

SO/AN 344-01 AGING: MYTH AND REALITIES

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION: HYBRID CLASS

The course is a hybrid course with most classes meeting face-to-face (T/Th 2:00 PM - 3:20 PM) and fewer than 50% of classes will work online. All students are required to create a Moodle account and enroll in the Moodle shell of this course by the first class to access readings, forums, assignments, and exams. *The enrolment key will be provided to students via email and shared in class.* [Login to Moodle](#) to access course resources. For assistance with Moodle, contact moodlehelp@triton.uog.edu.

PROFESSOR'S INFORMATION

Dr. Debra T. Cabrera

Email address is dcabrera@triton.uog.edu.

Telephone: (671)735-2871

Location: HSS219C

Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 9:00 to 11:00 AM and by appointment

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This course explores the major issues and concepts pertinent to gerontology, the study of the aging process. The prevailing theories of the social/biological aging process, and the economics, physical and psychological problems that might arise in late life are presented, and students learn how these factors impinge on the well-being of the older person and the social structure of a community. Aging as it occurs in different societies and throughout history is discussed. Social myths and stereotypes are explored. An overview of existing aging policies and special programs for seniors is included, as is a section on dying, death and grieving.

COURSE CONTENT

Aging is a biological process, a cultural process and a social process that all of us are experiencing simultaneously. This course serves as an introduction to the study of aging in the United States, otherwise known as gerontology. We will cover many topics including the life-course perspective of aging, how inequality affects the experience of aging, ageism and false stereotypes of older people, the effect of aging on health and the body, U.S. social policies related to the aged, non-communicable diseases and the demographic transition, death and other important theories and concepts that are relevant for students of Nursing, Social Work, Sociology and Anthropology.

Read this syllabus carefully. It is your guide to the course. Refer to it if you have questions about readings, assignment due dates, grading, and other class policies. I reserve the right to make minor changes to this syllabus to suit our learning needs.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ALIGNMENT MATRIX

The University of Guam's Sociology Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are aligned with UOG's Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs). This table describes sociology's PLOs and links them to SO 344's Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), which are also described. It lists the course assignments designed to assess these learning outcomes.

Program Learning Outcomes (or PLOs)	Student Learning Outcomes (or SLOs)	Assessment Tools
The sociology major educates students concerning:	At the conclusion of the course, students are expected to:	
(1) PLO #1 Apply sociological principles and concepts to the social world. <i>UOG ILO 4:</i> Understanding and appreciation of culturally diverse people, ideas and values in a democratic context. <i>UOG ILO 6:</i> An appreciation of the arts and sciences <i>UOG ILO 7:</i> An interest in personal development and lifelong learning.	a) 1) Knowledge of specific sociological principles, concepts and issues that contribute to students' understanding of the sociology of women.	Midterm, Writing Assignments, Essays, Argumentative Paper
PLO #2 Evaluate the effectiveness of sociological theories in explaining aspects of the social world. <i>UOG ILO 1:</i> Mastery of critical thinking and problem solving <i>UOG ILO 4:</i> Understanding and appreciation of culturally diverse people, ideas and values in a democratic context. <i>UOG ILO 6:</i> An appreciation of the arts and sciences	5) apply theoretical perspectives to empirical examples, so that students will be able to describe theory's role in generating sociological knowledge, and be able to compare and contrast basic theoretical perspectives; 6) identify myths and stereotypes of aging and describe how these shape attitudes toward older adults; 7) recognize the diversity in the aging experience, and describe the impact of gender, race, culture, and socioeconomic status on older people	Writing Assignments, Midterm, Final Exam, Argumentative Paper, Essays
PLO #3 Apply qualitative and quantitative research methodologies in research design, data collection and analyses in an ethical manner. <i>UOG ILO 2:</i> Mastery of quantitative analysis <i>UOG ILO 5:</i> Responsible use of knowledge, natural resources, and technology <i>UOG ILO 6:</i> An appreciation of the arts and sciences	8) understand the relation of theory to empirical evidence and the strengths and weaknesses of both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies;	Argumentative Paper, Presentation
PLO #4 Explain sociological knowledge through oral and written communication. <i>UOG ILO 3:</i> Effective oral and written communication skills <i>UOG ILO 5:</i> Responsible use of knowledge, natural resources, and technology <i>UOG ILO 7:</i> An interest in personal development and lifelong learning.	9) retrieve information and data from sociological texts; 10) comprehend and understand scientific technical writing that accurately conveys data findings, and; an 11) understanding of the principles of ethical practices in Sociology.	Writing Assignments, Argumentative Paper, Presentation

READINGS

There is one textbook and a collection of readings required for the class. Although it is not currently available at UOG bookstore, you can purchase the textbook (hardcopy or electronic copy) from an online company.

