

Aging, the Individual and Society

GERO 1010

Spring 2024

Tu Th 1:00 – 2:15

Olscamp 225

Instructor: Dr. Charlie D. Stelle

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Office Hours: TH 11:00 – 12:45; by appointment

COURSE INFORMATION:

Catalog Description: Study of aging from a multidisciplinary perspective; focus on the way people are thought about, evaluated, and treated on the basis of their age. This course has no prerequisites. This course has been approved as a BGPerspective Course for the Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Required Text: Quadagno, J. (2021). *Aging and the life course. An introduction to social gerontology* (8th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Purpose of the Course: The aging of human society worldwide is rapidly becoming one of the most distinct features of modern life. The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the biological, psychological, and social domains of the aging process. This course examines aging as a process that impacts both individuals and the wider society.

BGP Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Describe significant social/behavioral issues/questions using appropriate theories and evidence.
2. Articulate how the values of the social/behavioral sciences impact decision-making in contemporary society.
3. Deconstruct social/behavioral arguments critically, refuting logical and reasoning flaws inherent in them.
4. Compose written or oral arguments related to issues or questions in the social/behavioral sciences.
5. Evaluate evidence supporting arguments and conclusions on each side of major social or behavioral issues.

Course Learning Outcomes: Upon satisfactory completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Dispel myths about the elderly and the aging process.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the sociological, psychological, and biological theories of aging and be able to recognize the relevance of these theories to everyday life as evidenced in written reaction papers.
3. Understand the various research methodologies used to explore the aged and the aging process.
4. Develop an understanding of the reciprocal interactions between aging individuals and the challenges presented by their social contexts.
5. Utilize disciplinary modes of inquiry into the ways in which growing old and experiencing aging differ among cultures.
6. Have an appreciation for and knowledge of the challenges and opportunities that face individuals, families, and societies as members age chronologically and functionally.
7. Identify and critique a specific issue of aging.

8. Define one's role as an advocate for older adults and/or consider a career in an aging-related field.
9. Critically discuss past and present social policy as it relates to the provision of programs and services for current and future cohorts of older adults.

CLASS EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

Attendance/Participation: Attendance is essential for maintaining the best learning environment. Learning occurs in relationship not only between student and course materials, but also peer to peer, professor to student, and student to professor. Class attendance is critical to success in class.

Communication: I will check email from students and will typically respond to communications within 24-48 hours. Students are expected to notify the instructor of class conflicts ahead of time when necessary (e.g. for an exam) and accommodation will be made when appropriate at the discretion of the professor. Communication regarding class in terms of concerns about content (e.g., questions about material) or process (e.g., student progress, grades) can take place electronically.

Note: Communication via e-mail works best when the history of the message is maintained and included in reply messages. It is essential that you check your BGSU email account at least once a day. Please e-mail me directly at cstelle@bgsu.edu rather than through Canvas.

Recording and/or Distribution of Course Materials: Materials provided to students are the intellectual property of the instructor. This includes, but is not limited to, lectures, presentations, discussion questions, assignments, quizzes, and exams. Students are not permitted record or share in any way these materials without the explicit permission of the instructor.

Extra Credit: No additional extra credit is available.

Late Assignments: Late assignments are generally not accepted in this course. Exceptions to this policy are at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Changes: The course schedule, requirements, procedures, content, etc. are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. Students are accountable for any class changes announced or posted on Canvas or communicated by email.

University Closure:

In most cases, the University will not close for winter conditions unless the Wood County Sheriff's Department declares a Level 3 emergency. Once the decision is made to delay, cancel or close, individuals will be notified through AlertBG, email, the BGSU homepage, BGSU social media channels and the news media (see the [Emergency Cancellation Delay and Closing Policy and Procedures](#) document for a list of radio and television stations).

POLICIES AND RESOURCES AT BGSU

Academic Integrity: It is the aim of Bowling Green State University to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. Cheating and plagiarism are destructive to the central purpose of the university. The instructor and students in this course will adhere to the University's general Code of Conduct defined in the *BGSU Student Handbook*.

Please refer to the following website for more information on cheating and plagiarism:
BGSU Student handbook:

<https://www.bgsu.edu/student-handbook/code-of-conduct.html>

BGSU is a community of scholars. As members of this community, we each have the individual and collective responsibility to conduct our personal lives in the context of mutual regard for the rights, property and privileges of others.

