

## Psychological Factors in Aging PSYC 415 – 001, FALL 2011

**Instructor:** Caitlin Groeber                      **E-mail address:** [cgroeber@gmu.edu](mailto:cgroeber@gmu.edu)  
**Class time:** Wednesday 7:20 – 10:00 PM  
**Class location:** Robinson Hall A247              **Office phone #:** 703-993-1358  
**Office hours:** W 6:00 – 7:00pm & by appt.      **Office location:** DK 2034

**Course Goals:** The primary goals of this lab are for students to understand the psychological factors of aging and the encompassing cognitive, biological, physical, and social changes which occur during the aging process. This course will cover how to protect against degenerative aging, how to follow a lifestyle towards healthy aging, and how to cope with aging along the way. A secondary goal is for students to gain critical skills in interpreting peer-reviewed research literature in the gerontology field and to be able to relay information to classmates through presentations of simple literature reviews.

### **Required Text:**

Hooyman, N.R. & Kiyak H.A. (2010). Social Gerontology: A Multidisciplinary Perspective (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Pearson Allyn and Bacon.

**\*\* Participation:** All students are expected to come to class having read all assigned readings (textbook chapters and research articles) prior to attending class. Therefore, students should expect participate in class discussion throughout lecture material, the discussion of research articles by fellow classmates, and any other group discussions or activities which may occur. If you do miss class, please ask fellow classmates for notes before coming to me for help. **You are responsible for any and all announcements and modifications made to the syllabus whether you are present each week or not.**

**\*\* Published Research Paper Presentation:** During each class session, we will discuss not only the lecture material covering the assigned readings, but also current research from the field of gerontology. Each student will select one class in which present a published journal article to the class covering the topic discussed the previous class. I will provide articles to be presented which discuss research important to the field; articles will be specific to the topics of the course. As part of your grade, you will be required to read the article and email questions to the student presenting (cc me) in the week prior to the presentation.

**\*\* Research Paper:** Each student will pick a topic relevant to gerontology or the aging process on which to write a research paper. Students may choose to use the topic which they presented to the class or choose a different topic. The paper must 8-10 pages, typed, double spaced, and in APA format. Papers must be the original work of the student, but information may be used from the text, class lectures, papers, etc., with proper citation. At least 5 valid references must be used. You must turn in your topic to me no later than September 28. Research Papers are due at the beginning of class on November 30.

## **Psychological Factors in Aging** **PSYC 415 – 001, FALL 2011**

**\*\*Exams:** There will be three exams throughout this course. These exams will be a reflection of the material covered in class and through the assigned readings. The exams will not be cumulative. Unless the student has obtained my consent to postpone an exam or has written medical documentation for absence from an exam, there will be no make-ups. Permission to postpone an exam will only be given for very important and acute reasons and may carry a grade-loss penalty of 10% per day that will be deducted from the score of the make-up exam. The make-up exam will be structured like the original exam, but the content may be different.

**\*\*The GMU honor code will be strictly enforced.** George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. All violations of the Honor Code, including cheating and plagiarism, will not be tolerated and will be reported to the University Honor Committee &/or penalized. The instructor for this course reserves the right to enter a failing grade to any student found guilty of an honor code violation. Information that must be used from an outside source must be cited in correct APA format.

**\*\*Technology Statement:** Required knowledge of technology for this course includes the ability to receive emails sent via email to your GMU address and to access Blackboard 9.1 (<http://mymason.gmu.edu>). Any course material required, outside of the text book, will be provided via postings of the actual material or links on Blackboard or via email. Please check Blackboard frequently as material will be updated, announcements will be posted and grades will be logged. The use of the GMU library website ([library.gmu.edu](http://library.gmu.edu)) may also be required for access to journal articles.

**\*\*Students with Disabilities:** If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

**Psychological Factors in Aging  
PSYC 415 – 001, FALL 2011**

	<b>Tentative Course Schedule:</b>	<b>Assignments Due:</b>
August 31	Demographics and Aging Myths, Historical and Cross-Cultural Issues	Chapter 1, 2
September 7	Theories and Research Methods Issues in Aging Research	Chapter 1, 8 <b>Sign-up for Presentation</b>
September 6	<b>LAST DAY TO ADD CLASSES</b>	
September 14	Biological Aspects of Aging	Chapter 3
September 21	Chronic Disease and Well-Being	Chapter 4
September 28	Memory and Intelligence	Chapter 5 <b>Research Paper Topic DUE</b>
September 30	<b>LAST DAY TO DROP CLASSES</b>	
October 5	<b>EXAM 1</b>	
October 12	Psychological Disorders	Chapter 6
October 19	Personality (Theories)	Chapter 6
October 26	Love, Intimacy, Sexuality Social Support: Family, Friends, Communities	Chapter 7 Chapter 9
November 2	<b>EXAM 2</b>	
November 9	Productive Aging	Chapter 12
November 16	Caregiving	Chapter 10, 11
November 23	<b>THANKSGIVING BREAK</b>	No Class
November 30	Death and Dying	Chapter 13 <b>Research Paper DUE</b>
December 7	Policy	Chapter 16 & 17
December 14 7:30–10:15 pm	<b>EXAM 3</b>	

**Grades:**

Participation	25 points
Presentation	100 points
Research Paper	100 points
Exams (100 pts x 3)	300 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>525 points</b>