

Course Title: Gerontology PSCH 4305
Instructor: Kathleen Rivers
Office: BAB 108
Virtual Hours: Wednesday's 3:00pm – 4:00pm
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Student Learning Outcomes:

Welcome! What comes to mind when you think of aging? Can you relate to any of these famous quotes?

"Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter."

~Mark Twain "How old would you be if you didn't know how old you were?" ~Satchel Paige

"I still have a full deck; I just shuffle slower now." ~Author Unknown

"The key to successful aging is to pay as little attention to it as possible." ~Judith Regan

Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. ~Henry Ford

This course provides a broad overview of the multidisciplinary field of gerontology with an emphasis on key sociological, biological, and psychological aspects of age, aging, and the aged. A special focus is placed on the great diversity that exists within the older population. Students are encouraged to explore (a) their own attitudes and beliefs about aging; (b) what it means to age successfully; (c) career opportunities within gerontology.

Course Objectives:

Through class chapter readings, Activities, and discussions, students should develop an awareness of the variety of influences related to aging and the field of gerontology. During the course, students will learn to analyze and synthesize information as well as how to critically discuss and evaluate topics related to aging.

Book: Morgan, L. A., & Kunkel, S. R. (2016). *Aging society and the life course* (5th ed.). Springer Publishing Company.

This course will assist students to:

1. Describe age-related changes in biological systems, social relationships, social roles (e.g., retirement), cognitive abilities, and health and well-being.
2. Recognize the presence of ageism within our society.
3. Describe the implications of population aging for individuals, families, and society.
4. Distinguish between normal aging and the problems or diseases associated with aging.
5. Explain how gender, ethnicity, history, cohort, and socioeconomic status contribute to the experience of aging.
6. Apply their knowledge of aging to better understand themselves and their family relationships.
7. Demonstrate an ability to compare and contrast different points of view on controversial topics related to aging, such as antiaging research, healthcare, and changing social insurance programs (e.g., Medicaid, Medicare, & Social Security).
8. Consider the implications of their actions for their own individual aging as well as for the aging of society.

Recognizing Course Requirements:

1. Respect for students and lecturer must be maintained at all times when we meet online and in person. Respect is a basic human characteristic that entitles each person to their own right and identity. It also helps to nurture a healthy learning environment.
If you recognize that respecting others may be a problem, please be courteous and alert me or more suitable personnel (e.g. Sul Ross State University psychologists, family members, lecturers, close friends) and or refer to the Student Conduct and Discipline section of the SRSU Student Handbook.
2. During the course of this class, you may have strong emotional/psychological reactions to the course material and/or discussions. If you feel that you are having difficulty with the learning

environment, please discuss this with me immediately before continuing the course. Counseling and Accessibility Services (<http://www.sulross.edu/section/2408/counseling-accessibility-services>) can provide brief, short-term individual and group counseling or refer you to off-campus providers. You have already paid for these services through your Student Service Fee, whether you use them or not.

3. **SRSU Disability Services:** Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. Students with qualifying disabilities who seek accommodations must initiate a request for a meeting for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Counseling and Accessibility Services Office:
Ferguson Hall 112
Alpine, TX
(432) 837-8203
counseling@sulross.edu
7 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Monday-Friday
4. **Library Services Statement:** The Sul Ross Library offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or phone (432-837-8123).
5. **Honoring Academic Integrity:** Any instance of academic misconduct such as (1) turning in an identical written assignment for another course without approval, (2) copying from any source without proper citation, (3) crossing the boundary of what is allowed in a group project, (4) lying in connection with your academic work, (5) cheating, (6) plagiarism, (7) Using AI ChatGPT resources in attempt to cheat on exams, discussion, or writing assignments, (8) misrepresenting facts and/or collusion are contrary to the purpose of any educational institution and will be dealt with most severely to the extent of the university's disciplinary policy and/or through legal action if indicated.

An instructor who determines that a student has been dishonest academically can at a minimum issue no credit for the assignment/exam, and/or pursue more severe penalties, including but not limited to failing the course. Before the penalty is imposed, the student has the right to appeal to the division chairperson or Assistant Provost for the Academic Affairs. Further information about Academic Honesty can be read in the SRSU Student Handbook and procedures for dealing with these acts are outlined in the Scholastic Dishonesty Policy.

