Meeting time: Monday 1:30-4:00pm                                       Meeting place: Web 114

Instructor: Wei Zhang, PhD                                                       Office: Saunders 204
Email: weizhang@hawaii.edu                                                       Office phone: 956-7689
Office hours: TTH 2:30-4:00

Prerequisites:
SOC 300 or equivalent; SOC 354 or SOC 353 or equivalent strongly recommended

Textbook:

Course Description:
The Sociology of Aging is a substantive field which has major social implications as well
as personal significance in contemporary U.S. society and in the world. This course will
introduce sociological frameworks for understanding the personal as well as societal
issues associated with aging. We will also focus on ethnical issues embedded in the ways
in which aging is experienced, the treatment of the old in society, and social policies
towards the elderly. Specifically, this course will examine controversies in three 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. Another unique feature of this course is to
provide a comparative perspective by examining aging issues in different countries.

Focus Requirements:
Ethical Issues. The course will be organized around examining ten controversies in the
filed of aging. These controversies either directly pose ethnical 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 ethnical issues entailed in these controversies. Students will acquire
skills in ethnical reasoning through participating in debates on these controversies.
Students will also complete a course paper and will be expected to identify and analyze
the important ethnical issues involved in the topic of their paper.

Oral Intensive Focus. More than half of the class will involve 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 final paper. Additional instructions 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 debate, and presenting research or information to an audience, including the use of PowerPoint, handouts, and other activities. Student presentations will be rated by two other students as well as the instructor. Feedback forms will be provided to the students afterward.

**Course Assignments:**

*Oral Presentation.* Student 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 student’s individual course project.

*Course Project.* Students will be asked to undertake a course project on a topic of their own choosing within the filed 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 presentation in class. An electronic version of the final draft of the paper must be submitted for the Department of Sociology learning assessment process. *Example of correct file name format: [453F09YourNameFinalPaper.doc]*

**Course Grades:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Oral Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Final research paper</td>
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**Attendance.** Twenty percent of the grade will be based on attendance. After 2 absences, there will be a one letter grade reduction for every additional absence for any reason.

**Oral Presentations.** Fifty percent will be based on ratings of three oral presentations.

**Final Research Presentation.** Thirty percent of the final grade will be based on the quality of the final paper.

No incomplete grades will be given. All three oral presentations must be completed as scheduled in order to pass the course. An electronic file of your course paper must be submitted.
If you feel you need reasonable accommodations based on the impact of a disability, please contact the KOKUA Program, located in room 013 of the QLCS 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.

**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 writing 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, Section H. Academic Dishonesty, Part 2, Page 6).

**Course Outline:**

**Part I Finding Meaning in the Context of the Life Course**

_08/24/09 (Week 1)_

**Personal and Public Policy Challenges of Aging: Social Sciences and Ethnics**
Read: (1) Moody, Prologue: American as an Aging Society.
(2) Moody, Appendix A—How to Research a Term Paper in Gerontology.

_08/31/09 (Week 2)_

**A Life Course Perspective on Aging and Aging Population**
Read: Moody, Basic Concepts I—A life Course Perspective on Aging.

_09/07/09 (Week 3)_
Lab Labor Day Holiday

_09/14/09 (Week 4)_

**Why Do We Grow Old?**
Read: Moody, Controversy 2—Why Do Our Bodies Grow Old?

_09/21/09 (Week 5)_

**Does Intellectual Functioning Decline With Age?**
Read: Moody, Controversy 3—Does Intellectual Functioning Decline With Age?
09/28/09 (Week 6)
Does Old Age Have Meaning?
Read: Moody, Controversy 1—Does Old Age Have Meaning?

Part II Social and Economic Outlook for an Aging Society

10/05/09 (Week 7)
Social and Economic Outlook for an Aging Society
Read: Moody, Basic Concepts II—Social and Economic Outlook for an Aging Society

10/12/09 (Week 8)
Should Age or Need Be the Basis for Entitlement?
Read: Moody, Controversy 8—Should Age or Need Be the Basis for Entitlement?

10/19/09 (Week 9)
What is the Future for Social Security?
Read: Moody, Controversy 9—What is the Future for Social Security?

10/26/09 (Week 10)
Is Retirement Obsolete?
Read: Moody, Controversy 10—Is Retirement Obsolete?

Part III Aging, Health Care, and Society

11/02/09 (Week 11)
Aging, Health Care, and Society: Sociological Perspectives
Read: Moody, Basic Concepts III—Aging, Health Care, and Society

11/09/09 (Week 12)
Should We Ration Health Care for Older People?
Read: Moody, Controversy 4—Should We Ration Health Care for Older People?

11/16/09 (Week 13)
Should Families Provide for their Own?
Should Older People be Protected from Bad Choices?
Read: (1) Moody, Controversy 5—Should Families Provide for their Own?
(2) Moody, Controversy 6—Should Older People be Protected from Bad Choices?
11/23/09 (Week 14)
Should People Have the Choice to End their Lives?
Read: Moody, Controversy 7— Should People Have the Choice to End their Lives?
**DUE:** Preliminary Draft of Course Paper

11/30/09 (Week 15)
Student Presentations

12/07/09 (Week 16)
Student Presentations
**DUE:** Final Draft of Course Paper