

HLTH AGE 1BB3E: AGING AND SOCIETY

Department of Health, Aging & Society
McMaster University
Fall 2016

Instructor: Dr. Jessica A. Gish
Lectures: Thursday, 7:00-9:00pm
Office Hours: Thursday, 3:30-5:30pm

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**If you require this information in an alternate/accessible format, please contact the Department of Health, Aging & Society (ext. 27227 | e-mail: hasdept@mcmaster.ca).

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to gerontology, the interdisciplinary study of aging. Because of the “graying” of the Canadian population (and other countries), the examination of aging is a growing and increasingly important field of study. This course explores social, psychological, physiological, economic, and health aspects of aging from the perspective of individuals and society. A defining theme will be the examination of how the individual aging process at the “micro” level is simultaneously a social and cultural process in Canadian society at the “macro” level of social institutions, demographic trends, norms, and policy. Social gerontologists recognize that aging has personal meaning and significance in life, but are also interested in the social structural impact of aging in terms of community involvement, family relationships, political economy, retirement, and the delivery of health and social services. Specific topics to be examined include: ageism, images of aging, population aging, gender, sexuality, health, long-term care, family life, social support, caregiving, work, retirement, religion, spirituality, housing, transportation, and leisure. This course provides a foundation so that interested students can pursue further academic study in gerontology. The focus is on older adults and later life; an overview of aging as it relates to young adulthood and middle age is not provided.

Course Objectives

- Examine relations between the individual and society in the context of aging in Canada.
- Explain what it means to say that aging is a social and cultural process.
- Debunk common myths and misconceptions about older adults and the aging process.
- Review prominent gerontological theories and research methods in the field of aging.
- Become familiar with a range of themes and topics that gerontologists study.
- Discuss empirical research about older adults and policy in Canadian society.
- Introduce students to first person accounts of the lived experience of aging.
- Develop an expansive and critical understanding of the challenges and promises of aging for individuals, society, families, and health systems.
- Advance written, research, and presentation skills appropriate for the university level.

Course Materials

Novak, M., & Campbell, L. (2014). *Aging & Society: A Canadian Perspective* (7th edition). Scarborough, ON: Nelson Thomson Learning.

Listed below are additional readings that will be discussed in lecture. Links to these readings are posted on Avenue to Learn and can also be found using the McMaster University Library on-line catalogue. You are expected to read in advance these readings and to bring with you to lecture either a hard or an electronic copy of each reading on the day in which the article will be discussed (see Course Schedule & Reading Assignments on pgs. 10-11).

Adler, G. & Rottunda, S. (2006). Older adults' perspectives on driving cessation. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 20: 227-235.

Crooks, V.A., Williams, A., Stajduhar, K.I., Cohen, S.R., Allan, D., & Brazil, K. (2012). Family caregivers' ideal expectations of Canada's Compassionate Care Benefit. *Health and Social Care in the Community*, 20(2): 172-180.

Sharman, Z., Tigar McLaren, A., Cohen, M., & Ostry, A. (2008). "We only own the hours": Discontinuity of care in the British Columbia home support system." *Canadian Journal on Aging*, 27(1): 89-99.

Vasara, P. (2015). Not ageing in place: Negotiating meanings of residency in age-related housing. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 35: 55-64.

Course Style & Method of Instruction

This course will consist of both lectures and tutorials. Lectures will involve discussion of assigned readings as well in-class exercises, presentations by guest speakers, and the viewing of documentaries. It is important to keep up with assigned readings because lecture will not cover in entirety textbook content; rather assigned readings will be used as a starting point for more advanced discussion in lecture.

Powerpoint presentations will be posted on Avenue to Learn in the hours before lecture is scheduled to take place. Slides will be designed to facilitate note-taking during lecture; slides are not facsimiles or replicas of all that students are expected to know from lectures. You are unlikely to succeed in this course if you ignore the book and only attend lectures or if you simply read the text and miss class.

You are required to attend tutorials on and off throughout the semester according to the course schedule. The dates when you are expected to attend tutorial will be posted on Avenue to Learn after your first tutorial is scheduled to take place. To keep tutorials a small group experience, each tutorial section will be divided into 2 groups of approximately 10-15 students (called **Group A** and **Group B**). However, at times throughout the semester, you still will meet as a larger group (see Course Schedule & Reading Assignments on pgs. 10-11).

