

Gero 540: Course Syllabus Spring 2007

We at the Andrus Gerontology Center have been working hard to develop an exciting, state-of-the-art course for you, both in terms of gerontological content and the utilization of the latest web technology. For example, we have placed important articles on Electronic Reserve for you at the USC library. (These reading assignments are included along with selections from your textbooks at the beginning of each lecture.) And, while most of us probably won't meet each other face-to-face, we will get to know each other very well on line. You will be communicating with your instructors and your fellow students each week in Cyberclass Discussions, which allow us to share and explore ideas.

Please study this syllabus carefully. It contains important information about accessing the Electronic Reserves and Cyberclass Discussions. You will also find out about the course requirements, logistics and grading.

Introduction

This is an important time to study aging policy. The number of elderly Americans increased by 107 percent between 1960 and 1998. Their numbers are expected to more than double again between 1995 and 2050. No one can predict exactly how the society will be affected by this aging of the population, however it is likely that public and private costs will increase. Meanwhile policy makers, faced with a growing emphasis on cost containment, are being asked to reexamine the nature and scope of government's social welfare role. What policy course should they chart to meet the challenges of an aging society? And how will the various options affect current and future generations of older adults, their families and the professionals serving them? This course will introduce theoretical models of the policy process, and examine the history and development of policies for older persons. It is anticipated that students will develop the critical thinking skills required to evaluate existing age-based policies and proposals for change.

Course Objectives

- Introduce students to social, political, and economic issues and changes resulting from the aging of society
- Describe the historical development and content of key legislative and governmental programs developed for older adults, including Social Security Act, Older Americans Act, Medicare, etc.
- Help students examine different points of view and develop skills in critical thinking through which they can analyze policies and policy making to form their own perspectives
- Help students develop ability to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, and trade-offs inherent in current age-based policy

Provide students experience accessing, evaluating and using online sources of policy materials.

Your Instructors

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Jon Pynoos, Ph.D.

*UPS Foundation Professor of Gerontology, Policy, Planning and Development
Director, Division of Policy and Services Research.*

Jon Pynoos is the UPS Foundation Professor of Gerontology, Policy, Planning and Development at the Andrus Gerontology Center of the University of Southern California. He is also Director of the National Resource Center on Supportive Housing and Home Modification, and Co-Director of the Fall Prevention Center of Excellence, which is funded by the Archstone Foundation.

Dr. Pynoos has spent his career researching, writing, and advising the government and private sector, concerning how to improve housing and long term care policies and programs for the elderly. He has conducted a large number of applied research projects based on surveys and case studies of housing, aging in place and long-term care.

He has written and edited six books on housing and the elderly including [Linking Housing and Services for Older Adults: Obstacles, Options, and Opportunities](#); [Housing the Aged: Design Directives and Policy Considerations](#); and [Housing Frail Elders: International Policies, Perspectives and Prospects](#).

Dr. Pynoos was a delegate to the last three White House Conferences on Aging and is currently a member of the City of Los Angeles Task Force on Aging and the California Commission on Aging. He is also on the Board of the American Society on Aging and served as Vice President of the Gerontological Society of America. He is a founding member of the National Home Modification Action Coalition.

Dr. Pynoos has been awarded both Guggenheim and Fulbright Fellowships. Before moving to USC in 1979, Dr. Pynoos was Director of an Area Agency on Aging/Home Care Corporation in Massachusetts that provided a range of services to keep older persons out of institutional settings. He holds undergraduate, Master's and Ph.D. degrees from Harvard University where he graduated Magna cum Laude.

Bernard A. Steinman, MS

Bernard Steinman will be serving the role of TA this semester. Bernard is a 2nd year Ph.D. student in gerontology. He has a bachelor's degree from the University of Washington, and a Masters in Psychology from Mississippi State University. At the Andrus Gerontology Center, Bernard works as a research assistant with Dr. Pynoos at the Fall Prevention Center of Excellence. He is particularly interested in how late-life blindness and vision impairment influences the likelihood of falling. Prior to coming to USC, Bernard worked as a researcher in the field of vision rehabilitation, and has done extensive work evaluating state/federal older blind independent living programs. Please feel free to contact Bernard with questions and issues related to course content and/or access. Bernard's office is in GERO 228; he can be reached by phone (213-740-7306) or via email (bsteinma@usc.edu).

Reading Assignments

Readings are usually assigned at the beginning of the sessions for students to get a deeper understanding of the issue to be discussed. Reading assignments are intended to help stimulate discussions in the Cyberclass Discussion, and to provide

information and references that you can use in your final papers. Since there is no traditional "lecture" period, it is very important that you keep up with the readings, as a main source for acquiring course information. The required readings provide students with an overview of programs developed for older persons and the needs and problems that these programs are intended to address.

Books are available for purchase at USC's [Pertusati Bookstore](#), [Barnes and Noble](#), or online at [Amazon.com](#). Textbook reading assignments begin in earnest during the second week so get your books as soon as possible.

Additional required readings are on electronic reserve at [USC Leavey Library](#). These readings may be acquired by clicking on links within the lessons, or through the e-Resources link on the library page.

