

**McMaster University**  
**Health, Aging and Society**  
**HLTH AGE 4L03**  
**Social Policy and Aging**

Winter 2017; Tuesday, 11:30-2:20; Location MDCL 1116

Instructor: Dr. Amanda Grenier  
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Office Hours: Please email for an appointment

### **Course description**

**Social Policy and Aging** focuses on key policy issues in relation to aging and late life. In particular, it explores the relationships between the frameworks used to guide policies and programs for older people, key public policies and institutional structures, and lived experiences of older people. This course draws on a critical perspective that attends to language, power, diverse social locations, and change over time.

Throughout the course, we will review the challenges and tensions in current policy approaches, and consider pathways for change. The course offers students the opportunity to think critically about policies and organizational practices, engage in debates, and formulate a deeper understanding of contemporary issues in social policy. This course gives students an opportunity to exercise their curiosity and question taken for granted language and practices in social gerontology and social care. In fulfilling the course objectives, students will develop a more complex understanding of the intersections between socio-cultural responses, program guidelines, organizational practices, and lived experiences.

*Social Policy and Aging* is a fourth year seminar. Learning takes place inside and outside the classroom. In-class learning entails active student involvement in generating questions from the readings, participating in lectures and discussions, and peer feedback. Learning outside the classroom takes place through assigned readings, critical thinking about class material, applying concepts to students' areas of interest, and written assignments. Through their assignments, students will identify and explore a particular social policy issue with relevance to older people, write a critical synthesis, and propose suggestions for change.

### **Educational philosophy**

The course is structured according to an experiential and collaborative learning model. Each class is comprised of lecture and in-class tutorial time. The lecture will focus on the content of a particular area as outlined in the schedule. In-class tutorial time will involve exercises to help students integrate course content and stimulate critical thinking. Active student involvement is very important. Self-reflection, open exchange of ideas, and critical analysis are encouraged.

### **Course objectives**

By the end of the term, students should be able to:

- Identify key policies relevant to older people;

- Identify contemporary challenges and contradictions in policies for late life;
- Recognize underlying constructs in policy and practice;
- Appraise the available models used to understand and address 'age-related' change;
- Understand and discuss the implications of population aging for future planning;
- Suggest change in a particular area of policy or practice.

## Weekly course plan

January 10th	Introduction & syllabus
January 17 <sup>th</sup>	What is social policy? How is policy configured in Canada?
January 24 <sup>th</sup>	Demographic change and the active reshaping of late life
January 31 <sup>st</sup>	Retirement and the extension of work-life
February 7 <sup>th</sup>	'Success', longevity and care
February 14 <sup>th</sup>	'Aging in place'? Dilemmas of housing and care in late life
February 21 <sup>st</sup>	READING WEEK (no class)
February 28 <sup>th</sup>	Classification and practices: Bodies 'at risk'
March 7 <sup>th</sup>	Care: Formal, familial, and global contexts and experiences
March 14 <sup>th</sup>	Marginalized groups: Participation, inequality, and exclusion
March 21 <sup>st</sup>	Technology, access, and care
March 28 <sup>th</sup>	Questions of 'Age': Considerations of life course policy
April 4 <sup>th</sup>	In-class presentation of knowledge transfer activity & Wrap-up

REQUIRED TEXTS: There is no text for this course. Readings for each week are provided in the schedule below and available online and/or through the McMaster library system.

## Course Evaluation

### 1. Weekly summary and question (20%)

Weekly starting Jan. 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Students are expected to complete the readings, attend classes, and take part in the discussion. Each week, students will be required to complete a half page summary of the readings that includes one question for discussion. We will exchange summaries in a peer-feedback model, and questions will be used to facilitate class discussion. Students will submit their summary at the end of each class (ensure your name is on the paper). Students are required to submit 10 summaries in total (2 points per summary). Students not present in class cannot submit their summaries and will not receive the points for that week (unless a medical note is provided). The instructor will grade summaries at mid-term and at the end of the course, but they must be completed on a weekly basis.

