

## **GERO 501 Perspectives in Aging**

**Professor:** Dr. Dana Burr Bradley

**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 10:30-12:30 pm and by appointment via

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Welcome to WKU Aging! WKU Aging is guided by the belief that optimal aging is attainable on both the individual and community level and requires implementing holistic strategies. You can learn more about our academic programs, great activities & events for students and the community, and research opportunities by bookmarking our website: [www.wku.edu/aging](http://www.wku.edu/aging) and “liking” our Facebook page [www.facebook.org/wkuaging](http://www.facebook.org/wkuaging). If you would like to learn more about Aging@WKU, please stop by our offices in Academic Complex (305 A) and my office in Academic Complex 410A, send a message to [aging@wku.edu](mailto:aging@wku.edu) or call 270 745-3177.

• **What is the study of aging? • How Does Aging Affect the Mind and the Body?**

• **How Does Social Context Influence Aging and Life Course Development?**

• **What are the Needs and Interests of an Older Population?**

These questions are sparking the most important research in gerontology the resulting theories from across the various disciplines into one broad overview of gerontology. This interdisciplinary approach is key to developing a healthy "gerontological imagination," a necessary base for the study of gerontology. Throughout the semester you will become familiar with key facts, theories and concepts to help you reflect on the most important topics confronting our aging society. The fun and challenge of this class will be for you to decide how to resolve these issues in a well reasoned and argued manner.

**Course Objectives** By successfully completing this course, students will be able to

1. define basic terms used within social gerontology,
2. analyze societal and individual consequences of demographic changes in an aging society
3. explain how people are shaped by societal and cultural factors as they age,
4. identify and discuss current issues in social gerontology and aging
5. gain exposure to elders in your community by developing a consultant case study.

**Required Text:** *Aging: Concepts & Controversies by Harry (Rick) Moody 9<sup>th</sup> Edition*

*It's acceptable to use the 8<sup>th</sup> edition although page numbers will be different and a few controversies have been altered. You are responsible for reading the assigned reading.*

*Additional Readings are posted on the Blackboard site.*

## ☆ **ADA Accommodation**

In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, 1074. SARC can be reached by phone number at 270-745-5004 [270-745-3030 TTY] or via email at [sarc.connect@wku.edu](mailto:sarc.connect@wku.edu). Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

## ☆ **Title IX Misconduct/Assault**

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy (#0.2070) at <https://wku.edu/eoo/documents/titleix/wkutitleixpolicyandgrievanceprocedure.pdf> and Discrimination and Harassment Policy (#0.2040) at [https://wku.edu/policies/hr\\_policies/2040\\_discrimination\\_harassment\\_policy.pdf](https://wku.edu/policies/hr_policies/2040_discrimination_harassment_policy.pdf).

Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, Andrea Anderson, 270-745-5398 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121.

Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are "Responsible Employees" of the University and **MUST** report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's Counseling and Testing Center at 270-745-3159.

## **Classroom Environment**

All students taking this course are expected to have read policies regarding Academic Integrity: <http://www.wku.edu/Dept/Support/StuAffairs/StuLife/handbook/PIPolicy/14AcademicOffenses.htm>

Please be aware that plagiarism will not be tolerated under any circumstances. The penalty for plagiarism will be a zero for the assignment. If you have any questions as to what constitutes plagiarism, ask me! Furthermore, cheating on exams and/or assignments will not be tolerated, and the penalty is an automatic "0" for the test or an "F" in the course. This penalty works both ways, which means your copying someone else's work OR allowing someone else to copy your work is forbidden. Do not put yourself in this unfortunate situation—risking a poor grade does not begin to compare with getting an "F" for the entire course. Be advised that I will not hesitate to enforce this policy if necessary. This policy applies to all assignments.

**Furthermore, as this course examines various controversies designed to provide an opportunity for you to think critically; your tolerance of different opinions is expected.**

"Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services, Garrett 101. The OFSDS telephone number is (270) 745-5004 V/TDD. Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services."

## Course Flow: Units, Readings and Assignments

### Dates of Discussions & Required Work

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Unit 1      | <b>Ends September 24<sup>th</sup></b><br>Discussion Boards 1-3 (check BB for dates due)<br>Senior Case Study Check In #1 Sept 10th<br>CITI Certification DUE Sept 17th<br>Brief paper: “Social roles and chronological age”  |
| Unit 2      | <b>Sept 25<sup>th</sup> -- Oct 29<sup>th</sup></b><br>Discussion Boards 4-6 (check BB for due dates)<br>Journal Article Reviews DUE Oct 9th<br>Senior Case Study Check In #2 Oct 22nd<br>Brief paper: “How does economic and social class across the lifespan affect access to health care in later life?” |
| Unit 3      | <b>Oct 30<sup>th</sup> – Nov 26<sup>th</sup></b><br>Discussion Boards 7-9 (check BB for due dates)<br>Senior Case Study Check In #3 Nov 12th.<br>Brief paper: “Choose a side and argue using logic and cited references why the “right to die” should be legalized throughout the U.S.”                    |
| END of TERM | Discussion Board 10 due Dec 3rd<br>Case Study due Dec 3 <sup>rd</sup><br>Exam due Dec 6 <sup>th</sup>  |

