

**Sociology 353 (Spring 2018)**  
**Survey of Sociology of Aging**  
M,W,F 9:30-10:20 (WEB 103)

Instructor: Yean-Ju Lee ([yjlee@hawaii.edu](mailto:yjlee@hawaii.edu))  
Saunders 216 (956-7116)  
Office Hours: M 2:45-4:15 (or by appointment)

## **READING:**

Required Textbook:

Morris, Virginia 2014. *How to Care for Aging Parents: A One-Stop Resource for All Your Medical, Financial, Housing, and Emotional Issues* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). New York: Workman Publishing (M)

Vaillant, George E. 2002. *Aging Well*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company (V)

More reading materials from other books and journals on LAULIMA

Optional Textbook:

Quadagno, Jill 2008 (5<sup>th</sup> edition). *Aging and the Life Course: An Introduction to Social Gerontology*. McGraw Hill (Q)

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course explores the issue of aging from the sociological perspectives. The phenomenon of aging, however, pertains to diverse processes, requiring multidisciplinary understanding based on such areas as biology, psychology, economics, and political economy. We will examine issues related to these various aspects of aging, at both the micro and macro levels (i.e., dealing with individual experiences as well as social policy issues).

The course is intended to 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 offers *a service learning option* where students can volunteer in a long-term care program or for individual care in order to link the concepts and issues in this course with actual, concrete experiences in our community.

## **STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES (SLO's)**

- 1) Major sociological theories of aging
- 2) Biological and psychological processes of aging (including, principles of biological aging, health issues, psychology of aging, developmental task over the life course, successful aging)
- 3) Individual experiences and social policy issues related to living arrangement and care receiving/giving (including, community living, group homes, family and friend networks, care arrangement, carer-elderly relationships)
- 4) Individual experiences and social policy issues related to economics of aging (including, employment, retirement, sources of income, public programs supporting the elderly, resource allocations across the generations)
- 5) Considering all these, how to care for aging parents

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

Students are encouraged to visit the instructor during the 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.

Attendance is mandatory. The final grade will be lowered by **one level per three absences** (e.g., A+ to A, B to B-).

Class Presentation: The class will be divided into 8 groups. Each group will make a presentation on Monday explaining/summarizing the materials for the week and will give homework for the class, which is due by Friday. (10%)

Homework: On Friday, homework will be discussed. Written homework will be submitted and the Monday presenters will grade it and give feedback. Each submission should be (single-spaced) one page long. It should be based on the textbook but may require additional references. (10%)

Paper 1 (Biological and psychological processes): Each student will find *one elderly person as the study subject* and write both papers based on the person. Each paper should be 6 to 10 page long, double-spaced. Paper 1 is about the biological and psychological processes of aging, and it should consist of two parts: (1) the physical and mental health status of the person and (2) analysis of those conditions using the life course perspective as well as the scientific knowledge about biology and psychology of aging.

The paper is due by the 8<sup>th</sup> week. (written paper 15%)

Paper 2 and Presentation (Economics of aging, social support, and caregiving issues): Paper 2 is about the issues of social support and economics of aging. The paper should consist of four parts: (1) the living conditions of the person, (2) analysis of those conditions using the life course perspective and the scientific knowledge about social relations and economics of aging, (3) care-receiving and giving, and (4) public support and related policy issues.

The paper is due by the 16th week, and presentation will be done in the same class when the paper is turned in. (written paper and presentation 25%)

Evaluation criteria for the papers:

1. Amount of information about the study subject: Collect and use as much data as you can
2. Logical flows: Describe the life circumstances in detail (For ethnographic studies, a good description is important)
3. Scientific knowledge about the topic (Use class materials as well as additional materials)
4. Analytic thinking: You should logically relate your observation to the scientific knowledge
5. Clarity in writing: Grammars, expressions, and paper organization

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism will be heavily penalized. Punishment may vary by the extent of plagiarism, from lowering the final grade by one letter to failing the course. According to the University of Hawaii Student Conduct Code: "The term 'plagiarism' includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another

person without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials (E7.208, Pages 4 and 5).”

