

University of North Texas
SOCI/AGER 4550
SOCIOLOGY OF AGING

Times 11:00-12:20 TTh
Class Room Chilton 274
Office: Chilton 302E
Office Hours T, 2-4, or
 by arrangement

Instructor: James H. Swan
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About the Professor / Instructor

Dr. Swan's has a Ph.D. in sociology is from Northwestern University (1981). He has been a Professor of Applied Gerontology at the University of North Texas since 2004. His major research area has been long-term care finance and policy but has in recent years developed research in physical activity & aging. His career has been in applied areas: doing health services research, and teaching in health administration, public health, and gerontology programs. Professionally, he has oriented to public health, long being active in the Aging and Public Health Section of the American Public Health Association (APHA) and served several years as one of that section's APHA Governing Councilors. In Texas, he has been active in the Texas Public Health Association (TPHA), currently as its President, on its executive board, governing council, and conference-planning committee. Dr. Swan has maintained a steady and active publication record for three decades, and annually presents at the APHA conference and other conferences. Dr. Swan's teaching interests have especially focused on research, social policy in aging, health and aging, and aging services. He has a strong commitment to global aging (and has taught courses in Mexico and Nigeria).

Syllabus and Timeline Change Policy

All important information for this course should be able to be found either in this Syllabus or the accompanying Timeline (found at the end of the syllabus). Therefore, most questions about this course and the guidelines should be able to be answered with these two documents. The University attorney advises faculty members to notify students that the syllabus and timeline used for this course are not contracts and are therefore subject to change. The goal is to adhere to the schedules provided, but it is important to note that changes may be necessary to meet unforeseen needs and events. Announcements will be sent to let everyone know of any changes.

Access and Log in Information

This course was developed and will be facilitated utilizing the University of North Texas' Learning Management System, Blackboard Learn. To get started with the course, please go to: <https://learn.unt.edu>

You will need your EUID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your EUID or have forgotten your password, please go to:

<http://ams.unt.edu>.

Student Resources

As a student, you will have access to:

- **Student Orientation via Blackboard Learn.** It is recommended that you become familiar with the tools and tutorials within the Orientation to better equip you in navigating the course.
- **Blackboard's [On Demand Learning Center for Students](#).** It is recommended that you become familiar with the tools and tutorials to better equip you to navigate the course.
- **From within Blackboard, you will have access to the "UNT Helpdesk"**
" tab which provides student resources and Help Desk Information.

Being a Successful Online Student

[-What Makes a Successful Online Student?](#)

[-Self Evaluation for Potential Online Students](#)

How the Course is Organized

Relevant information is located on the home page. This course is structured with weekly lectures from the instructor, plus weekly reading assignments from the required textbook and weekly required and recommended additional readings, plus weekly topics on the discussion board. Posting on the discussion board is a required and graded part of the course; and for an online class, "attendance in class" is defined as posting on the discussion board. Testing is via a midterm essay exam. Students are required to do a term paper plus an additional short paper or article review.

What Should Students Do First?

Students should first complete the Zip Code Survey located on the course home page then carefully read the syllabus regarding course requirements and assignments and note the timeline and particular assignment and exam due dates. Students may make introductions by posting to other students their greetings on the discussion board. Any questions or queries may be directed to the instructor using the course email system.

How Students Should Proceed Each Week for Class Activities All weekly instructor lectures are in a folder off the home page, as are the weekly discussion board topics, and as are any recommended readings not in the textbook. Students should submit all assignments by their due dates. The

completed midterm and both papers are to be emailed to the instructor at swan@unt.edu. Specific instructions regarding preparing and submitting assignments are given below.

Student Support

The University of North Texas provides student technical support in the use of Blackboard and supported resources. The student help desk may be reached at:

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940.565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130

Regular hours are maintained to provide support to students. Refer to the website (<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/hours.htm>) for updated hours.

Description

The American (and world) population is aging; and many social factors (e.g., sex, race/ethnicity, social class) affect the experience of and results of aging. This course explores social issues related to aging and to successful aging, including what young adults should be doing now to ensure that they have happy, healthy, wealthy and creative golden years.

Expected Outcomes

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

1. Describe aging and stages of aging through the lifecourse.
2. Delineate major theories applicable to the social context of aging.
3. Consider societal responses to aging, needed changes in such responses, and implications of those responses for the aged.
4. Discuss major controversies related to aging, considering different positions on such controversies.
5. Analyze possible responses to issues facing the elderly.
7. Understand the importance of issues facing older Americans.

TEXT

Moody, H.R. 2006. *Aging: Concepts and Controversies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage/Pine Forge.