There will be 5 Teaching Assistants (TA) for this course. Please direct your course inquiry to the appropriate TA. TA responsibilities and contact information will be posted on Avenue to Learn.

Course Requirements & Important Dates

Your final grade will be computed as follows:

Requirement	Weight	Date
Midterm	25%	October 20*
Tutorial Participation & Attendance	10%	Assessed regularly
Assignment #1: Senior Service Profile Paper & Presentation	10%	Due in <i>tutorial</i> the week of October 24-October 28**
Assignment #2: Critical Commentary of an Aging Issue	25%	Due in <i>lecture</i> on November 24
Final exam	30%	TBD by the Office of the Registrar

* There will be two room locations for the midterm. Room locations and information about where students will be writing their exam will be posted on Avenue to Learn.

** Your assignment is due on the day in which your tutorial is regularly scheduled to take place during this week.

EXAMINATIONS: You will write a midterm and a final exam in this course. Your midterm will be written during class hours. Your final exam is a registrar-scheduled exam. These exams will be multiple-choice exams. You are responsible for all course materials, including assigned readings, lecture notes, guest speakers, videos, and in-class exercises and discussions. Your final exam will require knowledge of material drawn upon from earlier sections of the course; *approximately 10 to 20% of your final exam will assess pre-midterm content*. The date of your final exam is to be determined by the Office of the Registrar but will take place between December 9 and December 22.

TUTORIAL PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE: Each student must attend regularly a weekly tutorial session run by a Teaching Assistant. Tutorials will provide you with the opportunity to discuss course material, complete small group activities and assignments to facilitate learning, participate in discussions about completed research studies using different theories and approaches discussed in lecture, and receive help with course assignments and exam preparation.

If you are unable to attend the tutorial section in which you are registered, you can request to be moved to another tutorial session. However, it may not be possible to grant all of these requests due to tutorial enrolment, room size, and fire code regulations. Please be mindful that it is *mandatory* that you attend all scheduled tutorial sessions; make-up assignments will not be prepared for conflicting schedules or other forms of competing obligations. Teaching Assistants are not responsible for informing individual students about material that was discussed during missed tutorial sessions.

Your tutorial participation grade will be assigned by your Teaching Assistant taking into consideration your attendance record and individual contributions to your tutorial session. *Tutorial attendance is worth 5% and tutorial participation is worth 5% for a total of 10%*. You will be rewarded if you participate in tutorials in a relevant, respectful, and contributory manner on an on-going basis throughout the semester.

To assess tutorial attendance, roll call will be taken regularly by your Teaching Assistant. Tutorial participation will be assessed after each tutorial by your Teaching Assistant. You can also accumulate credit by completing small tasks assigned by the Teaching Assistant during or in

advance of tutorial. For example, you can opt to hand-in written responses to entries posted on the **course blog** at the beginning of each tutorial. The course blog is located on Avenue to Learn; it can be accessed by clicking first on the “communication” tab then “discussions” on the drop down menu. *Each student is limited to handing in only 1 blog response per tutorial session.* It is not acceptable on the last day of tutorial to hand in blog responses retrospectively for previous tutorial sessions. Thus, on the last day of tutorial only 1 blog response will be accepted by your Teaching Assistant. Other small assignments will be assigned periodically throughout the semester. These assignments will not be assessed for accuracy but for completeness and will be used by your Teaching Assistant to provide general feedback to the class. The Teaching Assistant will look for evidence that you were intellectually and thoughtfully engaged with the tutorial assignment. Completed assignments will result in the accumulation of participation credit for this course.

Teaching Assistants reserve the right to downgrade your tutorial participation mark (a maximum of 5 points) for **negative class tutorial participation** and an attitude that is disrespectful towards the course, Professor, or Teaching Assistant. Activities considered negative class participation include: irregular class attendance, talking to classmates about material that is not related to the course, inappropriate use of computers or electronic devices (e.g., facebooking, twittering, texting, surfing the internet, playing games), sleeping, listening to ipods or mp3 players, coming to class late or leaving early, etcetera. Laptops should only be used to take notes; evidence of inappropriate computer usage or other behaviour may result in a Teaching Assistant asking you to leave tutorial.

