

GE 80A, 80B, 80CW
Frontiers in Human Aging:
Biomedical, Social and Policy Perspectives
2007-2008

<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/07F/ge80a-1/>

FALL QUARTER SYLLABUS, GE 80A

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Cluster Librarian: Lise Snyder, (310) 206-4474, lsnyder@library.ucla.edu

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Lectures

Room: De Neve P350

Day: Monday, Wednesday

Time: 3:30-4:45 p.m.

Discussion Sections

Monday: 11AM-12:50PM (Covel 218); 1PM-2:50PM (Public Affairs 1284)

Tuesday: 9AM-10:50AM, 11AM-12:50PM (Covel 218), 1PM-2:50PM, 3PM-4:50PM (Public Affairs 2278)

Wednesday: 9AM-10:50AM, 11AM-12:50PM (Covel 218)

Guest Faculty: Guest lectures by specialists in gerontology and geriatrics from both UCLA and other universities will also be incorporated throughout the course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A. Rationale

Individual life expectancy from birth has dramatically increased, leading to an unprecedented aging of our society. Students entering college today can expect to live decades longer than their ancestors. Life expectancy in the United States has increased in the last century from 47 to 76 years. People aged 65 years or older now comprise nearly 13% of the population. This proportion will grow to 20% by the year 2025 with the maturation of the “baby boomers,” the 76 million Americans born between 1946 and 1964. Since the aging process is both biologically influenced and socially constructed, this “Age Revolution” involves both biomedical and socio-cultural change. The reasons why so many are living longer have as much to do with lifestyle and social opportunities as with genes and biology. Advances in medical technology and public health have helped create this demographic transition through fundamental changes in environmental risk factors (e.g., sanitation) as well as vaccinations. Yet, our perceptions of age are deeply rooted in culture, religion, literature, music and film, all of which shape our views of the human life course. Thus, aging is a complex biological and social phenomenon; and gerontology, the study of aging, is inherently interdisciplinary. This “Age Revolution” is also creating new career opportunities in the social, behavioral and biomedical sciences, as well as in the humanities. In response to these trends, the nation’s academic institutions are moving to encourage an invigorated emphasis on age-related research and education. In addition to professional education, students need to be prepared to live longer and to work in a world with an increasingly broad age spectrum.

B. Course Organization & Approach

In order to chart the course for the study of aging in a way that is both personally and academically meaningful, three major perspectives will be used. The first perspective will be a **bio/psycho/social approach**, which is based on the recognition that aging is inherently an interdisciplinary phenomenon. The multiple disciplines will be represented by the core faculty for the cluster, as well as by various guest lecturers. Professors and guest lecturers will clearly articulate the fundamentals of their discipline, as well as its contributions to and limitations for the study of aging. The interdisciplinary approach aims to assist students in their mastery of gerontological content as well as their understanding of the nature of disciplinary knowledge. The lectures will consist of an in-depth *didactic component* to introduce a core content area within one discipline, followed by *dialogue among disciplines* in response to the didactic topic.

The cluster also aims to sensitize students at an early stage in the life cycle to the relevance of issues relating to aging throughout life. Aging is, in fact, recognized as a life-long process of human growth and development. Hence, the second approach embodied by this cluster will be the **life course perspective**, which is distinguished by the analytical framework it provides for understanding the interplay between human lives and changing social structures. This approach allows students to understand how events, successes and losses at one stage of life can have important effects later in life. Further, the cluster will include a focus on individuals as they age within a particular socio-historical context. Attention will be given to the current cohort of college-age persons in comparison to depression-era and baby boom cohorts in the United States. Age stratification and differential access by class and racial/ethnic groups influence opportunities and resources in a society. The life course perspective is particularly valuable in addressing these issues of diversity in aging. Culture, race, ethnicity, gender, and class will be actively considered within each aging context area.

This year-long course will also explore aging from multiple levels, ranging from the individual cell to society. A **systems perspective**, which identifies common characteristics of all living systems, will aid students in understanding aging phenomena at all levels.

