University of North Texas  
Applied Gerontology  
AGER 4800  
THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF AGING: GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Times: Internet  
Class Room: Internet  
Office: Chilton 302E  
Office Hours: Tues., 3-5, or by arrangement  
Instructor: James H. Swan  
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Description
Analysis of the aging experience in a global context, historically and currently. Topics include perceptions of aging, definition of need in old age, and models for delivering health and social services to older persons. Satisfies the Social Sciences requirement of the University Core Curriculum.

Expected Outcomes
Upon completion of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Describe issues of the diversity of culture and family contexts of aging in the world.
2. Relate issues of private and public policies and programs for aging in the world.
3. Delineate major theories applicable to the social context of aging in a diverse world.
4. Outline differences in aging and in response to aging across various nations.
5. Appreciate differences by political and cultural contexts around the world in responding to the needs of older persons.
6. Discuss issues in lifestyle, needs, access to care, and service delivery relating to elders in different countries.
7. Understand the importance of issues of diversity as they relate to the world’s aged populations.

TEXT


There are additional readings, which will be made available, mostly through the course website.
Course Format

This is an online class. The instructor will present perspectives on weekly topics, but interaction will occur via the discussion board on the class web-site. Each student will also prepare periodic assignments.

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria

The course requirements and grading criteria are:

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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Midterm Exam – two weeks to respond</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Term Paper -- (see below)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Discussion Board</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Periodic Assignments</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Exams: An essay test will cover both materials in required readings and anything I discuss in lecture. The exam will be posted on the web site, two weeks before the due date. E-mail responses to the address listed in this syllabus (swan@unt.edu), NOT to the WEBCTVISTA e-mail address.

Term paper: A term paper (8 to 10 pages) will be required, covering a topic from the class, and related to the literature and to theory, descriptions, and other materials from the class. A topic statement is due by February 3; an outline by February 17; a tentative bibliography (at least 8 entries) by March 16, and the paper by May 3. Please submit in Microsoft Word, double spaced. Please include your last name in the filename.

Statements of fact, data, and opinion of others must be supported by citations, in one of two forms: 1) in-text, with author and year in parentheses; or 2) numbered citations in order of appearance, with corresponding numbering in the references. Exact restatement of another's work is quotation, should be indicated and cited (in-text citations of quotes include page numbers of the quotes). Overenthusiastic quotation without attribution (plagiarism) is grounds at least for severe reduction in grade. Cite sources of assertions that are not either: (1) your own opinion, or (2) widely-known or common-sense knowledge (if in doubt, cite). Proper citation of sources does enter into the grade. A reference section at the end should list only sources cited. Tables from other sources or from others' data should have citations on the table and be listed in the reference section. At least some sources should be from the peer-reviewed literature: at least 5 such sources for graduate students, at least 3 for undergraduates. Web citations are fine, but be prepared to defend the validity of the source; provide the URL, and note when you last accessed the site. Citations of books are fine, but note that most books are not peer-reviewed literature. The textbook is not an acceptable source. Other documents, particularly organizational documents, are acceptable. Citations of interviews you have conducted are also acceptable. The paper will be graded on the quality of your sources (including adequacy of references provided), the organization and the quality of the paper.

Periodic Assignments: In lieu of student presentations that would be required in the classroom, students are to submit two short papers (2-4 pages each), covering topics from the second half of the class. Follow the rules for the term paper in regards to citations and sources; but the textbook CAN be used as a source in the short papers.

Discussion Board: Topics will be posted to the class web site’s discussion board, generally per class session. You are responsible for participating in discussions. You can start your own threads under each topic.
Course Outline and Required Readings

1. Introduction: An Aging World  
   Required: Sokolovsky, Pp. 1-12, Chapt. 1  

2. Why Aging in the World?  
   Required: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 3.  

3. Views of Aging Around the World  
   Required: Sokolovsky, Chapts. 8-9  
   Recommended: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 6.

4. Life Courses Around the World  
   Required: Sokolovsky, Chapts. 10-11.  

5. The Global Environment of Aging  
   Recommended: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 16, 24.

6. Social Support and World Aging  
   Required: Sokolovsky, Chapts. 15, 20  
   Recommended: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 2, 17.

7. Family in an Aging World  
   Required: Sokolovsky, Chapts. 28, 30, 45  
   Recommended: Sokolovsky, Chapts. 22, 40.

8. Roles of Aging Around the World  
   Required: Sokolovsky, Chapts 21, 23.  

9. Government Programs and Aging  
   Required: Sokolovsky, Chapts. 19.  
10. Social Programs for Aging in the World
   **Required:** Sokolovsky, Chapts 18.

11. Health and Aging in a World Context
   **Required:** Sokolovsky, Chapts 38, 41, 42.

12. International Long-Term Care
   **Required:** Sokolovsky, Chapts. 43
   Recommended: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 44.

13. Aging Communities
   **Required:** Sokolovsky, Chapts. 31, 32

14. End of Life Issues Internationally
   **Required:** Sokolovsky, Chapts 5.

15. The Future of World Aging
   **TERM PAPER DUE**
   **Required:** Sokolovsky, pp. 491-503, Chapt. 39.

16. Finals Week
   (You should be done here, so go work on your other classes.)