**Psychology of Aging**

**(PSYC 415)**

**Fall 2020**

**Lecturer:** Dr. Rebecca Morse

**Office:** Offsite (Arlington Campus – available via Skype)

**Office Hours:** Fridays 9-10AM

**Email:** rmorse@gmu.edu

**Phone:** 240-446-1022

**Lecture:** Online

**Required Text:**

Social Gerontology: A Multidisciplinary Perspective, 10th Edition

Nancy R. Hooyman, University of Washington

Kevin Y. Kawamoto

H. Asuman Kiyak, University of Washington, Seattle

ISBN: 9780133913156

**Provided Readings** (these will be provided as PDFs on Blackboard)

**Student Selected Articles**

**COURSE OBJECTIVES AND REQUIREMENTS:**

The overall objective of this course is for the student to become familiar with the field of psychology of aging through a biological, cognitive, and socio-emotional framework. Students should gain a basic knowledge of how psychological theory contributes to our understanding of the many facets of older adult development.

**Learning Outcomes:**

1. Understand the psychological factors of aging and the encompassing cognitive, biological, physical, and social changes that occur during the aging process
2. Critically evaluate how to protect against degenerative aging, how to follow a lifestyle towards healthy aging, and how to cope with aging along the way
3. Identify areas with strong support, those that require more investigation, and those that currently lack the support of the scientific community
4. Gain critical skills in interpreting peer-reviewed research literature in the gerontology field
5. Discuss the potential personal, societal, and legal ramifications of the findings

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| **Week Start Date** | **Topic** | **Assignment**  **Readings** |
| **August 24**  **August 31**  **September 7** | **Module 1: Foundations in Aging**   1. Intro, Themes, & Issues in Aging 2. Contemporary Theories of Adult & Late Life Development 3. New Methods for Studying Developmental Change | 1. Get your book 2. Chapter 8 3. Chapter 1   \*Articles on Blackboard | |
| **September 14**  **September 21**  **September 28** | **Module 2: Health & Aging**   1. Sociocultural Perspectives 2. Successful Aging 3. Intersection of Physical and Mental Health, & Mental Health Treatment | 1. Chapter2 2. Chapter 12 3. Chapter 4   \*Articles on Blackboard | |
| **October 5**  **October 12**  **October 19** | **Module 3: Brain & Behavior in Aging**   1. Changes in the Brain/Cognitive changes 2. Dementia & Alzheimer’s Disease 3. Elder Abuse | 1. Chapter 5 2. Chapters 17 & 18 3. Chapters 10 & 11   \*Articles on Blackboard | |
| **October 26**  **November 2**  **November 9** | **Module 4: Individual Factors in Aging**   1. Personality 2. Personal Control & Coping 3. Social and Emotional Processes | 1. Chapter 6 2. Chapter 3 3. Chapters 15 & 16   \*Articles on Blackboard | |
| **November 16**  ***\*November 23 Due after thanksgiving break!***  **November 30** | **Module 5: Relationships & Transitions in Aging**   1. Social Relationships, Family Relationships, Extended Social Relationships 2. Late Life Transitions: Work and Retirement 3. Death, Dying, & Bereavement | 1. Chapters 7 & 9 2. Chapter 13 3. Chapter 14   \*Articles on Blackboard | |
| **Due December 3rd** | Quality of Life Brochure PROJECT  Described on Blackboard | |
|  | **There are no extensions for discussion board posts past 11:59PM on December 5th** | |

**Disclaimer:** Due dates and assignment details are subject to change by the lecturer. The only way to stay current with respect to these aspects of the class is to ensure that you attend class. Failure to do so may result in missed announcements with respect to the details of class assignments and/or assignment due dates.

**Attendance:** Participation in the class will be measured through your participation in the weekly discussion and points will be awarded based on the criteria in the syllabus listed below.

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| **Grading Scale:** | | | | A+ | ≥ 100% |  |  | C | | 73 - 76% | | | |
|  |  |  |  | A | 93 - 99% |  |  | C- | | 70 - 72% | | | |
|  |  |  |  | A- | 90 - 92% |  |  | D | | 60 - 69% | | | |
|  |  |  |  | B+ | 87 - 89% |  |  | F | | Less than 60% | | | |
|  |  |  |  | B | 83 - 86% |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | B- | 80 - 82% |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | C+ | 77 - 79% |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Grades:**

* Weekly discussion post Modules worth 5 points each (15 weeks; One Module per week = 75 points total).
* Quality of Life Brochure = 25 points
* Late assignments are not accepted unless given permission before the assignment deadline; no extensions for the Research Essay.
* There is one opportunity for extra credit.