Required Readings

1. Moody, H. R., & Sasser, J. R. 2021. *Aging: Concepts and Controversies*. 10th ed. Thousand Oaks, California: Pine Forge Press.
2. The Course Reader is available in Moodle. (These readings are indicated by an asterisk in the schedule of readings and assignments.)
 - “Do We Fear Ageing? A Multidimensional Approach to Ageing Anxiety” by Robyn J. Brunton and Greg Scott in *Educational Gerontology* 41, 2015, pages 786-799
 - “COVID-19 and Ageism: How Positive and Negative Responses Impact Older Adults and Society” by Monahan, Caitlin; Macdonald, Jamie; Lytle, Ashley; Apriceno, MaryBeth; Levy, Sheri R. in *American Psychologist*, 0003066X, 20200716
 - “Sexual Quality of Life and Aging: A Prospective Study of a Nationally Representative Sample” by Forbes, Miriam K., Eaton, Nicholas R., and Krueger, Robert F. in *Journal of Sex Research*: Vol. 54 Issue 2, p137-148
 - “Chapter 3: Claiming Identity in a Nursing Home” by Debora A. Paterniti, pages 58-74 from *Ways of Aging* Edited by Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein
 - “Enhancing the Wellbeing of the Elderly: Social Use of Digital Technologies” by Hasan, Helen and Linger, Henry from *Educational Gerontology*. Pages 749-759, Vol. 42, No. 11
 - “An Aging Workforce: Employment Opportunities and Obstacles” by Mirjana Radovic-Markovic in *Cadmus*, Vol. 1, Issue 6 – May 2013, pages 142-155
 - “Controlling Disease and Creating Disparities: A Fundamental Cause Perspective, Pages 27-33 by Jo C. Phelan and Bruce G. Link in *Journal of Gerontology* (2005), Vol. 60B
 - “Grandparenting among the Chamorros of Guam” by Vicki Torsch in *Pacific Studies* Vol. 30, Nos. ¾ Sept./Dec. 2007, pages 81-100
 - “Risk of Psychological Difficulties Among Children Raised by Custodial Grandparents” by Gregory Smith and Patrick Palmieri in *Psychiatr Serv* 58(10) October 2007, pages 1303-1310
 - “Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Elders” by Kathryn L. Braun, Barbara W.K. Yee, Colette V. Browne and Noreen Mokuau, pages 55-67
 - “If I had lots of money...I’d have a body makeover” Managing the Aging Body” by Kathleen F. Slevin in *Social Forces*: 88(3), pages 1003-1020
 - "The Impact of Americanization on Intergenerational Relations: An Exploratory Study on the U.S. Territory of Guam," by Amanda Smith Barusch and Marc Spaulding from *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*: Vol. 16: Iss. 3, pages 61-79
 - “Chapter 3: Results” from *The Conceptualization of Depression by the Chamorro Man’amko of Guam* (MA Thesis from the MS in Clinical Psychology Program at UOG by Julie Jones Murrell), pages 17-42

- “Development of Loneliness in Middle and Old Age: Its Nature and Causes” by Soest et. al from *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology: Personality Processes and Individual Differences*, pages 1-19
- “Chapter 11: The Birth of the Shameful Death” by Alan Kellehear from *A Social History of Dying*, pages 213-233

GRADING SCALE:

Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	Percent Grade	Definition	
A+	4.00	98-100%	Outstanding	Honors-level performance with superior quality and extraordinary distinction.
A	4.00	93-97%		
A-	3.67	90-92%		
B+	3.33	87-89%	Good	Solid accomplishment, indicating a substantial mastery of course materials and a good command of skills required by the course.
B	3.00	83-86%		
B-	2.67	80-82%		
C+	2.33	77-79%	Adequate	Students have achieved the level of competency needed for advancing to a subsequent course which has this course as pre-requisite.
C	2.00	70-76%		
D	1.00	60-69%	Deficient	Minimal passing, but not adequate to take a subsequent course which has this course as pre-requisite.
F	0.00	<60%	Failure	Inadequate to receive credits.
P			Pass	
I			Incomplete	
NC			No Credit	