Observing Class guidelines

Class Participation:

1. This course requires discussion. Class attendance IS REQUIRED and will be determined with ONLINE participation. Class participation will be worth 20% of the final grade. The percentage is considerable so your presence will help your ability to complete all of assignments for this class.
Written discussions will not be accepted if texting language is used (for example: using i instead of I, emoji's, etc..).
2. Active involvement includes writing, participating via an online poll or quiz, engaging in online discussions and taking exams by the deadline date. In order to be successful in this course, you need to check your Sul Ross email **daily**, and Black Board announcements.
3. Distance Education Statement: Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as Smarthinking, library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support.

For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The

procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross will be expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

Regular communications with the professor: It is essential that you keep me current on your progress and any difficulties you may be having so that I can respond in real time to support your success.

The most efficient way of Course Behaviors - Respect and Disruptions: Watch the VIDEO on NETTIQUETTE - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWMk_Zv7nB8 and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80uRE972uQ0>.

You are encouraged and expected to openly engage in discussions, ask questions, share ideas, and express your thoughts in this web-based course in the same manner as in a face-to-face course. Please treat each other with dignity and respect and avoid disruptive behaviors. You are responsible for knowing what behaviors are acceptable versus unacceptable as referred to in

the Student Conduct and Discipline section of the SRSU Student Handbook (http://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files//sites/default/files/users/docs/stulife/student_conduct_d_iscipline.pdf).

Communicating with the Professor: The best way to contact me is through the VIRTUAL OFFICE on Black Board. GENERAL QUESTIONS will be posted to a discussion board for all. For PERSONAL or PRIVATE ISSUES email me at kathleen.rivers@sulross.edu. I strive to respond as soon as possible. If you do not receive a reply within 24 hours during the workweek, please resend your email.

Late Assignments/Projects/Checklists

You are expected to meet assignment/checklist deadlines. Checklists submitted after their due dates will be marked as zero.

Late assignments or projects will be reduced by 10% of the overall assignment for the first day of lateness and 20% for lateness beyond that for unexcused absences. For excused absences (university-authorized, legal or medical issues), speak with me before the absence so arrangements can be made.

Discussions: There are 12 discussions at 20 points each. Discussions ensure reflection on the material presented in the course. It is essential that each student responds in a timely manner so that discussions help all students in the course understand the concepts clearly.

Checklists – This is a 10-question test given to ensure that you have read the chapters, watched the PowerPoints, and understand the most pertinent concepts. Some of these questions will be on the midterm and final exams.

Midterm and Final Exams - Two (2) exams will be given during the course of this term. They consist of 50 to 60 questions each. Some of the questions for these two exams will be derived from the checklists and PowerPoints. The dates of the exams are planned for the dates listed below in the class schedule. Please note that there will be no make-up exams unless it is an excused absence with corresponding documentation.

Portfolio Project - The goal of this assignment is for students to complete the course with an individual collection of materials related to this course, which are relevant to them and/or their field. The portfolio will relate the information from class to life beyond this introduction and may encourage you to reflect, experience, and review psychologically in the real world. Obviously, people take away different things from the class and your portfolios will display this. This project must include the Self-Introduction and the Chapter Presentation. No late portfolios will be accepted unless due to illness and with documented proof. } Self-Introduction – Write two pages about yourself and your experience in this class.

- Use gerontology vocabulary words and the name of theory in your introduction that inspired you. (50 points)
- Chapter Presentation - Oral Presentation on Social Media Issue -. You present an issue you found on social media (e.g. SnapChat, Instagram, Facebook) and link it to two concepts from one of the chapters covered in class.
 - Chapter presentation: No less than 20 slides, no more than 10 minutes in length, grading rubric will be posted for more directions. THIS WILL NOT BE PRESENTED TO THE CLASS. IT WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE INSTRUCTOR FOR EVALUATION AND INCLUDED IN YOUR PORTFOLIO.

Extra Credit Activity – These points may be received for participating in up to two within the following activities (5pts/activity; 10pt maximum):

Attendance at a public lecture or activity related to psychology, such as drug/alcohol abuse, domestic violence, mental health awareness, a cultural event, an international event or religious activity different than your own, etc. Submit a summary to me via email (kathleen.rivers@sulross.edu) or on Blackboard of your attendance at the activity and what you learned from it.

Grading:

Grading: 1000 points total Final Grade

Introduction 1 (1 @ 20 points)

Checklists 12 (12 @ 10 points each)

Activities 12 (12 @ 10 points each)

Discussions 12 (12 @ 20 points each)

Midterm Exam: 150 points

Final Exam: 150 points

Portfolio: 200 points

Course Outline

(This schedule and the topics will be listed on calendar and subject to change.)