C. Interdisciplinary Scope

The *Frontiers in Human Aging: Biomedical, Social and Policy Perspectives* cluster will examine the aging process from the vantage points of multiple disciplines including biology, psychology, sociology, ethics and public policy. Disciplinary ways of knowing will be clearly identified and described in relation to the content. During the Fall and Winter, students will study biological and biomedical aging with an emphasis on how scientific breakthroughs relate to health and increased independence. In parallel, the course will integrate psychological, sociological, and policy perspectives, addressing issues such as how gender, race, ethnicity, social environment, and economic factors interact with aging. Historical perspectives on cohorts as they age over time will be applied to analyze the impact of the social environment on the aging experience. Lastly, ethical questions, public policy and economic issues, including business, marketing, and intergenerational dynamics, also will be explored. Each class session will involve imparting basic concepts and information in the context of one particular discipline, and then using that information base to initiate dialogue with other disciplines. The course will also include relevant literary references and examples from the arts, which will be interspersed throughout the lectures and used as reading material for discussion sessions. In the Spring Quarter, students will have the opportunity to explore one area in depth through participation in small-group seminars in such diverse topics as: “Gender, Ethnicity and Aging,” “The Immune System in Health and Disease,” or “Preventing Injuries in Older People.”

Receiving Writing II Credit for the your GE Cluster

Satisfaction of Writing I

In order for the Spring Quarter seminar of your Cluster course to satisfy the College’s Writing II requirement, you must satisfy the Writing I requirement by the end of Winter Quarter. If you have not satisfied the Writing I requirement with an AP English score, an IB English score, or transfer work, you must take English 3 in Fall or Winter Quarter and complete it with a grade of C or better.

Enrollment in English 3

It is your responsibility as a Cluster student to ensure that you enroll in English 3 in a timely way. Ideally you should take English 3 in Fall Quarter. If you don't, you should use your Winter Quarter priority pass to enroll in an English 3 course that fits your schedule.

Please see course web page, class links: <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/07F/ge80a-1/>

You should understand, however, that these places will be available on a first-come, first-served basis, and that at the end of first pass English 3 enrollment caps will be set at 20. No special arrangements for Cluster students will be made after that time. Also note that enrolled students seldom drop English 3, and that being on an English 3 wait list, even in first position, does not usually mean that you will ultimately be in the class.

COURSE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The *Frontiers in Human Aging: Biomedical, Social and Policy Perspectives* cluster offers a high level of faculty and teaching fellow commitment and new approaches to teaching in order to accomplish the following:

A. Overall Course Aims

- To increase understanding of the multidisciplinary nature of major complex phenomena;
- To strengthen writing and oral communication skills;
- To identify essential components of theory-building and application;
- To develop critical, interpretive and analytical skills from information in the media and scientific literature.

B. Specific Objectives

- To illustrate the interdisciplinary relationship between:
 - Biological foundations of aging,
 - Psychological and social constructions of aging,
 - Policy implications of aging;
- To explore diversity in human aging across the life course;
- To sensitize students to principles of successful and intergenerational aging;
- To appreciate continuity of aging over the life span within a socio-historical context;
- To view aging within various cultures through literature, art and the media;
- To facilitate “hands-on” and virtual experiences with aging;
- To introduce viable career opportunities in the fields of gerontology and geriatrics.

C. Course Texts

Required

The following required texts will be used throughout the year for the GE Cluster 80A, 80B and 80CW. The required Ferrini & Ferrini, Quadagno and Hacker texts are available at the UCLA Store (Ackerman), 2nd Floor Bookstore and they are also **on reserve in Powell Library**.

1. Quadagno, J. (2008). *Aging in the life course: An introduction to social gerontology* (4th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
2. Ferrini, AF & Ferrini RL (2008) *Health in the Later Years*, (4th ed.). New York, McGraw Hill.
3. Hacker, D. (2004). *A pocket style manual (4th ed.)*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.
4. Special Readings to be posted on course website

Supplemental

The following supplemental text is recommended and will be used throughout the year for the GE Cluster 80A, 80B, and 80CW. The text is available at the UCLA Store (Ackerman), and also will be held **on reserve in Powell Library**. This book is available at all major bookstores.