ASSIGNMENT #1 – SENIOR SERVICE PROFILE & PRESENTATION: You are required to identify and find out information about a service or program in Hamilton or the Greater Toronto Area designed to enhance the well-being of seniors. You are required to write a brief report of the information provided (3 pages) and conduct an informal presentation (5-7 minutes) explaining what you have learned to a small group of your peers. Your paper will require research in which you gather background information about the intent and purpose of the organization. You should describe in brief historical background about the service, the demographics of those who use the program, as well as, the issues, needs, or problems the service is designed to address. You should begin with a topic discussed in lecture or the textbook as a starting point for this assignment (e.g., health, inequality, social support, caregiving, death, recreation). *Hand in your assignment to your Teaching Assistant during tutorial on the day you are scheduled to present* (see Course Requirements & Important Dates on p. 3).

Your paper will be marked out of 100 marks. If you do not complete your presentation during tutorial, your paper will be penalized by 7 marks/7 percent. If you miss tutorial, you must submit a McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) to your Professor; arrangements will then be made in consultation with your Teaching Assistant (TA) for you to conduct your presentation outside of regularly scheduled tutorial time within the next 7-10 days. If an MSAF is not submitted or if you complete an MSAF but are unable to present your work to your TA in a timely manner, your term paper will be deducted by 7 marks. High quality presentations will be rewarded by your TA in your tutorial participation mark for the week. Further assignment guidelines will be provided in tutorial and posted on Avenue to Learn.

ASSIGNMENT #2 – CRITICAL COMMENTARY OF AN AGING ISSUE: You are required to write a term paper (5 pages) in which you discuss a topic related to aging and make

critical connections to theories, concepts, and insights from course/research material. Your paper should begin by discussing an issue relevant to aging in contemporary Canada by reporting on information that is found in a recent local or national newspaper (e.g., Hamilton Spectator, Toronto Star, Globe and Mail, National Post). The remainder of your paper will contain critical commentary and analysis of the issue using course concepts and empirical insights (e.g., findings from published gerontological research) that has been discussed in lecture and/or your textbook. *Hand in your assignment to your Professor in lecture on November 24th.* Further assignment guidelines will be provided in tutorial and posted on Avenue to Learn.

Tips and Suggestions for Succeeding in this Course

1. Attend lecture. It is my experience that students who come to class regularly do better in social science courses.
2. Keep up with assigned readings. Assigned readings will be the basis for lecture material, sometimes complementing readings and at times covering new ground. It is especially important to keep up with assigned readings because there will *not* be enough time in lecture to cover all of the content in the textbook/course pack. Some material you will be responsible for learning on your own through individual self-study.
3. When studying for exams remember that *all* lecture materials, including assigned readings, audio-visual materials (e.g., documentaries), and in-class discussions are considered testable materials on examinations.
4. PowerPoint presentations will be used during lecture but note-taking is crucial to doing well in this course. To the best of the Professor's ability, PowerPoint presentations will be posted on Avenue to Learn in the hours *before* lecture is to take place. If you simply review PowerPoint presentations in lieu of coming to class, you will not do well in this course. PowerPoint presentations will be designed to facilitate student note-taking and will not be a replica of all that was discussed during lecture. Taking notes in class is productive for two reasons. First, it ensures that you stay focused on course materials rather than distracted by Facebook, twitter, or any other electronic mode of communication. Second, it facilitates the learning process by giving you practice writing and thinking with new material, which in the process makes present material that is unclear. In this case you should ask a question of the Professor to obtain clarification and/or spend time outside of the classroom engaging with explanations presented in assigned readings.
5. Exchange contact information (e.g., e-mail address and/or phone number) with a classmate or "buddy" early in the semester. I will *not* provide lecture notes to students that miss class, thus your first point of contact should always be your "buddy." I will be happy to discuss course material during office hours that you do not understand but only after you have reviewed lecture notes from a classmate.

