

**SPRING 2009**  
**SYLLABUS FOR SOCIOLOGY 453 (ETH) (OC)**  
**ANALYSIS IN SOCIOLOGY OF AGING**  
**WEDNESDAY; 3:30PM – 6:00PM; GEORGE HALL 215**

Wes Lum, MPH, MA  
E-mail: [lumwesle@hawaii.edu](mailto:lumwesle@hawaii.edu)  
Phone: 586-7319  
Office: Henke Hall 314  
Hours: By appointment

**PREREQUISITES:**

SOC 300 or equivalent; SOC 353 or SOC 354 or equivalent recommended.

**READING:**

Harry R. Moody (2006). Aging: Concepts and Controversies. Fifth Edition. Pine Forge Press: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Additional articles will be assigned and handed out as useful.

**COURSE PURPOSE:**

The Sociology of Aging is a substantive field which has major social policy as well as personal significance in contemporary life. This course will introduce sociological frameworks for understanding personal as well as societal issues of aging. We will also examine the ethical issues embedded in the ways in which aging is experienced, the treatment of the old in society, and social policies towards the elderly. The course will focus on controversies in three broad areas: (1) issues of personal meaning in a life course perspective; (2) issues of social and economic equity; and (3) issues of aging and healthcare. 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.

**FOCUS REQUIREMENTS:**

**Contemporary Ethical Issues.** The course will be organized around examining ten controversies in the field of aging. These controversies either directly pose ethical choices or indirectly embed different value positions in the alternative positions on the controversy. The course will cover general principles of critical thinking and ethical deliberation as well as examine the specific ethical issues entailed in these controversies. Students will acquire skills in ethical reasoning through participating in debates on these controversies and writing short papers where they can demonstrate their ability at analyzing ethical issues. In addition, students will complete a course paper and will be expected to identify and analyze the important ethical issues involved in the topic of their paper.

**Oral Intensive Focus.** More than half of the class sessions will entail oral presentations by students, and 50% of the grade will rest on these presentations. Students will make at least three presentations. Two presentations will be in the form of an in-class debate

focused on the controversies which are the main focus of the course. A third presentation will be an oral presentation of the student's course project. Instruction will be given regarding general principles of good public speaking as well as specific modes of presentation appropriate to the two types of presentation, participating in a debate and presenting research or information to an audience, including the use of powerpoint technology. Student presentations will be rated by two other students as well as the instructor and feedback forms will be provided to the students.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

**Oral Presentations.** Students will make three oral presentations as described above. Two will be in the form of a debate format and the final presentation will be a formal presentation of their course project.

**Short Papers.** Three short papers will be due which focus on the reading and the in-class lectures and debates. Papers should be between 3 – 5 pages in length, double spaced.

**Course Project.** Students will be asked to undertake a course project on a topic of their own choosing within the field of the Sociology of Aging. The project may employ any type of research, such as field studies of agencies serving the elderly or social groups of elderly, interviews with older adults, or library and internet research and other types of archival research. The course project will result in a 10 page paper, double spaced, as well as a presentation in class. An electronic version of the final draft of the paper must be submitted for the Department of Sociology learning assessment process.

**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 GRADES:**

20%	Attendance
20%	Short paper assignments
40%	Oral presentations
20%	Final research paper

- Twenty percent of the grade will be based on attendance. After 2 absences, one letter grade reduction for every additional absence for any reason.
- Twenty percent will be based on three short paper assignments based on the readings.
- Forty percent will be based on ratings of oral presentations.

- Twenty percent of the grade will be based on the quality of the final paper of the student's research project.

No incomplete grades will be given. All three oral presentations must be completed as scheduled in order to pass the course. A hard copy and electronic file of your course paper must be submitted.

If you feel you need reasonable accommodations because of the impact of a disability, please (1) contact the KOKUA Program, located in room 013 of the QLCSS or telephone 956-7511 or 956-7612; (2) speak with me privately to discuss your specific needs. I will be happy to work with you and the KOKUA Program to meet your access needs related to your documented disability.

## **DUE DATES**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Reading Paper 1	February 28, 2008
Reading Paper 2	March 18, 2008
Reading Paper 3	April 15, 2008
Preliminary Draft of Course Paper	April 22, 2008
Final Draft of Course Paper	May 6, 2008

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **Part 1 Finding Meaning In the Context of the Life Course**

#### January 14, 2008 (Week 1)

*Personal and Public Policy Challenges of Aging: Social Science and Ethics*

Read: (1) Moody, Prologue: America as an Aging Society. (2) Moody, Appendix A -- How to Research a Term Paper in Gerontology

#### January 21, 2008 (Week 2)

*A Life Course Perspective on Aging and Aging Populations*

Read: Moody, Basic Concepts I -- A Life Course Perspective on Aging

#### January 28, 2008 (Week 3)

*Why Do We Grow Old?*

Read: Moody, Controversy 1. Why Do We Grow Old?

#### February 4, 2008 (Week 4)

*Does Creativity Decline With Age?*

Read: Moody, Controversy 2. Does Creativity Decline With Age?

#### February 11, 2008 (Week 5)

*Does Old Age Have Meaning?*

Read: Moody, Controversy 3. Does Old Age Have Meaning?

## **Part 2 Issues and Principles of Social and Economic Equity**

February 18, 2008 (Week 6)

*Social and Economic Outlook for an Aging Society*

Read: Moody, Basic Concepts II -- Social and Economic Outlook for an Aging Society

Due: Reading Paper 1

February 25, 2008 (Week 7)

*Should Age or Need Be the Basis for Entitlement?*

Read: Moody, Controversy 4. Should Age or Need be the Basis for Entitlement?

March 4, 2008 (Week 8)

*What Is the Future for Social Security?*

Read: Moody, Controversy 5. What Is the Future for Social Security?

March 11, 2008 (Week 9)

*Is Retirement Obsolete?*

Read: Moody, Controversy 6. Is Retirement Obsolete?

## **Part 3 Aging, Healthcare, and Society**

March 18, 2008 (Week 10)

*Aging, Health Care and Society: Sociological Perspectives*

Read: Moody, Basic Concepts III -- Aging, Healthcare, and Society

Due: Reading Paper 2

March 25, 2008 (Week 11)

No Class -- Spring Break

April 1, 2008 (Week 12)

*Should We Ration Health Care for Older People?*

Read: Moody, Controversy 7. Should We Ration Health Care for Older People?

*Should Families Provide for their Own?*

Read: Moody, Controversy 8. Should Families Provide for their Own?

April 8, 2008 (Week 13)

*Should Older People be Protected from Bad Choices?*

Read: Moody, Controversy 9. Should Older People be Protected from Bad Choices?

April 15, 2008 (Week 14)

*Should People Have the Choice to End their Lives?*

Read: Moody, Controversy 10. Should People Have the Choice to End their Lives?

Due: Reading Paper 3

April 22, 2008 (Week 15)

Student Presentations

Due: Preliminary Draft of Course Paper

April 29, 2008 (Week 16)

Student Presentations

May 6, 2008 (Week 17)

Student Presentations

Due: Final Draft of Course Paper