1. American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication Manual* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

On Reserve in Powell Library

1. Balkwill, F., & Rolph, M. (1993). *DNA is here to stay*. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books.*
 2. Balkwill, F., & Rolph, M. (1993). *Cells are us*. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books.*
 3. Balkwill, F., & Rolph, M. (1993). *Cell wars*. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books.*
 4. Small, G. (2002). *The memory bible*. New York: Hyperion.
 5. American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication Manual* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
 6. Ferrini, AF & Ferrini RL (2008) *Health in the Later Years*, (4th ed.). New York, McGraw Hill.
 7. Hacker, D. (2004). *A pocket style manual (4th ed.)*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.
- (*for use as 'catch-up' in basic cell biology)

D. Course Website

The GE 80A Website, <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/07F/ge80a-1/>, is an integral component of the class and you should visit it often to keep current on all aspects of the course. The website includes contact information for faculty and teaching fellows, course syllabus, announcements, relevant links, and the Discussion Board. Posting questions, answers and other aging-related issues on the Website Discussion Board is strongly encouraged. The postings will be included in the evaluation of students' participation.

E. Course Credit & General Education Fulfillment

GE 80 A, B, CW is a year-long commitment. Students will earn 5 course units per quarter and college Honors credit for all three quarters for a total of 15 units (must get a B or better grade in a class to qualify). Upon completion of the entire year-long Cluster course, students will satisfy 2 course requirements in the Social Sciences, 1 in the Life Sciences areas of General Education (GE), as well as the Writing II requirement.

F. Student Assignments and Grading Policy

Grading

- 40% exams (2 exams)
- 20% elder life review project
- 10 % brief paper #1
- 15 % brief paper #2
- 5% film presentation
- 10% participation

Late papers, missed exams, missed lectures and discussion sections

- Late papers will not be accepted and there will be no make-up exams. It is your responsibility to attend all lectures and discussion sessions.
- Remember that if you are not present, you cannot participate.
- Extenuating circumstances may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please take up such issues with faculty.

Re-grading Policy

- Disputes regarding grades on quizzes or assignments should be taken up with your teaching fellow.
- If an exam question is to be re-graded, we reserve the right to re-grade your entire exam and you may lose points.

Academic Integrity

- Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. All members of the team will strictly follow UCLA policy if cheating or plagiarism is suspected. Students will be referred to the Dean of Students and a formal hearing may be held. See the following URL for detailed information:
<http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/Student%20Guide%20to%20Academic%20Integrity.htm>
- The maximum penalty for academic dishonesty is expulsion from UCLA. DO NOT CHEAT OR PLAGIARIZE! It is not worth it!

G. Course Weekly Outline

The following outline presents the topics to be covered in the first quarter of the cluster. Detailed outlines for the remainder of the year will be provided at the beginning of the Winter and Spring Quarters, respectively. During lecture, key aging issues will be presented in-depth, complemented by a dialogue between disciplines. Students are expected to complete all readings before lecture on the date of the assigned readings. For the discussion sessions, students are divided into groups of 20 per section, to facilitate and encourage maximum student participation.

FALL QUARTER, 2007

WEEK ONE:

Monday, 10/1

PERSPECTIVES ON AGING and THE CLUSTER ROADMAP

- Welcome & Faculty/Teaching Fellows' introductions
- The longevity revolution and you
- Attitudes about aging and ageism
- Myths and stereotypes
- Institutionalized ageism
- Overview of course syllabus & expectations
- Aging "frontier" and three viewpoints of exploration

Reading Assignment:

Quadagno: pp. 1-16

Ferrini & Ferrini: pp 1-4

Brief Paper #1 (Ageism) Assigned

Wednesday, 10/3

GLOBAL IMPACTS OF THE LONGEVITY REVOLUTION

- Demography of aging in the USA
- Worldwide aging
- Life span and life expectancy
- Domestic and international demographic shift
- The epidemiologic transition

Reading Assignment:

Quadagno: Chapter 4 and pp. 306-307; 332-333

Handout: Bookmark of Facts on Aging

WEEK TWO:

Monday, 10/8

APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF AGING

- A systems framework
- Biopsychosocial perspective
- Life course perspective

Reading Assignment:

Quadagno: Chapter 3

Ferrini & Ferrini; pp 28-37; 51-55

Brief Paper #1 (Ageism) DUE at Beginning of Lecture

WEEK TWO:

Wednesday, 10/10

THE LIFE CYCLE & SOCIAL THEORIES OF AGING

- Life Cycle
- Developmental stages
- Sociology of Aging
- Social Theories of Aging
- The Life Review Assignment

Reading Assignment

Quadagno: Chapter 2 and pp. 165-172

Handout: Life Review Assignment

WEEK THREE:

Monday, 10/15

AGING POLICIES

- Social Security
- Medicare/Medicaid
- Americans with Disabilities
- Long-term care
- Health Care Delivery System

Reading Assignment:

Quadagno: Chapter 11

Optional reading for Policy Paper: Ferrini & Ferrini; Chapter 14

Brief Paper #2 (Policy) Assigned

Wednesday, 10/17

THE AGING BODY: THE CELL

- Components of the cell
- Aging at the cellular level

Reading Assignment:

Ferrini & Ferrini: pp.37-48; 51-54

WEEK FOUR:

Monday, 10/22

THE AGING BODY: BEYOND THE CELL

- The immune system
- Interaction between different organs

Reading Assignment:

Ferrini & Ferrini: pp 55-73; 82-87

Brief Paper #2 (Policy) DUE at Beginning of Class

WEEK FOUR:

Wednesday, 10/24 **MIND & BODY CONNECTION I**
Stress and the immune system

Reading Assignment
Article on website

WEEK FIVE:

Monday, 10/29 **MIND AND BODY CONNECTION II**
Guest lecturer: Arnold Scheibel, MD, UCLA Brian Research Institute

- The developing brain
- Plasticity of the brain

Reading Assignment:
Quadagno: pp 129-130; 148-157

Wednesday, 10/31 **EXAM #1**

WEEK SIX:

Monday, 11/5 **AGING AND SPECIFIC DISEASES, PART I**

- Cardiovascular disease
- Type II diabetes

Reading Assignment:
Ferrini & Ferrini: Chapter 4

Wednesday, 11/7 **FAMILIES AND CAREGIVING**

- Social Support Networks
- Changing Family
- Grandparenthood
- Family Care
- Caregiver Burden

Reading Assignment:
Quadagno: Chapters 8 and 10

WEEK SEVEN:

Monday, 11/12 **UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY (VETERAN'S DAY)**

WEEK SEVEN:

Wednesday, 11/14

(1) THE POLITICS OF AGING

Guest Faculty: Fernando Torres-Gil, PhD, Associate Dean, School of Public Affairs, UCLA

- Cohorts and voting behavior
- Political debates about the aged
- Intergenerational conflict
- activism of older adults

(2) DIVERSITY, INEQUALITY AND AGING

- Sexual identity
- Social class
- Race/Ethnicity
- Multiple jeopardy

Reading Assignment:

Quadagno: Chapter 16

WEEK EIGHT:

Monday, 11/19

UCLA AND SERVICE LEARNING

Guest Faculty: Kathleen O'Byrne, PhD, Director, UCLA Service Learning Program

SENSORY CHANGES WITH AGING

Reading Assignment:

Ferrini & Ferrini: pp 152-154; 473-478

Quadagno: pp 130-136

Wednesday, 11/21

GERIATRIC EVALUATION

Guest Faculty: David Reuben MD, Chief, Geriatrics Division, UCLA

- Functioning
- Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment
- Medicine and Aging
- Activities of Daily Living

Reading Assignment:

Ferrini & Ferrini: pp 431-450

Quadagno: pp. 230-231

WEEK NINE:

Monday, 11/26

AGING AND SPECIFIC DISEASES, PART II: CANCER

Reading Assignment:

Ferrini & Ferrini: Chapter 4

WEEK NINE:

Wednesday, 11/28

MIND AND BODY CONNECTION III

Guest Faculty: Gary Small, MD, Professor, Dept. of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences UCLA

- Dementia
- Maintaining cognitive vitality

Reading Assignment:

Ferrini & Ferrini: pp 194-196; 217-222

WEEK TEN:

Monday, 12/3

GENDER ISSUES

- Reproductive aging
- Estrogen and the Women's Health Initiative

Reading Assignment:

Quadagno: pp. 136-144

Ferrini & Ferrini: pp. 132-133; 176-181

Life Review Assignment DUE at Beginning of Lecture

Wednesday, 12/5

EXAM #2