

## ***Gero 500 – Perspectives on Aging - Spring 2006 Online Class - Syllabus***

### **Office Hours: By Appointment**

### **Overview**

This course is unique and innovative in that it is delivered via computer and is entirely web based. The material covered will be the same as that delivered in the traditional, on campus course. An additional, significant difference is that students will also be required to utilize the immense resources available on the World Wide Web (WWW). The Internet and the WWW are changing not only how courses are taught but also transforming the volume, structure and content of the information delivered. Because this class will not meet in the traditional fashion (but will, in the virtual sense), additional student responsibilities are required. Each class period will consist of several of the following components:

- Readings from the Required Text
- Readings from the Electronic Reserve
- A Web Lecture
- Virtual Professor Questions
- Web Navigation Exercises
- Discussion in a Cyber Classroom
- A weekly Critical Thinking E-mail Exercise
- Access to an outstanding Glossary

Every student must have access to a computer with a modem and a printer as well as a word processing program. Each of the 13 weeks of the course will be conducted asynchronously in one week blocks of time. For example, your first assignment will be given on Thursday at 12:00 noon and must be completed by the following Thursday at 11:00 a.m. (all times are Pacific Standard) However, you may log-on to the site at any time you choose during the duration of the week. You will have access via e-mail, cyber class, and telephone to your professor from the Andrus Gerontology Center.

Most weeks of this course consists of required readings from your textbook as well as electronic reserves, a lecture written by a leading expert in the field of gerontology, interactive exercises to further enhance your understanding of the subject matter, and either an essay assignment that will be sent via e-mail to the professor, a discussion in the cyber classroom, or a quiz. Note that as you read through the lecture, you will come upon various interactive exercises, charts, graphs, or figures that will enlarge when you click on the link. You will also be able to click on selected terms that will take you to a glossary. These activities are designed to further explain and illustrate the lecture's major concepts. The essay you will be required to compose will generally be a 1-2 page paper that integrates a week's material. During the established course duration, you are expected to keep pace with assignments and deliver assignments on schedule to the instructor for review and analysis. When you compose your e-mail exercises, it is best if you first write out your answer on a word processing program (i.e., MS Word or Word Perfect), copy it, and then paste it into the e-mail, and then send it.

It is strongly suggested that in order to keep up with the course, you schedule a specific time each week to read the required text and supplemental materials, "attend" the lecture, view the interactive exercises, participate in the Cyber Classroom, and complete the assignment. It is also

necessary to check e-mail at least every other day for messages from professors, teaching assistants and fellow classmates. (Note: Supplemental readings for each course are available on-line (Electronic Reserve). I recommend that you print out the electronic reserves. This will allow you write notes on the readings. Additionally, it is important that each of you begin building your own gerontology library.

### **What are Cyber Classrooms?**

Each student is required to participate meaningfully in on-line discussions which occur in cyber classrooms. These cyber classrooms are places for you to discuss the readings, lecture and assignments and to engage your professor and fellow students in discussions of specific gerontological issues. The cyber classrooms are also a perfect place to raise questions you have about each week. Your fellow students and I will be happy to try to answer your questions.

To keep our conversations focused, I've created 8 cyber classrooms that correspond with a specific week. Within each cyber classroom, you will find a set of prompting questions meant to highlight issues I think are important and to stimulate discussion. Depending on when you log-in to the classroom, you may also find a conversation in progress. Feel free to jump in at any level: taking up one of my prompting questions or joining the conversation in progress. I also encourage you to pursue issues that interest you but that neither I nor your fellow students have raised.

Students are required to participate in the cyber classrooms. The cyber classrooms will be structured so that all responses will remain accessible to participants during the entire course (i.e., you will be able to read all of what has been contributed to the point where you log-in). You may log-in anytime during the day.

Note: AgeWorks also has a separate bulletin board for general program comments, technical questions and helpful hints you may want to post. Feel free to post messages to this board anytime. It is located on the AgeWorks Home Page.

### **Required Texts**

Hooyman, N., and Kiyak, A. (2001). *Social Gerontology: A Multidisciplinary Perspective* 6th edition. Allyn and Bacon: Boston.

Albom, M. (1997). *Tuesdays with Morrie: An Old Man, a Young Man, and the Last Great Lesson*. Doubleday.

### **Evaluation**

There will be a midterm test and a final research paper. Directions for the exam and the paper will be forthcoming.

All written materials should be typed, grammatically correct, clearly written, and structurally sound. Papers and exams should be double-spaced and spell-checked. Poor grammar will reduce your grade.

## **Grading**

E-mail Assignments (6 total) 60 points  
Participation (8 total) 80 points  
Chapter Quizzes (4 total) 80 points  
Mid-Term Examination 100 points  
Final Research Paper 80 points  
Final Exam 100 points  
TOTAL 500 points

Your course grade is based on attaining a specific percentage of the maximum points possible. You should keep a record of each grade you receive and the number of points possible for that specific assignment. Make-up exams will be scheduled on a case-by-case basis.