### Assignments

All assignments should be submitted double-spaced and in Times New Roman 12 pt. font, Please cite facts and arguments that you use to back up your assertions. You may use whatever citation format you would like (I work in APA). Here is the general rule – I enjoy learning new things, and it is helpful when I can find your citation.

**Brief Paper Assignments:** Each unit has an assigned paper topic which should be a minimum 3 pages in length (and an additional page for references). The objective of these assignments is to expose you to matters that affect older adults in our everyday lives. Please cite peer reviewed sources, and IF you are citing a web-site, it should only be from a governmental or foundation source – not popular press unless there is a compelling reason to do so. Please use APA style or another format. Papers are to be 100% free from spelling and grammar errors.

### Due Dates:

Unit 1 no later than Sep 24. Discuss how social roles may change with chronological age. Pick at least three examples (roles).

Unit 2 no later than Oct 29 “How does economic and social class across the lifespan affect access to health care in later life?”

Unit 3 no later than Nov 26. “Choose a side and argue using logic and cited references why the “right to die” should be legalized throughout the U.S.”

**Summary of Journal Readings Oct 9:** You will select ten articles from an approved list of gerontological journals and write 2-page summaries, double spaced describing what you learned from each article. No more than two articles can come from the same journal. The journal articles should be published in the last six years. Each summary needs to be accompanied by a full reference citation to the article. This assignment allows students to individualize the course readings to meet their own personal and professional interests for a maximum of 100 points (10 per journal summary). **\*\*HINT\*\*It is suggested that you pick journal articles that are relatable to the questions you may ask your interviewee for the senior case study.**

**Online Discussions:** On Blackboard, there is a “Discussion Board” where we will conduct threaded, asynchronous discussions on aging issues. With such a small class, this discussion should be easy and interesting. Helpful if you place your response at the beginning of the week, rather than at the very end to facilitate discussion and dialog. Complete all 10 (10 points a piece) for a maximum of 100 points.

**Senior Case Study Project- due no later than Dec 3rd.**

For this project, you will need to identify an older adult, your “older consultant.” Ideally, this should be someone that is NOT a close family member.

**Complete compliance (ethics) courses BEFORE beginning your research.**

<http://www.wku.edu/compliance/training.php> this needs to be completed by **September 17<sup>th</sup>** meet the minimum requirements listed in the next bullet and have appropriate time to complete the final paper. You need to complete: [1] Social/Behavioral Research Course (live human beings) & [2] Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research Course (RCR). Each of the two modules has been reported to take roughly a minimum of 2-3 hours to complete; please consider this in your research timeline.

Please upload a copy of your CITI completion report to the Blackboard site – under assignments.

To receive a favorable grade, you should be meeting with your consultant at least one hour each week (for a minimum of four times or weeks)

- Complete all three “check-ins” by the due date for maximum credit.
- Keep a log of these meetings including date, time and place. Following each meeting record subjects discussed, information gained, ideas or hypotheses about the adult individual and their ecological contexts (e.g. spouse, family, community, society) stimulated by the conversation, etc. Your log can be in outline form.

- As a suggestion, use the information learned from your meetings to investigate further what may have already been researched. For example, you can find an article on the subject, write a summary, and also embed this information into your paper properly cited.

### **Final Exam Due December 6th**

The Final Exam will cover concepts and readings we have had throughout the semester. It will be open-book/note essay exam.

#### **Grade Calculations:**

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| 10 online discussion board postings @ 10 points | 100 points |
| 3 short paper assignments @ 50 points           | 150 points |
| 10 journal summaries @ 10 points                | 100 points |
| 1 Case Study paper                              | 200 points |
| Completion of CITI training                     | 25 points  |
| Completion of detailed log                      | 25 points  |
| Checkpoint 1                                    | 25 points  |
| Checkpoint 2                                    | 25 points  |
| Checkpoint 3                                    | 25 points  |
| 1 Final exam @ 100 points                       | 100 points |

**TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE: 800 points**

Total points earned/8.0 = Grade received

Grade Ranges: (Pluses and minuses are also calculated within these ranges.)

A=90-100%, B=80-89% C=70-79%, D=60-69%,