

Sociology 3750– The Sociology of Aging Winter 2008

Instructor – Nancy Robbins

I can be reached at home at 852-1931 or by email at nancypat@telus.net. I welcome phone calls at my home at anytime; however, please use discretion and not call me after 8:00 in the evening.

Class times: Wednesdays 11:30 – 2:20

Required text: Aging in Contemporary Canada. Second Edition. Neena Chappell, Lynn McDonald and Michael Stones, 2008.

Additional readings will be assigned periodically and are available for photocopying for a small fee at the front desk of the YREC offices.

Course description: The study of aging from biological, psychological and sociological perspectives. Includes aging in relation to the self-concept, family, religion, politics, health, retirement and leisure, housing, and attitudes toward death from a Canadian and comparative perspective. Critically examines Canadian social policies and programs, and institutional and community-based services.

Assignments and Exams

Grade Breakdown:

Final paper	40%
Presentation	20%
Cumulative journal	40%

Final Paper

Students are required to complete an interview and case study of an individual that they consider to be part of the aging population of Canada. Students are given freedom on what they wish to discuss with their subject as long as it fits within the topics discussed in class.

Students are required to submit a final report discussing their interview as well as an analysis of their results. Students are given freedom in the format; however, the following are suggested guidelines:

Part 1 – Introduction and Review of the Interview Method and Questions

Part 2 – Biography of your subject

Part 3 – Topics Discussed with your subject (note: these are suggestions and may not apply to all subjects):

- A – Caregiving
- B – Work
- C – Retirement
- D – Views on Death and Dying
- E – Gender
- F – Ethnicity
- G – Health & Well-Being
- H – Family and Marriage

Part 4 – Sociological Analysis

Part 5 – Differences between Yourself and your subject / Conclusion

There are some mandatory requirements

- correct spelling and grammar
- neat presentation
- application of theory
- discussion of method
- interview questions (in appendix)
- double spaced
- organization and headings
- footnotes or endnotes
- bibliography

Failure to complete a bibliography and appropriate footnotes or endnotes means a failure of the final report. Late assignments will not be accepted after the end of the final exam.

Final papers should be approximately 15 – 20 pages in length. Please do not exceed the maximum page requirement.

Due: April 16, 2007

Value: 40%

Presentation

While maintaining confidentiality and anonymity of their subject, students are required to present an overview of their interview to the class. This presentation should include a discussion of how their subject was chosen, what the interview entailed, the results and analysis of their interview and any personal reflections on the research process. Grading for this presentation will be based on both other students' comments as well as comments from the instructor.

Students wishing to use power point or additional handouts are asked to follow some guidelines: email the power point presentation no later than the day prior to the presentation and to have handouts ready prior to the start of class for photocopying and faxing.

Due: April 9, 2008

Value: 20%

Cumulative Journal

Students are required to keep an ongoing journal throughout the term; each entry should be a maximum of five (minimum of three) double spaced typewritten pages. Topics will not be assigned by the instructor; instead, students are required to choose topics of interest as discussed and should be written from your own personal insights into weekly readings, issues, class lectures and discussions. Student confidentiality will be respected.

Students are required to submit their journal entries each week to the instructor in person or by fax. A hard copy of the entry is preferred. The instructor will respond to the writing and hand back to the student one week after it is submitted.

A mark will be given at the end of the semester at which point, students are required to submit the entry journal for review by the instructor.

Due: individual journal entries are due weekly; final journal due on April 16, 2007

Value: 40%

A few notes on written work:

Due dates: Due dates are assigned for a reason. Late work is usually marked with grade deductions and will be accepted in extenuating circumstances; but note, extensions are RARELY given! However, if needed, please see me to discuss why you cannot meet a deadline for the written assignment. Late work is subject to penalties regardless of the circumstances.

Submission of papers: Assignments and papers are to be submitted on time, typed, spell checked and submitted by email to the instructor at nancypat@telus.net. **Please do not use the drop box under Blackboard as I will not receive it!** I will email you to let you know that I have received your assignment. If you don't hear from me, I haven't received your paper – it is YOUR responsibility to follow up!