Grading

Grades for each course requirement will be added together at the end of the term. The final total will be translated into the following letter grade according to the grading system documented below:

Grade	Equivalent Grade Point	Equivalent Percentages
A+	12	90-100
A	11	85-89
A-	10	80-84
B+	9	77-79
B	8	73-76
B-	7	70-72
C+	6	67-69
C	5	63-66
C-	4	60-62
D+	3	57-59
D	2	53-56
D-	1	50-52
F	0	0-49

Instructor Policies

Class Communication, Email & Office Hours: Please do *not* e-mail your Professor using Avenue to Learn. The best way to contact your Professor is to e-mail directly using your McMaster University account. Unfortunately e-mails that are sent to Professors from Avenue to Learn are bounced back when they are replied to. For this reason it is most effective and efficient if you email your Professor regularly from your McMaster e-mail account and not from Avenue to Learn.

If you have a substantive question that comes out of lecture, you are welcome to e-mail me but I prefer to see students during office hours. It is much easier to provide clarification about substantive questions in person than it is over e-mail. If you send a question about course content using e-mail, be prepared that I may simply ask you to come see me in person if the answer requires extensive explanation.

Please do not e-mail questions that can already be answered by information that has been given to you during lecture or is present on the course outline, documents posted on Avenue to Learn, or in university regulations (e.g., course calendar). There will be ample time to ask questions in class about course material, assignments, and exams, so please feel free to do so. E-mails to your Professor (and TA) should contain: “**HLTH AGE 1BB3E**” in the subject line. Otherwise your e-mail may be deleted as spam or directed to a junk mail file.

Computers & Cell Phones: You are welcome to bring your laptops with you to class, but when in class you should only be using your word-processing program. Please keep all electronic social networking out of the classroom. This means absolutely *no* twittering, texting, or facebooking during class time. My concern lies in the potential that this behaviour has for

disrupting the learning of others in the classroom not electing to participate in it. If necessary, I will ask those who are breaking this policy to leave the classroom.

Late Assignments: All written work must be submitted in person on the due date as per the assignment instruction guidelines. Assignments that are received by e-mail in electronic form in lieu of a hard copy or under the Professor's door will NOT be accepted. As described above, your assignment must be received in person in lecture on the assignment due date to avoid late penalty. Your assignment cannot be submitted to the digital drop box in place of an in person submission of a hard (printed) copy of your assignment. It is extremely time consuming for your Professor and Teaching Assistant to print student assignments individually in a class of this size, thus it is absolutely mandatory that you submit paper copies of your assignment. Planning your work, scheduling time, and meeting deadlines can be especially challenging, but are important skills to develop and part of the reality of life outside of the university. As an incentive to develop this skill and to be fair and equitable to all students, ***late assignments will be penalized at the rate of 5% per day that the assignment is late (including weekends)***. If an assignment is due at the beginning of lecture or tutorial, it will be considered one day late if it is received at any time after the end of class. Late penalties will be waived if the office of the Associate Dean of Social Sciences notifies the Professor that you have submitted to that office the appropriate documentation to support your inability to submit the work by the due date.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *Please do NOT e-mail or approach the Professor before or after lecture to request an extension for an assignment. In general, I do not grant extensions for assignments outside of the academic missed work university policy. In the event that you would like to request an extension on your assignment, make arrangements to come see me during office hours to discuss the specific circumstances surrounding your request. All requests that come to me outside of office hours will be denied. Your Teaching Assistants do not have the authority to grant extensions independent of consultation with the Professor.*

Missed Course Work: In this course if you miss an exam or assignment due date because of an excused absence, it is the Professor's policy that credit will not be transferred to another course assignment. You must complete all exams and assignments in a timely manner in this course.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please familiarize yourself with revisions to the university policy for the McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) because under no exceptions will the previous rules and guidelines be enforced. These policy revisions became effective in the spring/summer 2015 term.

- The MSAF can be used for medical and nonmedical (personal) situations.
- Approval of the MSAF is automatic (i.e. no documentation is required).
- The upper limit for when an MSAF can be submitted has been reduced from 'less than 30%' to 'less than 25%' of the course weight.
- The MSAF provides relief for missed academic work resulting from medical or personal situations lasting up to 3 calendar days. If your medical or personal situation lasts longer than 3 days, you must report to the Faculty Office to provide appropriate supporting documentation.

