PSYS 423 - Psychology of Adult Life and Aging – Summer 2025

Important things to note about this course:
- Course runs from May 12 to May 30. It is offered entirely online.
- The course is designed so that you will **not** have to "teach yourself." Rather, you'll have multiple resources to facilitate your learning. Content is presented via lecture videos & textbook.
- You will have access to Dr. M'ski via office hours if you need help.
- "Aging" throughout adulthood means both growth and decline. This course goes beyond stereotypes to emphasize how we know whether "aging" is affecting people's lives.
- A prior psychology course is **not** required for this course, as the basics of systems are introduced prior to jumping into exploring how the systems change as we grow older

Details:
Instructor: Dr. Andy Mienaltowski (Dr. M'ski)   Phone: (270) 681-0270   E-mail: **drmski@wku.edu**

Required Textbook:
Cavanaugh, J. C., *Adult development and aging* (9th ed). Belmont, CA: Cengage.

More info here: https://www.cengage.com/c/adult-development-and-aging-9e-cavanaugh/9780357796276/

This book is required for the course. The eBook is included in the WKU Big Red Backpack program. If you opt out of the Big Red Backpack program, you will still need access to the book (whether eBook or paper copy). The eBook is sold through the WKU Store if you would like to access it via Blackboard. The eBook is managed through the Yuzu reader, which allows for highlighting, is searchable, and can even read the book aloud to you.

Recommended Materials:
OWL Purdue website on how to format a paper using APA style:
    https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html

The APA Publication manual can be a helpful resource. However, OWL Purdue is just as helpful and **free**. It includes sample papers written in APA style. Also, you may find that there are AI programs/sites that can assist in editing your writing, including the use of APA style.

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 specific activities (including summative quizzes and empirical and applied engagement activities) that cover the assigned reading and video lectures, and (b) short written essay 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 term to facilitate steady progress rather than attempting to quickly complete assignments by some date at the end of the term. All activities are submitted through Blackboard and lectures are delivered via video links, so a consistent internet connection is needed. **Successful students are motivated to learn about the aging process.** I will be communicating with you throughout the term and look forward to the interaction and providing you with feedback on your assignments and essays.

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.

Connections Systems Learning Outcomes	Course Overview and Learning Outcomes
Students will examine systems, whether natural or human, by breaking them down into their component parts or processes and	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

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:	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.
	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:
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.	(b) Identify the individual components of cognitive, emotional, social, and biopsychological systems, and describe how each is assessed by psychological scientists. (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.
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.