HHS policies on grievances and appeals

<https://www.bgsu.edu/health-and-human-services/students/academic-advising-center/appeals.html>

Graduate policies can be found at this link

<http://www.bgsu.edu/graduate/catalogs-and-policies.html>

Academic Grievance Policy: Bowling Green State University has an established procedure for a fair resolution of student's academic concerns. Refer to the student handbook policy statement on grievances. You can also find additional information on appeals at

<https://www.bgsu.edu/health-and-human-services/academic-advising-center/appeals.html>

Accessibility Policy: Any student who requires special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact the professor at the first of the semester to make necessary accommodations. A student should present appropriate verification from the Office of Disability Services for Students, 38 College Park Office Building. No requirement exists that accommodations be made prior to completion of this approved University process.

<https://www.bgsu.edu/accessibility-services.html>

Civility in the Classroom: Students are expected to adhere to BGSU's Core Values –

<https://www.bgsu.edu/catalog/general-information/the-university/core-values.html>

The Core Values to which the University adheres include:

- Respect for one another
- Collaboration
- Intellectual and personal growth
- Creativity and innovation
- Pursuit of excellence

Each student is partly responsible for maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have an opportunity to gain from time spent in class, students should be focused on the activity within the classroom. You are welcome to use laptops, cell phones, and other forms of technology within the classroom. However, they should only be used for completing classroom activities. You should not be using technology for non-course related activities.

In addition, another part of being an active participant in class is how you participate and treat your peers. We can all learn from each other, so we must treat each other with respect and dignity. This

means allowing everyone to share their ideas and carefully consider your input. This is not meant to stifle discussion, but more on considering how we share our thoughts and beliefs and how we react to others. No one should ever be put down for his/her contributions.

Inappropriate behavior in the classroom (e.g. being disrespectful of peers or instructor, making offensive remarks, talking during exams, etc.) shall result in *minimally* a request to leave class. In addition, a student who engages in such behaviors during course assignments (e.g., exams, papers, group projects) will not be permitted to complete or make-up the assignment and will be given a grade of zero (0) for the assignment. Please take a look at BGSU's Student Handbook <https://www.bgsu.edu/student-handbook/code-of-conduct.html> for issues relating to the code of conduct such as student rights and responsibilities, student conduct, academic conduct, academic integrity, and disciplinary procedures.

- Students who violate faculty expectations as outlined in the syllabus may be subject to conduct action.
- If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 419-372-2843 or odos@bgsu.edu.
- View the [Student Handbook](#).
- Learn more about and view the [Code of Academic Conduct](#).
- Learn more about and view the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

Title IX - See It. Hear It. Report It: Bowling Green State University (BGSU) is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students that is free of all forms of discrimination and harassment. Sexual misconduct and relationship violence in any form are antithetical to the university's mission and core values, violate university policies, and may violate federal and state law. Faculty members are considered mandatory reporters and are required to report incidents of sexual misconduct and relationship violence to the Title IX Coordinator. If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, please visit <https://www.bgsu.edu/equity-diversity-and-inclusion/title-ix.html> to access information about university support and resources.

Religious Accommodations: In addition to participation/attendance/absence policies already listed, you may have up to three (3) excused absences each academic semester, without penalty, to take time off for reasons of faith or religious or spiritual belief system or to participate in organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or other religious or spiritual organization. You are required to notify me in writing of specific dates requested for excused absences and/or alternative accommodation no later than fourteen (14) calendar days after the first day of instruction for this course. After necessary notification, you should consult with me to determine an appropriate alternative opportunity that will be provided to help you complete your academic responsibilities for the course. These requests will remain confidential. The Office of Registration & Records maintains a list of [accommodated religious holidays](#). Please note that this list is not exhaustive of all holidays. For more information about the [Student Religious Accommodations policy](#), you may contact the Dean of Students at odos@bgsu.edu or 419-372-2843.

Freedom of Expression: Bowling Green State University, as a public institution, is committed to freedom of expression and the rights protected by the First Amendment. First Amendment rights have implications inside the classroom as well. Review the [Office of the Dean of Students page regarding Freedom of Expression](#) at Bowling Green State University for more information including the policy. To report concerns please visit the [See It. Hear It. Report It.](#) page.

Student Veteran-friendly Campus: BGSU educators recognize student veterans' rights when entering and exiting the university system. If you are a student veteran, please communicate with your instructor so reasonable accommodations can be made for absence when drilling or being called to active duty. Refer to the [Veterans](#) page.