### 2. Annotated bibliography (25%)

February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Select a topic that you will pursue for the critical analysis paper (see below). In this assignment, you will select and review 10 key articles that you will later use to develop your paper, and create an annotated bibliography. First, you will provide the bibliographic references for each article **according to the standard APA format**. Second, you will provide a one-paragraph summary per article that includes the argument and key points. Adherence to APA is required (.5 per citation). The annotated bibliography must not exceed 2 single spaced pages. Please indicate the most relevant article for your work with a star, and note in your summary why it is most relevant. Assignments will be graded on the citation style, quality of the summaries, and selection of the readings.

### 3. Critical analysis Paper (35%)

March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017

In this paper, you will draw on the articles collected in your annotated bibliography to write a critical analysis paper. Your paper will explore your selected social policy issue in relation to an aging population, and outline the challenges/tensions, and gaps in current structures and/or responses. You will also identify and suggest changes that would be more suitable for an aging population (you will later take this up in the knowledge exchange activity). The paper must demonstrate a clear argument and level of analysis that moves beyond description (i.e., from *'the author says frailty is a multi-dimensional variable'*, to something such as *'while medical authors such as Rockwood suggest that frailty is a multi-dimensional variable, Grenier points to the social dimensions of this experience'*). The paper must not exceed 10-12 double spaced pages.

### 4. Knowledge exchange activity (20%)

April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017

In this assignment you will develop a relevant suggestion for change based on your work this term. You will use the most appropriate format to create something to share with your target audience. The intent is to move your suggestion beyond the academic context and into a public or practice setting. For example, you could create a policy brief, a blog entry, a hashtag campaign, a product targeted to a clinical service, decision-makers, or community stakeholders. You will need to produce a visual display for your work (poster, factsheet, model, etc) that is no larger than 11 x 17 (see me for exceptions). You will also write a ½ page summary that explains the contributions of your piece and why you have produced it as such (including rationale, target audience, and description). Images and summaries will be displayed and presented in class, and are to be submitted for grading at the end of class. Attendance is mandatory. Work will be graded for relevance of content, creativity, the quality of your presentation, and selection of an appropriate target audience. Examples will be discussed in class.

#### Assignment Submission

Assignments must be submitted on the due date by the end of the class. A **2% reduction** will be applied each day after the deadline. Assignments that are not submitted within a week after the due date will automatically receive a grade of zero. Late assignments submitted to the main office must have the date stamped on the front cover. In addition, please adhere to the following criteria for assignment preparation: All assignments must include a title page with all relevant course information, adhere to the page limits specified, be formatted with 12 pt. font and standard margins, and be stapled. You must use **APA style** for the citations and references in all assignments. Please consult an APA guide directly or your library e-resource.

**Privacy Protection:** Please submit all assignments in an envelope with your name written clearly on the front of the envelope. This will ensure your privacy when picking up graded assignments. Should you wish to receive your final paper by mail please provide a self-addressed envelope with proper postage.

**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.

**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](mailto: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>

**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.

**Alternate/Accessible Format for Course Outlines:** If you require this information in an alternate/accessible format, please contact the Department of Health, Aging & Society at 905-525-9140 ext. 27227 | e-mail: [hasdept@mcmaster.ca](mailto:hasdept@mcmaster.ca)

**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.

**Required Readings HLTH AGE 4L03**  
Winter 2017

**January 10th            Introduction & syllabus**

There are no assigned readings for this week.

**January 17<sup>th</sup>            What is social policy? How is policy configured in Canada?**

Westhues, A. (2010). Becoming acquainted with social policy. In *Canadian social policy: Issues and perspectives* (4th Ed.) (pp.5-24). Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Chappell, N., & Penning, M. (2009). Health care policy. In *Understanding health, healthcare and health policy in Canada* (pp.168-202). Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

**January 24<sup>th</sup>            Demographic change and the active reshaping of late life**

Gee, E.M. (2002). Misconceptions and misapprehensions about population ageing. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 31, 750-753.  
Available at: <http://ije.oxfordjournals.org.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/content/31/4/750.full>

Walker, A. (2002). A strategy for active ageing. *International Social Security Review*, 55(1), 121-139.  
Available at:  
[http://is.muni.cz/el/1423/podzim2013/SOC570/um/Walker\\_\\_Strategy\\_for\\_AA\\_2002.pdf](http://is.muni.cz/el/1423/podzim2013/SOC570/um/Walker__Strategy_for_AA_2002.pdf)