FINAL GRADES

Grades will be calculated based on your performance in the following areas:

Exercises/Writing Assignments	15%
Tests	15%
Attendance/Class Engagement	20%
Midterm	10%
Final Exam	20%
Argumentative Paper and Presentation	20%

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Attendance/Class Engagement

It is the student's responsibility to log in to Moodle for readings, announcements, assignments, forums, and other assessments. During our meetings, please be respectful and attentive. The term attendance means more than just being present. It also means *listening* to what people are saying and *responding* to what is being said when it is appropriate. Be on time for our class meeting. *Being absent, tardy, and non-attentive or disrespectful will negatively impact your grade.*

Tests

To keep everyone on track with the readings, a test will be administered periodically. The tests are not cumulative; they cover the most recent set of readings. The test format includes multiple choice and short answer questions. Tests will cover varying amounts of reading material. The tests will be taken online in Moodle. Avoidance of plagiarism and adherence to the honor code are expected.

Exercises/Writing Assignments

The exercises are designed to enable students to learn through discussion, analysis, critique and debate. The exercises require the submission of a short writing assignment. They ask you to respond individually to questions and must be submitted in Moodle. The due dates are specified in Moodle and announced in class. As with tests and other coursework, avoidance of plagiarism and adherence to the honor code are expected.

Final Argumentative Paper

Using your readings, feedback on assignments, and other resources, you are expected to write a paper and present it to the class. The topic will be your choice, after consultation with me. A rubric for your paper and its presentation is provided in Moodle.

Midterm

This midterm exam will cover both the readings and lectures for the first half of the course. The format will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. A study guide will be provided for the midterm and the final exam.

Final Exam

Our final exam will be cumulative, covering both readings and lectures throughout the course. A study guide will be provided. Like the midterm, the final exam will have a combination of question types.

LATE COURSEWORK

Students must communicate with me to explain the reason for missing work and ask for permission to submit late work. Late coursework may be accepted with penalty, no less than 10% deduction. No late coursework will be accepted after the last day of instruction for the course, resulting in a grade of zero for the work.

TIME COMMITMENT

University policy states: “At the University of Guam by definition one credit hour equals 15 hours of student-teacher contact in a face-to-face or on-line course” *and* “Faculty members are contractually expected to... assign readings, homework, and other learning activities that require *at least two hours of preparation and study time for every contact hour each week...*” For this course that means you are expected to put in *nine hours a week on average* including instructional time. Please be prepared to spend that much time on this course.

PLAGIARISM STATEMENT

The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited, to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials (UOG Student Handbook, p. 49). Cases of plagiarism are referred to the Student Discipline and Appeals Committee. In this course this penalty for plagiarism can range from no credit for the assignment to failure in the course. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), ChatGPT, or similar technologies is also prohibited unless used with permission and acknowledgement from the professor.

EEO STATEMENT, ADA ACCOMODATION SERVICES AND COMMITMENT TO STUDENT LEARNING

The University of Guam (UOG) is committed to achieving equal opportunity and full participation of persons with disabilities by providing for non-discriminatory access to its services and facilities through the ADA Office. The Mission of the ADA Office is to ensure non-discriminatory access to all benefits, privileges, opportunities and obligations to faculty, staff and community members with disabilities and to ensure a process for full compliance by UOG with the ADA of 1990, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, taking into account the economic climate and multi-cultural diversity of the institution.

For individuals covered under the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act), if you are a student with a disability requiring academic accommodation(s), please contact the Disability Support Services Office to discuss your confidential request. A Faculty Notification letter from the Disability Support Services counselor will be provided to me. To register for academic accommodations, please contact or visit Sallie S. Sablan, DSS counselor in the School of Education, office 110, disabilitysupport@triton.uog.edu or telephone/TDD 671-735-2505/2460.

The Enrollment Management & Student Success office provides reasonable accommodations for students in accordance with the UOG Policy and Procedure for student applicants with a disability. The ADA policy can be found on their website.