Mental Health: Your mental health is important to me. If you are currently experiencing distress, call (419-372-2081) or walk in at the Counseling Center located in 104 College Park (715 E. Leroy Ave.). An on-call counselor is available Monday-Friday from 8am-5pm. The [BGSU Counseling Center](#) also provides a number of services such as [individual counseling](#), [Counseling Center groups](#), virtual [Let's Talk](#) sessions, and other [non-emergency services](#).

Falcon Food Pantry: The [Falcon Food Pantry](#) is here to support you with nutritious and accessible food. Students, faculty, and staff are welcome to stop by once a week to select a bag of food and hygiene items. The Falcon Food Pantry is located in 109 Central Hall and is open on Mondays and Thursdays from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM and Wednesdays from 2:30 PM to 5:30 PM. Please bring your BGSU ID card with you.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Exams: There will be three exams, each worth 100 points. The first two exams will be administered during regular class periods; the final exam will be administered only during the final exam period. The final exam is non-cumulative and covers the third section of course material. Exams will consist of multiple choice questions. To do well on exams, class attendance and note taking are very important as well as reading the assigned material. Exam material will include the text, assigned readings, lecture, class discussions, and media. Notification of the possibility to miss a scheduled exam (e.g. athletic participation) or emergency (e.g. family emergency, illness) needs to be made as soon as possible. In no case will a student be allowed to take an exam outside the regularly scheduled time without prior permission of the instructor.

Application Activities and Assignments:

Application activities allow the student to examine her/his own beliefs and values about aging and demonstrate application of course concepts. These assignments are designed for you to process your thoughts, feelings, and reactions to the material being covered in class. The assignments can include, but are not limited to, written in-class assignments, small/large group discussions and outside of class homework papers. Twelve of these will be assigned, each worth a possible 10 points. Therefore, two of these can be missed without penalty. If more than 100 points are accumulated, they will be added into the final grade calculations.

These activities will be both scheduled (known ahead of time, due electronically) and unscheduled (in class, discussion, short reflection). Because they build on material covered during class sessions, in-class activities may NOT be submitted late or outside of class. If you are absent (even if the professor is aware of the absence), you will NOT receive points because your presence is required. Occasionally, materials will be distributed prior to the class in which they will be discussed. Students will need to complete these homework assignments and be ready to discuss these assignments in class.

If a student needs clarification on any course assignment, then it is her/his responsibility to request clarification from the professor. To increase the likelihood of successful performance on any course assignment, the student is strongly encouraged to attend class, take notes, and read materials.

GRADING:

Points: The total number of points that a student earns on the following assignments and exams.

<u>Assignment and/or projects</u>	<u>Available Points</u>
Examinations (3 @100)	300
Application Activities & Assignments (10 @ 10)	<u>100</u>
	400

Grading Formula: Letter grades will be computed according to the following criteria:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Total Points Earned</u>
A	358 - 400
B	318 - 357
C	278 - 317
D	238 - 277
F	0 – 237

Course Changes: The course schedule, requirements, procedures, content, etc. are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. Students are accountable for any class changes verbally announced in class and/or posted on the course Canvas page.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNED READINGS:

Week	Dates	Topic/Reading Assignment
1	1/09 & 1/11	Introduction to Course Requirements Introduction to Social Gerontology Reading: Chapter 1
2	1/16 & 1/18	Life Course Theory and Transitions Reading: Chapter 2
3	1/23 & 1/25	Demographics of Aging – Characteristics of Older Adults? Reading: Chapter 4
4	1/30 & 2/1	Old Age and the Welfare State - Reading: Chapter 5
5	2/6	Old Age and the Welfare State - Reading: Chapter 5
	2/8	Exam 1
6	2/13 & 2/15	Biological Perspectives on Aging
7	2/20 & 2/22	Psychological Perspectives on Aging Reading: Chapter 7

8	2/27 & 2/29	Social Perspectives on Aging – Family Relationships Reading: Chapter 8
9	3/4 - 3/8	No Classes – Spring Break
10	3/12 & 3/14	Social Aspects of Aging – Family Relationships, Social Support, and Caregiving; Care for the Frail Elderly Reading: Chapters 8 & 12
11	3/19 & 3/21	Social Aspects of Aging – Living Arrangements Reading: Chapter 9 (Exam 2)
12	3/26 & 3/28	Health and Health Care Reading: Chapter 11
13	4/2 & 4/4	Work, Retirement, and Leisure Reading: Chapter 10
14	4/09 & 4/11	Economics and Aging: Poverty, Inequality, Policy and Politics Readings: Chapters 14 -16
15	4/16 & 4/18	Death, Dying, and Bereavement

Final Exam: Tuesday, April 23rd 11:30 – 2:00 PM