**Assignments:**

* **Weekly Discussion Posts:**
  + Please complete the discussion board modules as outlined on the Blackboard website for the class.
  + **NO QUOTES are to be used.**
  + Follow the guidelines posted for each week in determining your response.
* **Research Design Essay:**
* At the end of the course you will be responsible for completing a 4-5 page essay on methods in aging research, in which you will design your own [pretend] quality of life for aging study. Details of the essay will be outlined in the assignments section of blackboard during the first week of classes (this includes a grading rubric). This essay will be more involved than your typical weekly homework assignments, so it will account for 25% of your final grade on its own. THIS ASSIGNMENT WILL NOT BE DROPPED; it is mandatory for all students. Any essay turned in after the deadline (or not at all will be given a grade of zero.
* \*Students enrolled in 614 must complete the above assignment, but it should be 8-10 pages in length.

**Make-up Policy:** Make-up assignments will only be administered in special circumstances. Prior approval should be obtained if circumstances allow. Please let me know as soon as possible if you are unable to take an exam at the scheduled time.

**Academic Integrity:** GMU seeks to foster a spirit of academic honesty and integrity. This is as important to your professional development as the knowledge you gain in your course work. Violations of academic integrity includes: cheating on exams or homework assignments (e.g. copying the work of others), passing off someone else's ideas as your own (plagiarism, discussed in detail later), and engaging in dishonesty of any kind with respect to your participation and assignments. Failure to uphold these standards will result in immediate consequences (i.e. not a warning) commensurate with the violation, which may include a failing grade on the assignment and/or referral to the appropriate University resources.

**Plagiarism:** Any work submitted by a student must represent original work produced by that student. Any source used by a student must be documented through normal scholarly references and citations. The extent to which any sources have been used must be apparent to the reader. Everything used from other sources - ideas from other's or actual language - must be cited. This policy includes the use of materials from the World Wide Web. With respect to plagiarism, it is always best to err on the side of caution. If you are caught plagiarizing material, the assignment will receive a failing grade and you will not have the opportunity to re-submit the assignment. Additionally, depending on the severity of the violation, you may be referred to the appropriate University resources.

**Accommodations:** If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should: 1) make sure this documentation is on file with the Office of Disability Services (SUB I, Room 4205; 703-993-2474) to determine the accommodations you need; and 2) talk with me by the second week of class to discuss your accommodation needs. Accommodation scan only be made in cases in which proper documentation has been provided through the Office of Disability Services.

**Diversity:** An emphasis on diversity and inclusion is essential to achieve our goals as a campus community. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds, and practices have to opportunity to be heard and respected. This commitment to diversity is included in all University settings. GMU promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment with respect to diversity and seeks to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group, and organization to make improvements as needed. If you feel, in any way, that any aspect of your personal characteristics, viewpoints, or perspectives are not being respect, please talk to me. I will listen.

**Privacy and Communication:** Student privacy is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). As a result, students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important information about this class, including any communication with the professor via digital communication. Please allow 24 hours (48 on weekends) for a response to email messages.

**Electronic Devices and Computers:** Please make sure you have a working computer and internet connection for this class. Assignment that are late due to technical issues (such as non-working internet connection and/or broken computers) will still be considered late unless discuss with the professor prior to the due date.

**Extra-Credit Assignments:** There will be no extra credit assignments in this course. Please prepare for the tests and classroom assignments accordingly.

**Enrollment:** Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class. Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes (available from the Registrar - registrar.gmu.edu). Please contact the Registrar's Office with any specific questions.

Important Dates

<https://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars/fall_2020/#dates>

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| **First Day of Fall Classes** | Mon. Aug 24 |
| **Last Day to Add:** All Individual Sections Forms Due | Mon. Aug 31 |
| Labor Day : University Closed | Mon. Sept 7 |
| **Last Day to Drop: With 100% Tuition Refund** | Tue. Sept 8 |
| **Drop period begins: 50% Tuition Refund Period Begins** | Wed. Sept 9 |
| **Final Drop Deadline:** **Last Day for 50% Tuition Refund** | Tue. Sept 15 (Final Drop) |
| **Unrestricted Withdrawal Period: 100% Tuition Liability** | Wed. Sept 16 - Mon. Sept 28 |
| [**Selective Withdrawal Period**](https://registrar.gmu.edu/topics/selective-withdrawal/) - Undergraduate Students Only**(100% tuition liability)** | Tue. Sept 29 - Wed. Oct 28 |
| Fall Break (Classes Do Not Meet) | Mon. Oct 12 |
| **Thanksgiving Recess: No Classes (University Closed Nov. 26-29)** | Wed. Nov 25 - Sun. Nov 29 |
| **Last Day of Class** | Sat. Dec 5 |