Journal entries are the exception; it is preferred that they be submitted directly by fax or in person in a hard copy.

Questions regarding assignments: I am always available for questions by phone, email or in person. Please be sure to consult with me prior to the due date.

Sources: All sources must be documented by footnote or endnote and in a bibliography. I do not require a particular format for your referencing of sources as long as it is consistent and done correctly. There will be penalties if documents are not referenced and any direct copying of information from the Internet will not be tolerated.

Class Participation and Attendance: Attendance is mandatory for this course. Please let me know in advance if you are unable to attend classes. Homework assignments will be given throughout the term for class discussion and all students are expected to participate.

Information on Grades

Students will receive a percentage mark on all written work and exams in this course. This percentage mark will be translated to a number of points for each requirement for the course. In turn, the total number of points per student will be translated into a letter grade in accordance to Grande Prairie Regional College regulations.

All points will be accumulated out of 100 and be translated to a letter grade for Grande Prairie Regional College.

I am happy to discuss any grades at any point during the course and at the end of the course in person or by email. Grades are confidential and will only be discussed with the student.

Please note, the grade book will not be accessible online through BlackBoard for classes that have less than 10 students. All grades will be made available to the student by email.

Your final mark will be a letter grade as Grande Prairie Regional College uses the alpha grading system.

Alpha Grade	Percentage Range	Descriptor
A+	90 - 100	Excellent
A	85-89	
A-	80-84	Very Good
B+	76-79	
B	73-75	Good
B-	70-72	
C+	67-69	Satisfactory
C	64-66	
C-	60-63	
D+	55-59	Poor
D	50-54	Minimal Pass
F	0-49	Failure

More information on the alpha grading system and Grande Prairie Regional College's grading policy is available at <http://www.gprc.ab.ca/pdf/policies/academic/GradingPolicy-2003.pdf>

Course outline:

- January 9 **Introduction to the Sociology of Aging**

- January 16 **Attitudes & Stereotypes**
Readings: text chapter 1; Miner: Body Ritual among the Nacirema; Joseph: Warnings
Cumulative Journal entry #1 due

- January 23 **Demographics**
Readings: census release no. 2 Age and Sex (posted on Blackboard); text chapter 2; Bryant and Joseph: Canada's Rural Population
Cumulative Journal entry #2 due

- January 30 **Theories & Methods**
Readings: text chapter 3 and chapter 4; Reinharz: Feminist Oral History
Cumulative Journal entry #3 due

- February 6 **Gender**
Readings: text chapter 5; Lindsay and Almey: Women in Canada, Senior Women; Abu-Laban and McDaniel: Aging, Beauty and Status; Ritchie: Clearing the Path
Cumulative Journal entry #4 due

- February 13 **Ethnicity**
Readings: text chapter 6
Cumulative Journal entry #5 due

- February 20 **Reading week**

- February 27 **Cognitive, Physical & Mental Well-Being**
Readings: text chapter 7 and chapter 8; Doolittle Tetu: Oh, That Shoestore Used to be Mine
Cumulative Journal entry #6 due

- March 5 **Health & Health Care**
Readings: text chapter 9 and chapter 10; Davis: Livvy Caldwell; Seltzer: A Place for Mother
Cumulative Journal #7 due
- March 12 **Marriage, Families & Caregiving**
Readings: text chapter 11 and chapter 12; Thompson: Planting
Cumulative Journal entry #8 due
- March 19 **Work, Retirement & Leisure**
Readings: text chapter 13 and chapter 14
Cumulative Journal entry #9 due
- March 26 **Social Policy & Poverty**
Readings: text chapter 15; Nelson: Gender and Canada; Bolz: Social Security
Cumulative Journal entry #10 due
- April 2 **Death & Dying**
Readings: text chapter 16; Tana: Post Humus; Flanagan: Survived by his Wife
Cumulative Journal entry #11 due
- April 9 *Class Presentations*
Cumulative Journal entry #12 due
- April 16 *Final paper due*
Cumulative Journal (combined) due