The University of Guam does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the admission to or employment in its education programs or activities. Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX and its implementing regulations may be referred to the University's Title IX Coordinator, located at the EEO/ADA & TITLE IX Office, Dorm 2 Iya Hami Hall, Room 104, Tel. No. [\(671\) 735-2244](tel:6717352244), TDD No.: [\(671\) 735-2243](tel:6717352243); or to the Office of Civil Rights (OCR).

COMMUNICATION POLICY

University policy states that official communications will be sent using university assigned (@gotriton or @triton) email addresses. University electronic mail and messaging is to be used to enhance and facilitate teaching, learning, scholarly research, support academic experiences, and to facilitate the effective business and administrative processes of the University. (OIT policy manual, 3.10, p. 36)

In keeping with this policy *all communications from me will come to your UOG Triton email account*. Check it regularly. You may contact me by email at dcabrera@triton.uog.edu. If you are asking a general question that affects other students, please do it through the appropriate Moodle Forum. Sending me *a direct email is best for personal matters that affect your coursework*.

STUDENT EVALUATION OF FACULTY INFORMATION

The student course and faculty evaluations for courses will be administered at the completion of the semester within CollegeNet. Student participation is essential and appreciated. Student responses are anonymous and cannot be traced back to individual students.

NO RECORDING POLICY

Unauthorized recording of class meetings is not allowed, to include photos, videos and audio recordings that have identifiable information of any person class.

MOODLE EXPECTATIONS

Using computers not phones. The screen may be too small to see the materials being shared. I urge you to connect via a computer if you have access to one. If you do not, please let me know.

Netiquette. This is a set of rules for behaving properly online. Cyberspace makes it easy for people to forget that they are interacting with other real people. The following bullet points cover some basics to communicating online:

- Be sensitive to the fact that there will be various cultural and linguistic backgrounds, as well as different political and religious beliefs, plus just differences in general.
- Use good taste when composing your responses in Forums. Swearing and profanity is also part of being sensitive to your classmates and should be avoided. Also consider that slang can be misunderstood or misinterpreted.
- Do not use all capital letters when composing your responses as this is considered "shouting" on the Internet and is regarded as impolite or aggressive. It can also be stressful on the eye when trying to read your message.
- Be respectful of others' views and opinions. Avoid "flaming" (publicly attacking or insulting) them as this can cause hurt feelings and decrease the chances of getting all different types of points of view.
- Be careful when using acronyms. If you use an acronym, it is best to spell out its meaning first, then put the acronym in parentheses afterward, for example: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). After that you can use the acronym freely throughout your message.
- Use good grammar and spelling and avoid using text-messaging shortcuts.

MILITARY SERVICE

For our brothers and sisters in military service, it is the student's responsibility when alerted and on orders for deployment to inform the instructor immediately. If you apply to be deployed during the semester, to be given any accommodation or an incomplete grade, you *must* discuss your situation with the instructor personally *before* you apply. If you apply for deployment without bringing it to the instructor's attention in advance, no accommodation will be made under any circumstances. If, on the other hand, you speak to the instructor in advance about your situation, accommodation may be made. Keep in mind, however, that the final decision about whether accommodation will be allowed, or an incomplete grade given, is at the instructor's discretion, and is therefore not guaranteed.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS

DATES HIGHLIGHTED IN YELLOW ARE ONLINE and are subject to change. Any necessary modifications of the hybrid schedule will be communicated to students.

Aug. 15

- Welcome and Introduction

Aug. 20

- Basic Concepts I – A Life Course Perspective on Aging (SLO1)

Aug. 22

- Controversy 1 – Does Old Age Have Meaning? (SLO1)

Aug. 27, 29

- Controversy 2 – Why Do Our Bodies Grow Old? (SLO5-2,7)
- ** “Do We Fear Ageing? A Multidimensional Approach to Ageing Anxiety” by Robyn J. Brunton and Greg Scott in *Educational Gerontology* 41, 2015, pages 786-799
- *** “COVID-19 and Ageism: How Positive and Negative Responses Impact Older Adults and Society” by Monahan, Caitlin; Macdonald, Jamie; Lytle, Ashley; Apriceno, MaryBeth; Levy, Sheri R. in *American Psychologist*, 0003066X, 20200716