Return of Assignments: In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers. Tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. The Professor will make arrangements for you to pick up your assignments in person during scheduled office hours. You may also provide the Professor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the return of assignments by mail.

Review of Marks: A great deal of time and attention will be spent marking your assignments and effort will be made to provide feedback about your assignment. If you would like additional feedback about the grade you received, please book an appointment with your Teaching Assistant or attend their scheduled office hours. If you disagree with the mark you received for your assignment, please adhere to the following procedure:

1. Document in at least 2 to 3 paragraphs (1 full page, single-spaced, type-written) why you think you deserve an improved mark. Ensure that your comments address specifically your concerns about the marking and explain in detail why you think your assignment meets the expectations of the assignment as outlined in the grading rubric. Your response should reflect on *all* of the written feedback provided by the Teaching Assistant.
2. Submit your written commentary and original assignment to the Department of Health, Aging & Society (attention: the name of your TA). Then, book an appointment with your TA to discuss the marking of your assignment.
3. If the TA and you are unable to resolve the dispute, book an appointment with your Professor. Prior to the meeting ensure that your Professor has a copy of your written commentary as well as the original assignment.
4. Please note that your TA and Professor have the ability to *increase or decrease* the original assignment score.
5. All disputes involving the TA and Professor must be resolved *at least one month* within the date in which you received your mark.

Videos: We will watch several documentaries in this course, which will be used to illustrate concepts from course material and to generate in-class discussion. These videos will be extremely difficult to obtain outside of class time, thus it is important that you are in class to see them. Exams will assess your understanding of the documentary as it relates to course material as well as your general knowledge about your viewing of the film.

University Policies

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities: Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-StudentsWithDisabilities.pdf>

Academic Integrity: You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>. The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Avenue to Learn: In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Course Modification: The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy: Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Email Forwarding in MUGSI: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html>

*Forwarding will take effect 24-hours after students complete the process at the above link

Turnitin.com: In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be

assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>

HLTH AGE 1BB3E: COURSE SCHEDULE & READING ASSIGNMENTS

Week	Date	Topic	Reading Assignment	Tutorial Group	Tutorial Activity
1	September 8	Introduction & Course Overview	N/A	No tutorials this week	
2	September 15	Ageism & Cultural Images of Aging	CH1	Group A & B	Introduction to TA; Students are assigned into Group A or Group B
3	September 22	Theories of Aging & Research Methods	CH2 (see also, pgs. 144-148)	Group A	Exercise: Ageism & Age Images
4	September 29	Aging in Canada, the World & Population Aging	CH3	Group B	Exercise: Ageism & Age Images
5	October 6	The Aging Mind & Social Psychology	CH6	Group A & B	Lecture: Review Instructions for Assignment #1 & Discuss Plagiarism & APA Referencing
6	October 13	MIDTERM RECESS			
7	October 20	MIDTERM	N/A	No tutorials this week	
8	October 27	Personal Health & Health Care <i>Video: TBD</i>	CH5 & CH7	Group A & B	Senior Service Profile Assignment Presentations ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE in tutorial
9	November 3	Family, Caregiving & Social Support	CH12 & CH13 Sharman et al. (2008): "We Only Own the Hours": Discontinuity of Care in the BC Home Support System	Group A & B	Exercise: In-tutorial Debate on Students Living Rent-free in Nursing Homes
10	November 10	Work, Income & Retirement	CH8 & CH9	Group A & B	Lecture: Review Instructions for Assignment #2 & TA Assignment feedback on Assignment #1

11	November 17	Housing & Transportation	CH11 Adler & Rottunda (2006): Older Adults' Perspectives on Driving Cessation Vasara (2015): Not ageing in place: Negotiating meanings of residency in age-related housing	Group A	Exercise: Pension & Budget Planning
12	November 24	End of Life Issues ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE in lecture	CH14 Crooks et al. (2012): Family Caregivers' Ideal Expectations of Canada's Compassionate Care Benefit	Group B	Exercise: Pension & Budget Planning
13	December 1	<i>Guest Lecture: Red Hat Society & Course Wrap-Up</i>	N/A	Group A & B	Workshop: Final Exam Review