## **Course Objectives**

This course will provide interested persons with knowledge of physical, mental, and social age-related changes; it will show the interactions of these types of aging; and will describe the pathological developments that affect many older people. The course focuses on diversity in the older population that results from differing behaviors, traditions, and attitudes towards aging. The class will also emphasize that society is changed when the aging portion of the population increases rapidly. It is the instructors' aim to present material and encourage self-study so that useful knowledge, skill, and attitudes are developed that may be of use in the family, neighborhood, community, job, or religious institution. Aging will be one of the great influences on society in the twenty-first century.

Specifically, this course will assist individuals to:

1. Identify four areas of change (biological, psychological, sociological, and economic) experienced by older people and the implications of those changes in older individuals.
2. Increase their sensitivity to the heterogeneity of older adults.
3. Identify community resources and programs for older persons.
4. Identify and discuss issues and influences affecting the aged.
5. Develop skills in assessing indicators of normal aging and recognition of pathology as well as skills in assessing social and cultural differences in the elderly.
6. Understand that gerontology is multi- and interdisciplinary.
7. Understand and discuss how different disciplines interact to plan for and serve the older population.

## **Special Note**

It is important for me to get to know each student and your interests. Please arrange a time to talk with me about the class or about your overall graduate experience (if possible). If you feel intimidated by any of the course requirements, E-mail, visit my office, or call me. From you I expect participation, courtesy to other students, honesty, and promptness. All material must be your own. Direct quotes and simple summaries from texts are not acceptable in tests or in E-mail comments. Papers must be your own -- if I suspect otherwise I will call you and ask questions about the paper. Any material that is not your own is graded 0 and cannot be redone. Regular participation is essential to making this work. Failure to respond to exercise questions counts as 0, late papers and tests are reduced by 5 points for each day late.

## Class Schedule at a Glance

### January 12- Introduction and Why Study Aging?

- **Assignment:** Cyberclass Discussion
- **Text Readings:** H&K - 1
- **Supplemental Readings:** [AARP Global Aging Report](#) 


### January 19 - Demography of an Aging Population

- **Assignment:** Email Assignment
- **Text Readings:** H&K - 2,3
- **Supplemental Readings:** [AoA Profile of Older Americans](#)

### January 26 - Promoting Successful Aging

- **Assignment:** Quiz
- **Text Readings:** H&K - 4
- **Supplemental Readings:** [NIA on Disability](#)

### February 2 - Social Psychology

- **Assignment:** Cyberclass Discussion
- **Text Readings:** H&K - 8
- **Supplemental Readings:** [Want a Longer Life? Connect](#) 

### February 9 - The Aging Family

- **Assignment:** Email Assignment, Cyberclass Discussion
- **Text Readings:** H&K - 9, 10
- **Supplemental Readings:** [For Good Health, It Helps to be Rich and Important](#) 

### February 16 - Cardiovascular, Respiratory and Urinary Systems


- **Assignment:** Quiz
- **Supplemental Readings:** [Activity Matters](#) 

### February 23 - Immune, Nervous, and Reproductive Systems

- **Assignment:** Cyberclass Discussion
- **Supplemental Readings:** [Women's Sexuality as They Age](#) 


### March 2 – Midterm Exam

### March 9 - Psychology of Aging

- **Assignment:** Email Assignment and Cyberclass Discussion
- **Text Readings:** H&K - 5, 6, 7
- **Supplemental Readings:** [Successful Aging: The Second 50](#) 

## March 16 – Spring Break

## March 23 - The Economics of Retirement in Old Age

- **Assignment:** Email Assignment and Cyberclass Discussion
- **Text Readings:** H&K - 12
- **Supplemental Readings:** ["Separate Views: Ask the Experts"](#) 

## March 30 - Housing

- **Assignment:** Quiz
- **Text Readings:** H&K - 11
- **Supplemental Readings:** [Growing Old in a Good Home](#) 


## April 6 - Legal Issues

- **Assignment:** Cyberclass Discussion
- **Text Readings:** H&K - 15
- **Supplemental Readings:** [Lawmakers Troubled About Nursing Home Abuse](#) 


## April 13 - Professionals in Aging

- **Assignment:** Email Assignment
- **Supplemental Readings:** [Older Americans Living Longer](#) 

## April 20 - Death, Dying and Medical Ethics

- **Assignment:** Quiz , Email Assignment, and CyberClass Discussion
- **Text Readings:** H&K - 13
- **Supplemental Readings:** [Euthansia and Religion](#) 

## April 27 - Aging and the Future

- **Assignment:** Final Exam
- **Text Readings:** H&K - 16, 17
- **Supplemental Readings:** [Great Expectation](#) 

## May 4 - FINAL EXAM DUE