Sept. 3, 5

- Controversy 3 - Do Intelligence and Creativity Decline With Age? (SLO6-7)

Sept. 10 TEST

Sept. 12, 17

- Controversy 4: Should We Ration Health Care for Older People? (SLO9)

Sept. 19

- Controversy 5 – Should Families Provide for Their Own? (SLO6,7)

Sept. 24 TEST

Sept. 26

- Controversy 6 – Should Older People be Protected from Bad Choices? (SLO6-8)
- *** “Sexual Quality of Life and Aging: A Prospective Study of a Nationally Representative Sample” by Forbes, Miriam K., Eaton, Nicholas R., and Krueger, Robert F.

Oct. 1

- Controversy 7 - Should People Have the Choice to End Their Lives? (SLO2)

Oct. 3 MIDTERM

Oct. 7-12 FALL BREAK

Oct. 15

- Basic Concepts III: Social and Economic Outlook for an Aging Society
- Controversy 8 - Should Age or Need Be the Basis for Entitlement? (SLO5-2,7)

Oct. 17

- ** “Chapter 3: Claiming Identity in a Nursing Home” by Debora A. Paterniti, pages 58-74 from *Ways of Aging* Edited by Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein (SLO4, 6,7)
- ** “Enhancing the Wellbeing of the Elderly: Social Use of Digital Technologies” by Hasan, Helen and Linger, Henry from *Educational Gerontology*. Pages 749-759, Vol. 42, No. 11(SLO6,7)

Oct. 22

- **“An Aging Workforce: Employment Opportunities and Obstacles” by Mirjana Radovic-Markovic in *Cadmus*, Vol. 1, Issue 6 – May 2013, pages 142-155 (SLO6,7)
- **Controlling Disease and Creating Disparities: A Fundamental Cause Perspective, Pages 27-33 by Jo C. Phelan and Bruce G. Link in *Journal of Gerontology* (2005), Vol. 60B

Oct. 24, 29

- Controversy 9 – What is the Future for Social Security? (SLO4,6,7)

Oct. 31

- Controversy 10 – Is Retirement Obsolete? (SLO6,7)
- ** “Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Elders” by Kathryn L. Braun, Barbara W.K. Yee, Colette V. Browne and Noreen Mokuau, 13 pages

Nov. 5 TEST

Nov. 7, 12

- Controversy 11 – Aging Boomers: Boom or Bust? (SLO6,7)
- ** “If I had lots of money...I’d have a body makeover” Managing the Aging Body, in *Social Forces* 88(3), pages 1003-1019 by Kathleen F. Slevin
- Online Forum: Body and Soul - Age and Religion

- ***“Grandparenting among the Chamorros of Guam” by Vicki Torsch in *Pacific Studies* Vol. 30, Nos. ¾ Sept./Dec. 2007, pages 81-100
- ***“Risk of Psychological Difficulties Among Children Raised by Custodial Grandparents” by Gregory Smith and Patrick Palmieri in *Psychiatr Serv* 58(10) October 2007, pages 1303-1310

Nov. 14, 19

- ** “Chapter 3: Results” from *The Conceptualization of Depression by the Chamorro Man’amko of Guam* (MA Thesis from the MS in Clinical Psychology Program at UOG by Julie Jones Murrell) (SLO6,7)
- ** “Development of Loneliness in Middle and Old Age: Its Nature and Causes” by Soest et.al from *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology: Personality Processes and Individual Differences*, pages 1-19 (SLO6,7)
- ** “Chapter 11: The Birth of the Shameful Death” pages 213-233 from *A Social History of Dying* by Alan Kellehear (SLO2)
- Epilogue: Finding Your Place in an Aging Society

Nov. 21, 26

- Controversy 12 - The New Aging Marketplace: Hope or Hype (SLO3)
- ***"The Impact of Americanization on Intergenerational Relations: An Exploratory Study on the U.S. Territory of Guam," from *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*: Vol. 16:3, pages 61-79

Nov. 28-30 THANKSGIVING BREAK

Dec. 3 Argumentative Paper Due (SLO8-11)

Dec. 3, 5 Presentations and Discussions

Dec. 9 Our Lady of Camarin Day

Dec 10-12 TBA FINAL EXAMS

Dec. 15 Commencement