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Hours:

Class: 9:00-10:15 TTH AM  
Crawford 105

**READING:**

Jill Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course: an Introduction to Social Gerontology*. Fourth Edition. McGraw-Hill, 2008.

**Handouts:** Additional articles may be assigned to the class.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

This course provides an overview of the significant sociological perspectives, social issues, and social science research pertaining to the phenomenon of aging in society. The course will 1) examine the major theories of social aging, 2) analyze the changing demographic trends and the political economy issues facing aging societies; 3) describe how the broader societal context affects the nature of family relationships, community involvement, and the experiences of retirement and widowhood among the elderly; and 4) examine the current issues in health and social service delivery for care of the elderly.

The course examines a substantive field which has major social policy as well as personal significance in contemporary life. It is intended that this course provide a sociological foundation from which interested students can pursue further academic work leading either to a research career, planning and administrative careers, or a clinical career in the field of social gerontology. The course also offers a service learning option where students can volunteer in a long term care program in order to link the concepts and issues in this course and with actual, concrete experiences in our community.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

Maximum benefit from this course can be achieved only if the student regularly attends class and completes the reading as it is assigned. The syllabus indicates weekly assignments and is intended to aid the student in comprehending the total plan of the course. Students are encouraged to contact the instructor or the teaching assistant during scheduled office hours regarding any problems in the course or for the purpose of pursuing topics of discussion beyond what is possible during the regular class period.

**Extra Credit:** Students are strongly write short extra-credit papers, especially if students who have difficulty with multiple-choice tests. A **short paper** worth up to 5 points will be possible during each of the three major sections of the course. The papers will be due in the class period prior to each midterm and on the last day of class in the semester. Separate instructions will be provided for the extra credit papers.

**Grades:** Two midterms, each counting 50 points, and a final cumulative examination counting 80 points, will be given. No make-up examinations will be given except in the case of a valid medical excuse and no incomplete grades will be given. Course grades will be determined by the total points earned.

First Midterm Exam - Thursday, February 12  
Second Midterm Exam - Thursday March 19  
Final Examination - Tuesday, May 12, 9:45 – 11:45

**Assistance with Disabilities** Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability is invited to contact me privately. I would be happy to work with you, and the KOKUA Program (Office for Students with Disabilities) to ensure reasonable accommodations in my course. KOKUA can be reached at (808) 956-7511 or (808) 956-7612 (voice/text) in room 013 of the Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services.

**Scholarly Integrity:** "Plagiarism includes but is not limited to submitting, in fulfillment of an academic requirement, any work that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual's work without attributing that borrowed portion to the individual; neglecting to identify as a quotation another's idea and particular phrasing that was not assimilated into the student's language and style or paraphrasing a passage so that the reader is misled as to the source; submitting the same written or oral or artistic material in more than one course without obtaining authorization from the instructors involved; or "drylabbing," which includes obtaining and using experimental data and laboratory write-ups from other sections of a course or from previous terms." (University of Hawaii at Manoa, Student Conduct Code, Section H. Academic Dishonesty, Part 2, Page 6).

## COURSE OUTLINE

### PART I THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON AGING

**Week 1    January 13            The Social Definitions of Aging**

T    Sociology and the study of aging  
Th   Myths and realities of aging

Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course*:  
Ch. 1 "The Field of Social Gerontology" pp. 2-23.  
Ch. 6 "Biology of Aging" pp. 120-147.

**Week 2    January 20            The Life-Course Perspective on Aging**

T    Psychological models of the life course  
Th   Social context and the life course

Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course*:  
Ch. 7 "Psychological Perspectives on Aging" pp. 148-177.  
Ch. 3 "Adult Development and Life Course Transitions" pp. 50-69

**Week 3    January 27            Theories of Disengagement and Continuity**

T    Disengagement theory, activity theory, and continuity theory  
Th   Modes of adaptation to life changes

Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course*:  
Ch. 2 "Theories of Aging: Micro Theories" pp. 24- 36

**Week 4    February 3                Modernization Theory and Social Processes**

T    Modernization and aging  
Th   Age Roles, Age Integration and Segmentation

Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course*:  
Ch. 2 "Theories of Aging: Macro Theories" pp. 36-49 .

**Week 5    February 10            Historical Context: Political Economy of Aging**

T    Age stratification and political economy (Deadline extra credit papers)  
Th   FIRST MIDTERM EXAMINATION

Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course*:  
Ch. 5 "Historical Perspectives on Aging": pp. 94-119

## PART II DEMOGRAPHY AND POLITICAL ECONOMY OF AGING

### **Week 6 February 17 The Demography of Aging**

- T Changes in life expectancy and population structure
- Th Social composition of the elderly category

Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course*:  
Ch. 4 "Demography of Aging" pp. 70-93.

### **Week 7 February 24 The Social Security System**

- T The U.S. Social Security System
- Th The Social Security crisis and issue

Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course*:  
Ch. 11 "Old Age and the Welfare State" pp. 254-264.  
Ch. 15 "The Economics of Aging, pp. 350-477.

### **Week 8 March 3 The Political Economy of Retirement**

- T Structural factors in patterns of retirement
- Th The private pension system & Alternatives to economic dependency

Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course*:  
Ch. 12 "Work and Retirement: Entering Retirement, pp. 280-295.

### **Week 9 March 10 Economic Inequality: Class, Ethnicity and Gender**

- T Class, ethnicity and gender among the elderly
- Th Age-related consumption patterns

Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course*:  
Ch. 16 "Poverty and Inequality" pp. 378-401.

### **Week 10 March 17 The Political Economy and The Elderly**

- T Intergenerational politics and political participation of the elderly (deadline extra credit papers)
- Th SECOND MIDTERM EXAMINATION

Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course*:  
Ch. 17: "The Politics of Aging" pp. 402-424.

**SPRING BREAK: MARCH 23 – 27**

**PART III SOCIAL CONTEXT, RELATIONSHIPS AND CARE OF THE ELDERLY**

**Week 11 March 31                    Adaptation to Retirement and Senior Activities**

- T Retirement transitions and life styles
- Th Family relationships and role relationships

Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course*:  
Ch. 12 “Work and Retirement: Adjusting to Retirement” pp. 295-303.

**Week 12 April 7                    Family Relationships**

- T Friendships and widowhood
- Th Household composition and residential changes

Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course*:  
Ch. 8 “Family Relationships and Social Support Systems,” pp. 178-205.

**Week 13 April 14                    Social Networks and Community**

- T Retirement communities and life care arrangements
- Th Health problems and access to care

Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course*:  
Ch. 9 “Living Arrangements” pp. 206-227.

**Week 14 April 21                    Health Care and the Medical System**

- T Medicare and financing health care
- Th Public policy and Federal initiatives: The Administration on Aging

Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course*:  
Ch. 11 “Old Age and the Welfare State: Health care” pp. 264-278.  
Ch. 13: “Health and Health Care” pp. 304-327.

**Week 15 April 28 The Long-Term Care Continuum and Financing**

- T Family caregiving and community-based services
- Th the Residential institutional care continuum

Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course*:

Ch. 10: "Caring for the Frail Elderly" pp. 228-253.

**Week 16 May 5 Social Aspects of Dying and End of Life Issues**

- T End of life decision-making and care for the dying (deadline extra credit papers)

Quadagno, *Aging and the Life Course*:

Ch. 14 "Dying, Death and Bereavement" pp. 328-349.

**FINAL EXAM: Tuesday May 12, 9:45—11:45**