

**FCS 5230-H: Societal Aspects of Aging**  
**Fall 2012**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Jacquelyn Frank

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**OFFICE HOURS:**

**MON:** 5:30-6:45 p.m.; **TUES:** noon-1:45 p.m.; **THURS:** 10:00-noon; & by appointment

*Never begin a sentence with “The elderly are...” or “The elderly do...” No matter what you are discussing, some are, and some are not; some do, and some do not. The most important characteristic of the aged is their diversity. The average can be very deceptive, because it ignores the tremendous dispersion around it. Beware of the mean.”*

*-Quinn, 1987, p. 64.*

**Course Description:** Review of current social gerontological theories and research; consideration of structural aspects of the social order as related to the aging process.

**Required Texts:**

Bengtson, V., Gans, D., Putney, N., & Sliverstein, M. (Eds.). (2009). *Handbook of theories of aging* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Springer Publishing Company.

Morgan, L., & Kunkel, S. (2011). *Aging, society, and the life course* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Springer Publishing Company.

+ Readings from *Aging Today* and *Generations* (resources that you will have as part of your ASA student membership).

**Course Objectives:**

1. Explain the demographic and historical factors that form the macrosocial context for individual aging.
2. Analyze the ways in which physical, psychological and social aging affects individuals and how individuals adapt to these processes.
3. Apply various social theories of aging to various current aging issues in order to critique them through a theoretical lens.
4. Relate the role of policy shifts and development to the interdisciplinary field of gerontology.
5. Integrate current information from the American Society on Aging with gerontological theories in order to bridge real world aging issues with course content.

### Methods of Evaluation:

1. Midterm exam (Addresses course objectives 1, 2, 3)
2. Final Area Plan assignment & presentation (Addresses course objectives 2, 4, 6)
3. Theories paper (Addresses course objectives 2, 3, 4)
4. Class Discussion Leader (Addresses course objectives 3, 4, 5)
5. Life Course and Current Topic (ASA) short paper (Addresses course objectives 1, 4, 5)

\*\*\* *If you have not joined ASA yet as a student member, please do so ASAP!!!*

*Participation, Attendance, and Student Responsibilities*-attendance and participation are *expected* in graduate level courses. It is imperative that students come to class and participate in order to fully learn and understand the issues presented in this course. Students WILL LOSE POINTS off their final course grades for coming late and/or leaving early unless it has been approved in advance.

One of the major teaching methods for this course will be intellectual discussion. Failure to attend class and actively participate adversely affects your learning and that of your classmates who do not benefit from your contributions. Fifty points toward your final grade are for participation. Attendance ≠ participation. Participation means active involvement and genuine contributions based on preparation for class.

One other note: please make sure ALL cell phones are off or on silent mode at all times. It is rude and disruptive to the class to have phones ringing and buzzing during the class period or to have people *texting* during class. The first infraction of the cell phone rule (including catching you *texting* during class time) will result in a warning. If you are caught using your phone, *texting*, *emailing*, a second time you will lose 10 points off of your grade EACH time this happens.

A variety of teaching and learning methods and approaches are typically used in this class. These include: lectures, group discussions, films, books, guest lecturers, and individual analysis. Students can and *should* learn from each of these methods as well as from their classmates. In other words, films, discussions, guest lecturers, and group activities **do not indicate busy work or wasted class time**. They represent different methods for conveying information about the topics covered in this course. What students gain from these different methods is likely to be in direct correlation with the seriousness which students regard these methods. Quite simply: *you will get out of this course what you put into it*.

### Academic Dishonesty

The Standards of Student Conduct are outlined on the EIU website and all students should be familiar with the specifics of the Student Conduct code. Students who engage in academic misconduct and violate the university student conduct code will be reported to the Office of Student Standards at the university. In addition, if a student engages in academic dishonesty in this course (through cheating, plagiarizing, or deception), he/she will, at a **minimum** receive a zero on the relevant assignment(s) and an “F” in the course.

Regardless of the course penalty, under university rules, the student will be reported to the Office of Student Standards at Eastern Illinois University.