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

Course Format

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria

| The course requirements and grading criteria are: | <u>% of Grade</u> |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. Midterm Exam – two weeks to respond | 20% |
| 2. Final Exam – two weeks to respond | 20% |
| 3. Term Paper -- (see below) | 30% |
| 4. Presentation -- (see below) | 10% |
| 5. Discussion Board | 15% |
| 6. Class Participation | 5% |

Exams: Essay tests will cover both materials in required readings and anything I discuss in lecture. The final will not be cumulative, covering only materials since the Midterm. The exams will be both distributed in class and posted on the web site, two weeks before the due date. On each exam, you will be presented with five overall questions and asked to write essays in response to three (3) of them. For each question, respond to each component of each subquestions – failure to respond to each such component results in reduction in grade. E-mail responses to the address listed in this syllabus (swan@unt.edu), **NOT to the Learn (Blackboard) Messaging.**

Term paper: A term paper (8 to 10 pages) will be required. **Type (word process) term papers, double spaced.** 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 so 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 strongly into the grade.** A reference section at the end should list **only sources cited. The text is not an acceptable source in a term paper.** 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 3 in general. Web citations are fine, but be prepared to defend the validity of the source; provide the URL, and note when you accessed the site. Citations of books are fine, but note that most books are not peer-reviewed literature. Other documents, particularly organizational documents, are acceptable. Citations of interviews you may have conducted are also acceptable. **The paper will be graded on the quality of sources (including adequacy of references provided),** the organization of the paper, and the quality of the paper. See the Guide to Term Papers handed out and on the website. A topic statement is due by September 11; an outline by September 25; a tentative bibliography (at least 8 entries) by October 23, and the paper by December 1 – email to swan@unt.edu.

Presentations: Each student will do one presentation to the class on a course topic, which **may be but need not be** the topic of the term paper. Presentations occur in the last four class sessions, the time available depending on the number of students. Presentations are judged primarily on the ability to convey information more than on content, but the content will be considered in grading. PowerPoint is recommended.

Discussion Board: Topics will be posted to the class web site's discussion board.' You are responsible for participating in discussions. You can start your own threads under each topic.

Disabilities Accommodation:

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda> . You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Course Outline and Required Readings

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|---|---------------------|
| 1. Aging and Society Required: Moody, pp. 1-8. | August 25 |
| 2. Social Theories of Aging Required: Moody, pp. 9-13. | August 27 |
| 3. The Aging Person Required: Moody, pp. 13-27. | September 1 |
| 4. Why Aging Required: Moody, pp. 55-62. | September 3 |
| 5. Health Promotion with an Aging Society Required: Moody, pp. 63-71. | September 8 |
| 6. Promoting Long Life (Controversy II) Required: Moody, pp. 72-90. 11(1): 54-65. | September 10 |
| 7. Aging and Creativity (Controversy III) Required: Moody, pp. 97-106. | September 15 |
| 8. Lifelong Learning Required: Moody, pp. 107-130. | September 22 |
| 9. Physical Activity and Aging Required: Swan, et al., 2008, Getting tougher for the fourth quarter: boomers and physical activity, <i>Journal of Aging & Physical Activity</i> 16(3): 261-79. Swan, et al., 2013, Increased physical activity, physician recommendations, and senior center participation, <i>Health</i> 5(12A): 8-18. | September 17 |
| 10. Meaning in Old Age (Controversy I) Required: Moody, pp. 29-50. | September 24 |
| 11. Socioeconomics Required: Moody, pp. 301-324. | September 29 |
| 12. Social Policy and Aging Required: Moody, pp. 325-333. MIDTERM HANDED OUT | October 1 |
| 13. Entitlement and Aging (Controversy VIII) October 15 Required: Moody, pp. 335-369. | October 6 |
| 14. Social Security (Controversy IX) Required: Moody, pp. 375-412. | October 8 |

MIDTERM EXAM AVAILABLE

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| 15. Retirement (Controversy X) Required: Moody, pp. 415-451. | October 13 |
| 16. Health Care Required: Moody, pp. 133-160. MIDTERM EXAM DUE | October 15 |
| 17. Autonomy in Old Age (Controversy VI) Required: Moody, pp. 239-265. | October 20 |
| 18. Rationing of Health Care (Controversy IV) Required: Moody, pp. 167-180. | October 22 |
| 19. Health Reform and Aging Required: Administration on Aging, 2011, Affordable Care Act: opportunities for the aging network. | October 27 |
| 20. Burdens on Families (Controversy V) Required: Moody, pp. 201-234. | October 29 |
| 21. Suicide & End-of-Life (Controversy VII) Required: Moody, 389-417. | November 3 |
| 22. Boomers (Controversy XI) Required: Moody, Chapt. 3, pp. 455-474. | November 5 |
| 23. Aging in the Marketplace (Controversy XII) Required: Moody, 477-495. | November 10 |
| 24. The Future of Aging Required: Moody, 499-502. | November 12 |
| 25. Presentations | November 17 |
| 26. Presentations | November 19 |
| 27. Presentations FINAL EXAM AVAILABLE | November 24 |
| 28. Presentations TERM PAPER DUE | December 1 |
| 29. Presentations | December 3 |
| 30. FINAL EXAM DUE | December 10 |

**TO COUNT TOWARD A GRADE, ALL MATERIALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY
December 11**