Required Books:

- Hudson, R. B. (2005). *The New Politics of Old Age Policy*
- Kingdon, J.W. (2002). *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. Second Edition
- Schultz, J. H. & Binstock, R. H. (2006). *Aging Nation: The Economics and Politics of Growing Older in America*
- Torres-Gil, F. (1991). *The new aging: Politics and change in America*

Recommended Books:

- Gelfand, D.E. (2006). *The Aging Network*. Fifth Edition
- Johnson, H. and Broder, D.S. (1996). *The System*
- Moody, H.R. (2006). *Aging: Concepts and controversies*. Fifth Edition
- Redman, E. (1972). *The Dance of Legislation*
- Steckenrider, J.S. & Parrot, T.M. (1998). *New directions in old age policies*
- Birkland, T. A. (2005). *An Introduction to the Policy Process: Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy*

Assignments and Grading

Your course grade is based on attaining the maximum points possible. Course assignments, due dates and their value toward your final grade are summarized below. Please note that points will be subtracted for assignments that are turned in late.

1. E-mail assignments

Four short e-mail assignments (2-4 pages) will be assigned during the course of the semester. They will encourage students to review and analyze the materials presented in the lectures/readings. The assignments are usually due 7 days after they are assigned. For example, the first e-mail exercise is assigned on January 11 and is due by noon on January 18.

2. Cyberclass Discussions

Each week students will participate in discussions on the topics relevant to the lecture using the online discussion group site. This component of the class is important and your participation is required. You will find a set of prompting questions meant to highlight important issues and stimulate discussion. Depending on when you log in to the classroom (you may log in anytime during the week), you may find a conversation already in progress. Feel free to jump in at any level, taking

up one of the prompting questions or joining the conversation in progress. I also encourage you to pursue issues that interest you but which neither I, nor your fellow students have raised. Try to make your entries relevant, thoughtful and provocative of continued discussion. The Cyberclass Discussions will be structured so that all responses will remain accessible to participants during the entire course.

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.

3. Final Research Paper

There will be one final research paper. You should start thinking about your topic early in the semester, and submit 1-2 page proposal of your project by Thursday, February 15th (by noon). The final paper will be due on Thursday, April 26, (by noon). It should be approximately 12 -15 pages, typed, grammatically correct, clearly written, with no spelling errors. The content (including cover page, abstract, citations, and references) should be in APA format (see examples in APA publication manual, 5th edition). If you have questions regarding formatting your paper, you may contact Bernard Steinman.

4. Interactive exercises (not graded)

A number of interactive exercises are built into the lectures to provide students with opportunities to explore websites related to the course and to strengthen your understanding of the information. Students are encouraged, but not required to enrich their learning experience using these exercises.

Grade Breakdown

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percentage Value</u>
E-mail Assignment (10 points each)	40%
Cyberclass Discussion Participation	15%
Final Research Paper Proposal	5%
Final Research Paper	40%
TOTAL	100%

Academic Integrity [VERY IMPORTANT]

I will strictly adhere to the University Student Conduct Codes established expectations of academic honesty. This means student work should be submitted with the respect for the intellectual property rights of others; the ideas and wordings of another writer must be acknowledged and appropriately used.

According to SCAMPUS University Governance sections 11.00 and 11.11, plagiarism is the unacknowledged and inappropriate use of others' works. It includes:

- "the submission of material authored by another person but represented as the student's own work, whether the material is paraphrased or copied in verbatim or near verbatim form;"
- "the submission of material subjected to editorial revision by another person that results in substantive changes in content or major alteration of writing style;" and
- "Improper acknowledgement of sources in essays or papers." [1]

Plagiarism is serious student misconduct. If such behavior is found, the instructor has the responsibility to report to the Office of Student Conduct and may apply appropriate sanctions to students who violate principles of academic integrity.

Disabilities Services and Programs

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to the instructor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Review

Your program 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 rather, in the virtual sense), additional student responsibilities are required.

Each week of the course consists of readings from required texts as well as electronic reserves, a lecture, interactive exercises to further enhance your understanding of the subject matter, and a Cyberclass Discussion. 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 their links. These activities are designed to further explain and illustrate the major concepts of the lecture. During the course, you are expected to keep pace with readings, and to deliver assignments on schedule to the instructor. Assignments must be turned in one week from the day they were assigned. Assignments must be turned in by noon (Pacific Standard Time). However, you may log on to the site at any time you choose during the week. You will have access to Dr. Pynoos, Bernard, and your classmates via e-mail and in Cyberclass Discussions.

It is strongly suggested that in order to keep up with the course, you schedule a specific time each week to read the required texts and supplemental materials, "attend" the lecture, view the interactive exercises, and participate in the Cyberclass Discussion. It is also necessary to check e-mail at least every other day for messages from your professor and fellow classmates. Note: Supplemental readings for each course are available on-line (Electronic Reserve) and may also be purchased as a hardcopy through the University Bookstore, or other online booksellers. We recommend that each of you purchase the hard copy of the readings, as this will allow you to write notes in the margins of your personal copy. Additionally, it is important that you begin to build your own gerontology library, for future reference.

Finally, we would like to learn more about your specific interests in gerontology and experience or concerns as a graduate student taking online courses. Please feel free to e-mail or call us, especially if you have questions or comments about any of the course requirements. We hope that the class is an enjoyable and fulfilling experience for you, and we look forward to the experience.