AGING & GERONTOLOGICAL SERVICES
SOCIAL WORK 19:910:572
RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
[YEAR, DAY TIME, LOCATION]

Instructor Information
Name:
Office Address:
Telephone Number:
Email Address:
Office Hours:

Catalog Course Description

This course provides an overview of older adults as a population group and of aging as a biopsychosocial process. The course explores aspects of social services and health care systems intended to help individuals, families, and communities confront aging-related challenges and capitalize upon aging-related strengths.

Place of Course in Program

This course is an elective open to all M.S.W. students. The course is a requirement for the School of Social Work’s Certificate in Gerontology.

Course Objectives

Specific objectives of this course are for students:

1. To recognize one’s own attitudes about aging and older adults as a population group, as well as broader societal ideologies about aging, and to articulate ways in which these attitudes and ideologies can influence gerontological social work practice.

2. To understand primary biopsychosocial processes related to aging and to apply this understanding to gerontological social work practice.

3. To critically analyze aspects of gerontological service delivery systems for informing practices that promote social and economic justice among older adults and their families.

4. To appreciate strengths and vulnerabilities among particular subgroups of older adults, including African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, and other racial-ethnic groups, as well as women and GLBT elders.

5. To integrate formal gerontological scholarship with one’s own professional and personal experiences to enhance social work practice.
**Required Readings**

The required readings for this course comprise a collection of book chapters, journal articles, and other short writings. Students can access these materials through the course’s Sakai website by clicking on the “Resources” link and then selecting the “Weekly Readings” subdirectory. Readings are organized by the week for which they are assigned.

**Course Website**

This course will rely heavily on its Sakai website. Students can access the site by visiting [http://sakai.rutgers.edu](http://sakai.rutgers.edu) and signing in with their Rutgers University NetId and email password. Students with multiple Sakai sites will need to click on the tab titled “Gerontology Seminar, NB.”

The course website is organized principally around the main links on the left-hand side of the page. Here are six links in particular that students are to become immediately familiar with:

1. **Announcements:** This link will take students to a list of announcements that the instructor has posted regarding important information about course administration and new information on other parts of the site. Notifications regarding new announcements will be sent to students’ Rutgers email accounts; students can refer back to this link for archives of all previous announcements.

2. **Gradebook:** The instructor will confidentially post students’ grades on each assignment as the semester progresses. Students are encouraged to ensure that their grades have been properly entered throughout the semester.

3. **Resources:** The instructor will post PowerPoint slides and other materials from class under this link.

4. **Library E-Reserves:** Students can follow this link to much of the material from the course packet. Readings will be organized by week.

5. **Syllabus:** A file that contains an up-to-date copy of this syllabus will be kept under this link.

**Course Assignments**

1. **Class participation (9% of total grade):**

   Students’ participation grade will be based upon their in-class contributions, reflecting the extent to which students: (a) arrive to class on time, (b) fully engage in classroom exercises, and (c) thoughtfully advance classroom discussions. Students who miss more than two classes will automatically be deducted three percentage points.
(2) Take-Home Assignments (63% of grade)

Throughout the semester, students will complete several take-home writing assignments:

For Week #2, students will write a one-page summary regarding the agency at which they are currently serving (or have most recently served), as well as how this agency relates to social work practice with older adults and/or their families. (5% of students’ total grade)

For Week #3, students will complete two assessments of one’s own attitudes toward aging, which will be distributed in advance in class. Students will then write a two-page reflection exploring the personal and/or societal sources from these attitudes have been derived, as well as how they might influence aspects of gerontological social work practice. (7% of students’ total grade)

For Week #4, students will self-correct the “Facts on Aging” quiz completed in class the week prior. Students will then select one answer that required correcting and will write a brief paragraph indicating why they selected their original answer and how their corrected understanding could inform their gerontological social work practice. (7% of students’ total grade)

For Week #6, the instructor will distribute a prompt for a take-home essay. Students are expected to write three pages in response to this prompt, drawing on materials from the assigned readings and class notes from Weeks #2, #3, #4, and #5. (18% of students’ total grade)

Students are to complete two, three-page reflections, with respect to any of the content throughout weeks #7 through #15. Each essay is to address one of the following questions with respect to the service delivery element of focus that week, and students are encouraged to use readings from other courses in which they have or are engaged. The reflection must be turned in at the beginning of the class in which the topic is covered, and students must eventually complete each of the following two choices with respect to one topic area.

(1) Examine a scholarly assigned reading, and discuss one way in which a main idea in that reading can be used to advance gerontological social work practice. Then, note one way in which something from the reading is not entirely congruent with one’s own professional experiences in gerontological social work. Discuss the nature of this “disconnect” and a way to reconcile the potentially disparate ideas for better informing “scientific inquiry,” as well as social work practice. (12% of students’ total grade)

(2) Identify a key need of a subgroup of older adults and/or their families, as articulated within the readings, and state the demographic relevance of this subgroup of older adults. Then, formulate a policy or program element that would address this need. List three measurable objectives that the program
would aim to achieve and a brief statement as to how you would measure the potential attainment of those objectives. (12% of students’ total grade)

(3) Final paper on inter-agency collaboration (30% of grade)

Students will be assigned to groups of two, each representing a particular component of the gerontological service delivery system. Students will collaborate on writing the beginning of a grant proposal (no more than 10 pages) seeking support for enhancing collaboration across the respective components of the gerontological service system to create more optimal, coordinated services for diverse groups of older adults.