**Assignments, Grading, and Grade Scale**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Class Discussion Leader	20	<i>Varies</i>
Life Course Topic Short Paper	25	<i>Oct. 1<sup>st</sup></i>
Midterm Examination	50	<i>Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup></i>
Theories Paper (via Web CT by 9:00 p.m.)	50	<i>Nov. 19<sup>th</sup></i>
Area Plan Final Paper	75	<i>Dec. 10<sup>th</sup></i>
Area Plan Final Presentation	30	<i>Dec. 10<sup>th</sup></i>
Participation	40	<i>Ongoing</i>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>~</b>	<b>290</b>

## **STUDENT RIGHTS:**

Having described policies and responsibilities to which you, as a student, will be expected to adhere for this course, I want to emphasize that as an instructor I have responsibilities to you. Cornwell Strickland, writing in Excellence in University Teaching, has noted the following student rights:

1. the right to be recognized as an individual, even in large classes,
2. the right to have a professor interested in teaching,
3. the right to instruction based on adequate preparation,
4. the right to express opinions and to challenge those of the instructor,
5. the right to personalized instruction, relevant to student needs and interests,
6. the right to access to the professor at times other than class sessions, and
7. the right to know the system by which he or she is graded.

If you ever have questions or concerns about your rights, please do not hesitate to contact me or my department Chair, Dr. Karla Kennedy-Hagan, if you feel that you cannot speak with me directly.

The policies outlined in this syllabus exist so that you have a clear and complete understanding of student and faculty responsibilities for this course. An additional note: I realize that that many of you have jobs and other obligations in addition to your college classes. Therefore, it is critical for students to communicate with me ahead of time if there is some problem or reason why you might need an extension, etc.

I *will* show fairness and understanding to a student when s/he keeps me informed about any problems that s/he may be having. However, if a student ceases coming to class, ASSUMES s/he can turn in assignments late without prior permission, stops communicating with me, lies to me, cheats on ANY assignment or exam then no consideration will be shown to the student. In short, if students are fair and honest with me, I will be fair with them.

## **General Format for our Class periods:**

- 7:00-7:30 Discussion Leaders and class discussion on chapters
- 7:30-8:20 Topic/Lecture
- 8:30-9:30 Theories & connection to class topic

## Schedule\*\*

**August 20<sup>th</sup> : Course Introduction, Life Course Perspective, The Older Americans Act**

**August 27<sup>th</sup> : What are theories? Why are they Important?; Research**

Readings Due: Morgan & Kunkel chs. 1,& 4; Bengston et al., chs. 1-3

**September 3<sup>rd</sup> (Labor Day, No class)**

**September 10<sup>th</sup> : Theory across Disciplines; Research in Aging**

Readings Due: Morgan & Kunkel ch.. 2 , Bengston et al., chs. 4-7

**September 17<sup>th</sup> : Psychological Theories; PechaKucha, Area Plan Assignments**

Readings Due: Bengston et al., chs. 14 & 15

**September 24<sup>th</sup> ( No class--Gone to IARSLCE international meeting in Baltimore )**

**October 1<sup>st</sup>: Psychological Theories ; Family and Aging**

Readings Due: Morgan & Kunkel, ch. 5; Bengston et al., chs. 16-18

Discussion Leaders #1 & #2: Williams & Catron

*Life Course Topic Short paper due electronically BEFORE class begins*

**October 8<sup>th</sup> Social Science Perspectives on Theories; Employment & Retirement**

Readings Due: Morgan & Kunkel, ch. 6; Bengston et al., chs. 19-21

Discussion Leaders #3 & #4: Vance & Hanna

**October 15<sup>th</sup> Social Science Perspectives on Theories: Economics and Aging**

Readings Due: Morgan & Kunkel, ch. 7; Bengston et al., chs 22-24

Discussion Leaders #5 & #6: Russell & Hunter

**October 22<sup>nd</sup> Theories essay exam: 7:00 p.m.- 8:15 p.m.**

**October 29<sup>th</sup> Women & Aging; Experiences of Aging**

Readings Due: TBD

Discussion Leaders: Shuler & Hawn

**November 5<sup>th</sup> Public Policy, Theory and Aging**

Readings Due: TBD

Discussion Leaders: Ramirez & Jackson

**November 12<sup>th</sup> Public Policy, Theory and Aging**

Readings Due: TBD

Guest Speaker: Deb Groendal, Executive Director, Mid-Illinois Senior Services

**November 26<sup>th</sup> Baby Boomers & Aging**

Readings Due: TBD

Discussion Leaders: Moubry & Paul

**December 3<sup>rd</sup> : The Future of Aging & Theories, Course Wrap Up;**

Readings Due: TBD

**December 10<sup>th</sup> (Final Paper/ Pecha Kucha Presentation night)**

I will provide dinner for that night! ☺

7:30-9:45