AGING: CHANGE AND ADAPTATION

Course Instructor: Stephen J. Cutler

Office: Department of Sociology
31 South Prospect Street, Rm. 002

Phones: Office: 656-2217 or 656-3238 (Megan Johnson, Rm. 007)
Home: 899-4635

E-mail: Stephen.Cutler@uvm.edu or Megan.M.Johnson@uvm.edu

Office Hours: Tues., 2:00 p.m.-3:15 p.m. and Thurs., 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Course Web Site: http://www.uvm.edu/~scutler/soc20/

Course Description: This course provides a multidisciplinary introduction to the study of human aging. The importance of the multidisciplinary approach derives from the fact that the process of aging is best viewed and understood as a set of interrelated changes ranging from the biological to the societal. Thus, through lectures and discussion, we will explore individual and social meanings of aging and old age; examine the physical, physiological, psychological, and sociological changes accompanying aging; and consider the individual, family, community, and societal adaptations that need to be made in response to these changes.

At the conclusion of the course, you should be able to:

1. Recognize aging as a normal developmental phase of the life cycle that is both unique to each individual and patterned by social, cultural, and historical forces.

2. Identify physical, physiological, psychological, and sociological changes inherent in the human aging process.

3. Recognize the origins and forms of “ageism” and its individual, social, economic, and political consequences.

4. Identify factors in the internal and external environments that may affect the aging process.

5. Identify middle- and upper-level courses at UVM that will enable you to pursue further, specialized studies of human aging.
Readings: Each student should purchase a copy of the following books:


All readings, as noted in the course outline, should be completed prior to the session for which they are assigned.

Copies of these books are available at the University Bookstore.

Evaluation: In addition to the expectation of regular class attendance and participation, final grades will be based on the following:

A) Three in-class examinations, given on **Tuesday, February 21**, **Tuesday, April 4**, and **Thursday, April 27**. Each exam is designed to evaluate your understanding of and familiarity with content covered in lectures, your textbooks, and other required readings or viewings. Each exam will include both multiple choice and essay questions. Each exam will be cumulative; questions on material covered on previous exams will be included.

B) A typed summary and analysis of a life review with an older relative or acquaintance (65+), due by **Tuesday, May 2**. Specific guidelines for this assignment will be distributed separately.

With the above assignments in mind, the basis for determining final grades is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>First Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Second Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Third Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Life Review Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Participation, attendance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C) **Policy Regarding Late Assignments:** Assignments should be submitted by **1:45 p.m.** on the date they are due. Assignments which are turned in late will be penalized one grade for any part of a 24-hour period that they are overdue. An A paper turned in at 3:00 p.m. on the due date will receive a grade of A-; the same paper turned in at 2:00 p.m. the following day will received a grade of B+. In no case will late assignments be accepted after the graded papers have been returned to other students. The only exceptions to this policy will be if there is a signed medical excuse or other unusual extenuating circumstances which have been cleared with me well in advance of the due date.
TOPICS AND ASSIGNED READINGS

TUESDAY, JANUARY 17

Topic: Course Introduction: Why Study Aging?
Presenter: Stephen Cutler, Department of Sociology, UVM

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19

Topic: Issues in the Study of Aging
Presenter: Stephen Cutler

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24

Topic: Demographics of Aging
Presenter: Stephen Cutler
Readings: Same as for January 19

THURSDAY, JANUARY 26

Topic: Universal Physical and Physiological Changes with Age (Part I)
Presenter: Sarah Abrams, School of Nursing, UVM

TUESDAY, JANUARY 31

Topic: Universal Physical and Physiological Changes with Age (Part II)
Presenter: Sarah Abrams
Readings: Same as for January 26
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2

**Topic:** Normal Psychological Processes in Aging (Part I)

**Presenter:** Jacqueline Weinstock, Department of Integrated Professional Studies, UVM

Chap. 5, “Cognitive Changes with Aging,” pp. 164-190
Chap. 6, “Personality and Mental Health in Old Age,” pp. 194-213 only