(For the entire Student Conduct Code, see: <http://www.hawaii.edu/apis/ep/e7/e7208.pdf> and [http://studentaffairs.manoa.hawaii.edu/downloads/conduct\\_code/UHM\\_Student\\_Conduct\\_Code.pdf](http://studentaffairs.manoa.hawaii.edu/downloads/conduct_code/UHM_Student_Conduct_Code.pdf).)

Two Exams: Two non-cumulative in-class exams will cover the lectures and related readings. The ranges are roughly equivalent to the two papers, where the mid-term (in the 6th week) covers materials of week 1 through week 6 and the final exam includes readings of week 7 through week 15. Each exam will include 10 short-answer questions. For each exam, an exam bank will be available. (Exam 1=15%, Exam 2=25%)

Service Learning Option: Extra-credit will be awarded to students volunteering for aging-related organizations/activities for 10 hours or more during the semester. The final grade will move up by **one or two levels (10-19 hours=1 level, 20 or more hours=2 levels)**.

#### COURSE OUTLINE:

(Week)

(Reading)

#### **Part I: Social Gerontology and Sociological Theories of Aging**

Week 1 (January 8, 10, 12)

Introduction to social gerontology	Q Ch1
Demography of aging	Q Ch4
Life course perspectives; Theories	Q Ch2; V Ch1

Week 2 (January 17, 19)

Life course perspectives; Theories	Q Ch2; V Ch1
Sociological theories of aging	Q Ch3

#### **Part II: Biological and Psychological Process of Aging**

Week 3 (January 22, 24, 26)

Biological process of aging	M Ch5; Q Ch6
The body imperfect: Parts I and II (Presentation and HW #1)	M Ch11-12

Week 4 (January 29, 31, February 2)

The aging brain; Dementia	M Ch23-24
Degenerative diseases (Presentation and HW #2)	Q Ch11 (first half)

Week 5 (February 5, 7, 9)	Psychology of aging Matters of mind (Presentation and HW #3)	M Ch6; Q Ch7 M Ch13
Week 6 (February 12, 14, 16)	(M) Health care issues  (W) Video: Unnatural causes (SES and health)	Q Ch11 (second half)
	<b>(F) <u>Exam 1</u></b>	

### **Part III: Living Arrangement, Care, and Family and Friend Networks**

Week 7 (February 21, 23)	Aging well: Developmental tasks	V all chapters
Week 8 (February 26, 28, March 2)	Living arrangement, housing (Presentation and HW #4)	M Ch19-22; Q Ch9
	<b>PAPER 1 due</b>	
Week 9 (March 5, 7, 9)	Family and friend networks Social support systems (Presentation and HW #5)	M Ch1-4 Q Ch8,12(part)
Week 10 (March 12, 14, 16)	Care receiving and caregiving (Presentation and HW #6)	M Ch7-9, 25
Week 11 (March 19, 21, 23)	Aging in Hawaii (Guest Speaker)	
<i>Spring break (March 26-30)</i>		
Week 12 (April 2, 4, 6)	Access to health care system (Last good bye) Public programs (Presentation and HW #7)	M Ch10,14 (M Ch26-28) Q Ch12(part)

## **Part IV: Economics of Aging**

Week 13 (April 9, 11, 13)

Employment, Retirement  
Social Security program  
(Presentation and HW #8)

M Ch15-16; Q Ch10,14  
Q Ch5

Week 14 (April 16, 18, 20)

Old age and welfare state; Paperwork  
(Presentation and HM #9, volunteer?)

M Ch17-18

Week 15 (April 23, 25, 27)

Resource allocation across the generations  
Inequality and poverty

Preston  
Q Ch15

Week 16 (April 30, May 2)

Paper 2 due and PRESENTATIONS

Final Exam: May 7 (Monday) 9:45-10:35