The paper must demonstrate understanding from the following sources: (1) assigned readings, (2) notes from in-class activities and lectures, and (3) additional scholarly research.

Outline of components for final paper

For Week #8, students must submit an at least one-page overview of their final paper, specifying how each part of the proposed paper will follow the guidelines specified by the rubric. (5% of total grade)

For Week #12, students must submit an annotated bibliography for four scholarly sources, with clear relevance for the final paper. (5% of total grade)

For Week #16, students must submit their final papers. (20% of total grade)

Grading: Final grades will be assigned using the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>91-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-90</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>81-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-80</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59</td>
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</table>

Course Policies

(1) Turning in Written Assignments:

Only printed copies of students’ work will be accepted. No assignments will be accepted electronically unless students face very unusual circumstance. (If such is the case, please contact the professor by email 24 hours BEFORE the assignment is due to make arrangements.)

The essay on aging and final paper should use the following formatting guidelines:
- Double-spaced
- 1-inch margins all around
- APA style for citations (http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html)
- Stapled
- Typed in 12-point Times New Roman font

Reflection paragraphs should also be typed and double-spaced. Material that is consulted from sources outside of the assigned, in-class readings should be cited and documented in a reference list. Students who choose to include the exact words of authors of the in-class readings should use APA style in placing quotation marks and providing a proper in-text citation for the material.

NO LATE WORK will be accepted for any of the assignments. Please refer to the schedule of course topics and readings for deadlines with respect to each assignment.

(2) Statement on Academic Integrity (NOTE: The following text has been adapted from the School of Social Work’s Office of Academic Affairs.)

All work submitted in a graduate course must be your own. It is unethical and a violation of the University’s Academic Integrity Policy to present the ideas or words of another without clearly and fully identifying the source. Inadequate citations will be constructed as an attempt to misrepresent the cited materials as your own. In this course, students are required to use APA style for all citations and reference lists.


Please Note: Violations of academic integrity by graduate and professional students will normally be penalized more severely than violations by first-year undergraduate students. Since all violations of academic integrity by a graduate or professional student are potentially separable under the Academic Integrity Policy, faculty members should not adjudicate alleged academic integrity violations by graduate and professional students, but should refer such allegations to the appropriate Academic Integrity Facilitator (AIF) or to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. The AIF that you should contact is Antoinette Y. Farmer, 732.932.2621. The student shall be notified in writing, by email or hand delivery, of the alleged violation and of the fact that the matter has been referred to the AIF for adjudication. This notification shall be done within 10 days of identifying the alleged violation. Once the student has been notified of the allegation, the student may not drop the course or withdraw from the school until the adjudication process is complete. A TZ or incomplete grade, shall be assigned until the case is resolved.

Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be properly cited in the text. Acknowledgment is required when material from another source is stored in print, electronic, or other medium and is paraphrased or summarized in whole or part in one’s own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: to paraphrase Freud’s position on infant development...and conclude with a
bracketed citation of the text. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material. Information which is common knowledge, such as names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc., need not to be cited; however, all facts or information obtained in reading, research, or class lectures that are not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. In addition to materials specifically cited in the text, only materials that contribute to one’s general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography. Plagiarism can, in some case, be a subtle issue. Any question about what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed with the faculty member.

(3) Disability Accommodation

Please Note: Any student who believes that s/he may need an accommodation in this class due to a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services, Kreeger Learning Center, 151 College Avenue; dfoffice@rci.rutgers.edu; 732-932-2847. Students must have a letter of accommodation from the Office of Disability Services in order to receive accommodations.

(4) Statement on Cell Phone Use

No cell phones are allowed in class. Please turn all modes of ringers off and put phones out of sight. Students can use phones during designated break periods outside of the classroom.

(5) Receiving Course Messages through Email

Students are expected to regularly check their Rutgers email account for course messages. If students prefer to use a non-University email account, they are responsible for setting up account preferences such that mail sent to their Rutgers account is automatically forwarded to their other account.
## VIII. Course Outline and Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session #</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments Due for That Week</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week #1</td>
<td>Introductions to Each Other and to the Course</td>
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<td>Week #2</td>
<td>A Social Constructionist Approach to Later Life</td>
<td>Hooyman &amp; Kiyak, Chapter 8 (Social Theories of Aging)</td>
<td>Statement on relevance of field placement for gerontological social work</td>
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<td>Hooyman &amp; Kiyak, Chapter 5 (Cognitive Reflection regarding attitudes on aging)</td>
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<td>Week #9</td>
<td><strong>SPRING BREAK</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week #12</td>
<td>Issues in Long-Term Care Facilities</td>
<td>Nursing Home Reforms: Twenty Years After OBRA ‘87 Kaiser Family Foundation and Alliance for Health Reform 12/7/07 (Transcript or video.)</td>
<td>Annotated bibliography for final paper due.</td>
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