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7

**Topic:** Normal Psychological Processes in Aging (Part II)

**Presenter:** Jacqueline Weinstock

**Readings:** Same as for February 2

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9

*** NO CLASS – ASSOC. FOR GERONTOLOGY IN HIGHER EDUCATION MEETING ***

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14

**Topic:** Aging and Mental Health

**Presenter:** Clifford Singer, Department of Psychiatry, UVM

**Readings:** Hooyman and Kiyak, Chap. 6, “Personality and Mental Health in Old Age,” pp. 213-244 only

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16

**Topic:** Health and Illness in Old Age

**Presenter:** Stephen Cutler

**Readings:** Hooyman and Kiyak, Chap. 4, “Managing Chronic Diseases and Promoting Well-Being in Old Age,” pp. 109-155
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21

***FIRST EXAM***

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23

**Topic:** Dementia and Alzheimer’s Disease (Part I)

**Presenter:** Patricia Nelson, Dept. of Anthropology, UVM and, formerly, Vermont and New Hampshire Chapter, Alzheimer’s Assoc.

**Readings:** Hooyman and Kiyak, Chap. 6, “Personality and Mental Health in Old Age,” pp. 220-232 only

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

**Topic:** Dementia and Alzheimer’s Disease (Part II)

**Presenter:** Stephen Cutler

**Readings:** Same as for February 23

**Film:** “Grace”

THURSDAY, MARCH 2

**Topic:** Sociological Perspectives on Aging

**Presenter:** Stephen Cutler


Chap. 8, “Social Theories of Aging,” pp. 283-302

TUESDAY, MARCH 7

*** NO CLASS—TOWN MEETING DAY RECESS***
THURSDAY, MARCH 9

Topic: Families and Social Support Systems
Presenter: Stephen Cutler
Chap. 10, “Opportunities and Stress of Informal Caregiving,” pp. 349-374

TUESDAY, MARCH 14

Topic: Living Arrangements and Housing
Presenter: Fred Fengler, Department of Sociology, UVM

THURSDAY, MARCH 16

Topic: Remaining in One’s Home with Assistance—HomeShare Vermont
Presenter: Kirby Dunn, Executive Director, HomeShare Vermont
Readings: Same as for March 14

TUESDAY, MARCH 21—THURSDAY, MARCH 23

*** SPRING BREAK—NO CLASSES ***

TUESDAY, MARCH 28

Topic: Employment, Retirement, and Economic Issues (Part I)
Presenter: Barbara McIntosh, School of Business Administration, UVM
THURSDAY, MARCH 30

Topic: Employment, Retirement, and Economic Issues (Part II)
Presenter: Barbara McIntosh
Readings: Same as for March 28

TUESDAY, APRIL 4

***SECOND EXAM***

THURSDAY, APRIL 6

Topic: Ageism
Presenter: Stephen Cutler
Chap. 15, “The Resilience of Older Women,” pp. 564-584

TUESDAY, APRIL 11

Topic: Death and Dying (Part I)
Presenter: Stephen Cutler
Albom, Tuesdays with Morrie, pp. 1-89
Film: Excerpts from “On Our Own Terms, Moyers on Dying in America: A Death of One’s Own”

THURSDAY, APRIL 13

Topic: Death and Dying (Part II)
Presenters: Stephen Cutler
Readings: Same as for April 11, with the addition of Albom, Tuesdays with Morrie, pp. 90–192
TUESDAY, APRIL 18

