

PSYS 423 - Psychology of Adult Life and Aging – Summer 2021

This course is entirely online to make it convenient to complete. You do NOT need to make arrangements to complete quizzes at a testing center, but you will need to download the Respondus Lockdown browser.

All assignments are submitted via Blackboard.

Course Details:

Instructor: Dr. Andy Mienaltowski (Dr. M'ski)

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Office Hours: Summer office hours are by appointment. I can meet with you via phone or Zoom, and am happy to set up a time to chat about questions as well as your interest in class content and future career goals with senior citizens.

Required Textbook: (choose one – any one of these three editions is sufficient)

Cavanaugh, J. C., & Blanchard-Fields, F. (2010). *Adult development and aging* (6th ed). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Cavanaugh, J. C., & Blanchard-Fields, F. (2014). *Adult development and aging* (7th ed). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Cavanaugh, J. C., & Blanchard-Fields, F. (2019). *Adult development and aging* (8th ed). Belmont, CA: Cengage.

(You may use the eBook for the course if you prefer. Page numbers for the readings are provided for all 3 editions of the textbook and supplemental text info is provided on Blackboard. See Readings Map for more details at end of syllabus.)

Recommended Materials:

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the APA* (7th ed). Washington, D.C.: APA.

ISBN-13: 9781433832161 (Links to APA style sites will be provided if you do not own a manual.)

Required Software:

Because this is an online course, you are required to download the **Respondus Lockdown Browser** to take quizzes. This browser is free, compatible with PCs (Windows 10) and with Macs (Apple OS), and is easy to use. You are welcome to use your readings and notes that you take while reading and studying in order to complete the quizzes. You are not allowed, however, to search the web. The lockdown browser allows you to access quizzes on your computer but it prevents you from using other websites. You can complete all quizzes in the comfort of your own home.

You can download the lock down browser here:

PC - <https://www.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?ostype=1&id=476234332>

Mac - <https://www.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?ostype=2&id=476234332>

WKU offers a tutorial video on how to install the browser:

https://itweb.wku.edu/training_attech/index.php?fuseaction=view.yt&id=636

Course Description:

Prerequisites: 21 hours of Foundations & Explorations Courses, or junior status, or permission of instructor.

Course Description: Psychological processes in adulthood and aging. Emphasis on contemporary theories, methodological issues, and interactions of psychological, biological, social, and environmental factors in adulthood and aging.

General Info about the Course: For this course, you will be assessed through (a) unit quizzes that cover the course's topic areas and will be based on your readings, and (b) three short written essays that ask you to apply theory and research findings from your readings to important topics in aging and psychology. The deadlines for the assignments in this course are spaced throughout the 3-week term to facilitate steady progress. All activities are submitted through Blackboard, so a consistent internet connection is needed. **Successful students are motivated to learn about the aging process.** This course will challenge you to use your skills like a social scientist would to draw conclusions about the work of other scientists. You will be asked to consider journal articles and book chapters of the foremost experts in gerontology. I will be communicating with you throughout the term, and look forward to the interaction and providing you with feedback on your assignments.

Colonnade Program: Fulfills 3 out of 9 hours of course credit from the Connections category of the WKU Colonnade (General Education) Program, specifically in the *Connections-Systems* area. The following are the learning outcomes for the Connections-Systems category of the Colonnade Program as well as the learning objectives that will be introduced in this course to meet these outcomes.

<i>Connections Systems Learning Outcomes</i>	<i>Course Overview and Learning Outcomes</i>
Students will examine systems, whether natural or human, by breaking them down into their component parts or processes and seeing how these parts interact. Courses will consider the evolution and dynamics of a particular system or systems and the application of system-level thinking. Below are the three learning outcomes for Systems courses within the Connection Category of the Colonnade Program:	<p>PSYS 423, Psychology of Adult Life and Aging, is a developmental psychology course that covers human aging. Aging is a process that involves growth in some psychological abilities, maintenance of others, and still decline in others. This course will cover adult development, primarily focusing on how psychological systems evolve throughout the latter half of life. Although society perpetuates stereotypes about how our psychological systems change as we grow older, this course will explore the science that underlies these changes to our psychological systems. Moreover, we will consider how one's individual talents, abilities, and struggles contribute to the processes by which aging impacts our psychological systems. Finally, we will explore the social dynamics of growing older in today's world to better understand the impact that aging psychological systems can have on public policy and the programming of psychological research.</p> <p>The main goals for this course are: (1) to help you become familiar with current psychological theories of aging and how they account for changes in psychological systems, (2) to facilitate your critical analysis of the inter-relations amongst cognitive, emotional, social, and biopsychological systems and their constituent components as they evolve throughout adulthood, and (3) to encourage you to consider how your own psychological systems as well as those of your loved ones, patients, and clients might dynamically evolve as the years pass. The learning outcomes for the course include:</p>
1. Analyze how systems evolve.	(a) Discuss the research methods used by developmental psychologists to measure and characterize the impact that human aging has on the evolution of psychological systems, including their constituent components.
2. Compare the study of individual components to the analysis of entire systems.	<p>(b) Identify the individual components of cognitive, emotional, social, and biopsychological systems, and describe how each is assessed by psychological scientists.</p> <p>(c) Identify the major changes in the above psychological systems that take place throughout adulthood and into old age and that have been substantiated with empirical evidence by psychological scientists.</p>
3. Evaluate how system-level thinking informs decision-making, public policy, and/or the sustainability of the system itself.	(d) Describe the conditions under which improvements and/or impairments in cognitive, social, emotional, and biopsychological systems noted in the laboratory by psychological scientists might translate into substantial changes in in everyday functioning outside of the laboratory.

Disclaimer: The instructor reserves the right to postpone due dates but will not move them earlier. You are welcome to submit your work ahead of deadlines on Blackboard. The materials required for this course will not change and can be purchased online or from the WKU Store. Additional readings can be found on Blackboard.