

**University of North Texas
Applied Gerontology
AGER 4800**

THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF AGING: GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Times	Internet	Instructor:	TBD
Class Room	Internet	Phone:	(940) 565-3454
Office:	Chilton 302E	E-Mail	swan@unt.edu
Office Hours	Tues., 3-5, or by arrangement		

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 Immediate Past 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.

Course Pre-requisites There is no pre-requisite course or instructor permission needed for this course.

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. Testing is via midterm. Students are required to do a term paper plus make an additional short paper presentation.

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 are asked to 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 required and recommended additional readings. Students should submit all assignments by their due dates. 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. Please refer to the website (<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/hours.htm>) for updated hours.

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. Think critically about political and cultural contexts around the world in responding to the needs of older persons.
6. Communicate regarding 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.
8. Discuss social science empirical methods used to produce findings reported in the class.

TEXT

Sokolovsky. 2009. *The Cultural Context of Aging: Worldwide Perspectives*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 3rd edition.

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 website. Each student will also prepare periodic assignments.

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria

The course requirements and grading criteria are:	<u>% of Grade</u>
1. Midterm Exam – two weeks to respond	30%
2. Term Paper -- (see below)	35%
3. Short Paper	10%
4. Discussion Board	25%

Exam: 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 Learn 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 September 19; an outline by October 10; a tentative bibliography (at least 8 entries) by October 31, and the paper by December 4. **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 overall quality.

Short Paper: In lieu of student presentations that would be required in the classroom, students are to submit a short paper (2-4 pages), covering a topic from 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. Due October 9.

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 **August 24-28**
Required: Sokolovsky, Pp. 1-12, Chapt. 1
Recommended: Kinsella & Phillips, 2005, *Global Aging: The Challenge of Success*, Washington, DC, Population Reference Bureau, *Population Bulletin* 60(1), March.
2. Why Aging in the World? **Aug. 31-Sept. 4**
Required: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 3.
Recommended: You et al., 2010, Familial transmission of longevity among the oldest old in China, *Journal of Applied Gerontology* 29(3): 308-32.
3. Views of Aging Around the World **September 8-1`**
Required: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 8-9
Recommended: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 6.
4. Life Courses Around the World **September 14-18**
Required: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 10-11.
Recommended: Ben-Shlomo & Kuh, 2002, A life course approach to chronic disease epidemiology: conceptual models, empirical challenges and interdisciplinary perspectives, *International Journal of Epidemiology* 31(2): 285-93.
5. The Global Environment of Aging **September 21-25**
Required: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 14, 29, 31.
Recommended: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 16, 24.
6. Social Support and World Aging **Sept. 28-Oct. 2**
Required: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 15, 20
Recommended: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 2, 17.
MIDTERM EXAM POSTED
7. Family in an Aging World **October 5-9**
Required: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 28, 30, 45
Recommended: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 22, 40.
8. Roles of Aging Around the World **October 12-16**
Required: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 21, 23.
Recommended: Knodel et al., 2010, the role of parents and family members in ART treatment adherence: evidence from Thailand, *Research on Aging* 32(1): 19-39.
MIDTERM EXAM DUE
9. Government Programs and Aging **October 19-23**
Required: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 19.

Recommended: Gruber & Wise, 1998, Social security and retirement: an international comparison, *The American Economic Review* 88(2): 158-63.

Apt, 2002, Ageing and the changing role of the family and the community: an African perspective, *International Social Security Review* 55(1): 39-47.

SHORT PAPER DUE

10. Social Programs for Aging in the World **October 26-30**
Required: Sokolovsky, Chapt 18.
Recommended: Plath, 2009, International policy perspectives on independence in old age, *Journal of Aging & Social Policy* 21(2): 209-23.
11. Health and Aging in a World Context **November 2-6**
Required: Sokolovsky, Chapt 38, 41, 42.
Recommended: Berraho et al., 2010, Body mass index, disability, and 13-year mortality in older French adults, *Journal of Aging & Health* 22(1): 68-83.
Agrawal, 2010, Morbidity prevalence and healthcare utilization among older adults in India, *Journal of Applied Gerontology* 29(2): 155-79.
Fillenbaum et al., 2010, Prevalence and correlates of functional status in an older community-representative sample in Brazil, *Journal of Aging & Health* 22(3): 362-83.
12. International Long-Term Care **November 9-13**
Required: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 43
Recommended: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 44.
Hungwe, 2010, Evaluating older persons' perceptions on their quality of life in an old peoples' institution: a Zimbabwean case study, *Journal of Applied Gerontology* 29(3): 333-51.
13. Aging Communities **November 16-20**
Required: Sokolovsky, Chapt. 31, 32
14. End of Life Issues Internationally **November 23-25**
Required: Sokolovsky, Chapt 5.
Recommended: Ahmedzai et al., 2004, A new international framework for palliative care, *European Journal of Cancer* 40(15): 2192-2200.
15. The Future of World Aging **Nov. 30-Dec. 3**

TERM PAPER DUE

Required: Sokolovsky, pp. 491-503, Chapt. 39.

Recommended: Palacios, 2002, The future of global ageing,
International Journal of Epidemiology 31(4): 786-91.

16. Review, Finish on Discussion Board (finals week) **December 7-11**

**TO COUNT IN THE GRADE, ALL MATERIALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY
December 11**