**Topic:** Services and Programs for the Aged: State and Local

**Presenter:** John Barbour, Executive Director, Champlain Valley Agency on Aging


THURSDAY, APRIL 20

**Topic:** Public Policy Issues: The Community of Vermont Elders (COVE)

**Presenter:** Dolly Fleming, Executive Director, Community of Vermont Elders (COVE)

**Readings:** Hooyman and Kiyak, Chap. 17, “Health and Long-Term Care Policies and Programs,” pp. 626-659

THURSDAY, APRIL 20

**Topic:** Forum on Aging: The Anti-Aging Movement

---

**Forum on Aging:**

The Grams Memorial Lecture in Gerontology

Dr. Robert H. Binstock

Professor of Aging, Health and Society

Case Western Reserve University

“Anti-Aging Medicine and Research:
Hype, Reality, and Implications”

Memorial Lounge, Waterman Building, 7:00 p.m.

---

(extra credit)
TUESDAY, APRIL 25

Topic: A Personal Perspective on Aging

Presenter: Sophie Quest (72 year old musician, artist, UVM student, widow)

TUESDAY, MAY 2

Topic: Last Class: Lessons from our Elders and Implications for the Future

Presenter: Stephen Cutler

***LIFE REVIEW PAPER DUE***
## COURSE SCHEDULE AND TOPICAL OUTLINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>PRESENTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 17</td>
<td>Course Introduction: Why Study Aging?</td>
<td>S. Cutler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 19</td>
<td>Issues in the Study of Aging</td>
<td>S. Cutler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 24</td>
<td>Demographics of Aging</td>
<td>S. Cutler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 26</td>
<td>Universal Physical and Physiological Changes with Age (Part I)</td>
<td>S. Abrams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 31</td>
<td>Universal Physical and Physiological Changes with Age (Part II)</td>
<td>S. Abrams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 2</td>
<td>Normal Psychological Processes in Aging (Part I)</td>
<td>J. Weinstock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 7</td>
<td>Normal Psychological Processes in Aging (Part II)</td>
<td>J. Weinstock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 9</td>
<td>AGHE Annual Meeting—NO CLASS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 14</td>
<td>Aging and Mental Health</td>
<td>C. Singer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 16</td>
<td>Health and Illness in Old Age</td>
<td>S. Cutler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 21</td>
<td>First Exam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 23</td>
<td>Dementia and Alzheimer’s Disease (Part I)</td>
<td>P. Nelson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 28</td>
<td>Dementia and Alzheimer’s Disease (Part II)</td>
<td>S. Cutler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2</td>
<td>Sociological Perspectives on Aging</td>
<td>S. Cutler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 7</td>
<td>Town Meeting Recess—NO CLASS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 9</td>
<td>Families and Social Support Systems</td>
<td>S. Cutler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 14</td>
<td>Living Arrangements and Housing</td>
<td>F. Fengler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 16</td>
<td>Remaining in One’s Home with Assistance: HomeShare Vermont</td>
<td>K. Dunn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 21-23</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK—NO CLASSES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATE</td>
<td>TOPIC</td>
<td>PRESENTER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 28</td>
<td>Employment, Retirement, and Economic Issues (Part I)</td>
<td>B. McIntosh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 30</td>
<td>Employment, Retirement, and Economic Issues (Part II)</td>
<td>B. McIntosh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 4</td>
<td>Second Exam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 6</td>
<td>Ageism</td>
<td>S. Cutler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 11</td>
<td>Death and Dying (Part I)</td>
<td>S. Cutler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 13</td>
<td>Death and Dying (Part II)</td>
<td>S. Cutler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 18</td>
<td>Services and Programs for the Aged: State and Local</td>
<td>J. Barbour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 20</td>
<td>Public Policy Issues: The Community of Vermont Elders</td>
<td>D. Fleming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 20</td>
<td>The Anti-Aging Movement (Forum on Aging: 7:00)</td>
<td>R. Binstock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 25</td>
<td>A Personal Perspective on Aging</td>
<td>S. Quest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 27</td>
<td>Third Exam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>Lessons from our Elders and Implications for the Future</td>
<td>S. Cutler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>LIFE REVIEW PAPER DUE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>