**January 31<sup>st</sup>            Retirement and the extension of work-life**

Sargent, L. D., Lee, M. D., Martin, B., & Zikic, J. (2012). Reinventing retirement: New pathways, new arrangements, new meanings. *Human Relations*, 66(1), 3-21.  
Available at: <http://hum.sagepub.com/content/66/1/3.full.pdf>

Wister, A., & McPherson, B. D. (2014) Work, retirement, and economic Security. In *Aging as a social process: Canadian perspectives* (6th Ed) (pp. 302-368). Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Also see:

Baker, M., & Milligan, K. (2009). Overview of the public system in Canada, In *Government and retirement incomes in Canada*. Prepared for the Council of Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Finance Ministers (3.0). Retrieved From: [http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/201/301/annual\\_fin\\_rep\\_gov\\_can/html/2012-2013/activty/pubs/pension/ref-bib/baker-eng.asp#section3](http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/201/301/annual_fin_rep_gov_can/html/2012-2013/activty/pubs/pension/ref-bib/baker-eng.asp#section3)

**February 7<sup>th</sup>                    ‘Success’, longevity and care**

Dillaway, H.E. & Byrnes, M. (2009). Reconsidering successful aging: A call for renewed and expanded academic critiques and conceptualizations. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, 28 (6), 702-722.

Olshansky, S. J., Beard, J., & Börsch-Supan, A. (2012). The longevity dividend: health as an investment. In *Global Population Ageing: Peril or Promise?*, (pp. 57-60). Retrieved from:[https://cdn1.sph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1288/2013/10/PGDA\\_WP\\_89.pdf#page=60](https://cdn1.sph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1288/2013/10/PGDA_WP_89.pdf#page=60)

**February 14<sup>th</sup>                    ‘Aging in place’? Dilemmas of housing and care in late life**

Wiles, J., Leibing, A., Guberman, N., Reeve, J., & Allen, R.S. (2012). The meaning of “aging in place” to older people. *The Gerontologist*, 52 (3), 357-366.

Grenier, A., Barken, R. & McGrath, C. (2016). Homelessness and aging: The contradictory ordering of ‘house’ and ‘home’. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 39, 73-80. [dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2016.11.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2016.11.002)

**February 21st                    READING WEEK (no class)**

There are no readings for your week.  
Take this time to advance your work on your assignments.

**February 28<sup>th</sup>                    Classification and practices: Bodies ‘at risk’**

Grenier, A. (2007). Constructions of frailty in the English language, care practice and the lived experience. *Ageing and Society*, 27(3), 425-445.  
Available at:  
<http://journals.cambridge.org.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/action/displayFulltext?type=6&fid=968624&jid=ASO&volumeId=27&issueId=03&aid=968616&fulltextType=RA&fileId=S0144686X06005782>

Bornat, J., & Bytheway, B. (2010). Perceptions and presentations of living with everyday risk in later life. *British Journal of Social Work*, 40(4), 1118-1134.  
Available at: <http://bjsw.oxfordjournals.org.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/content/40/4/1118.full>

**March 7<sup>th</sup>                        Care: Formal, familial, and global contexts and experiences**

Funk, L. M. (2013). Home healthcare and family responsibility: A critical discourse analysis of talk and text. *Healthcare Policy*, 9 (Spec Issue), 86-97. doi:10.12927/hcpol.2013.23593.  
Available at: <http://www.longwoods.com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/content/23593>

Williams, F. (2010). Migration and care: Themes, concepts and challenges. *Social Policy and Society*, 9(3), 385-396.

Available at:

[http://journals1.scholarsportal.info.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/details/14747464/v09i0003/385\\_mactcac.xml](http://journals1.scholarsportal.info.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/details/14747464/v09i0003/385_mactcac.xml)

**March 14<sup>th</sup>                      Marginalized groups: Participation, inequality, and exclusion**

Walsh, K., Scharf, T., and Keating, N. (2016). Social exclusion of older persons: A scoping review and conceptual framework. *European Journal of Ageing*. doi:10.1007/s10433-016-0398-8

Martinson, M., & Minkler, M. (2006). Civic engagement and older adults: A critical perspective. *The Gerontologist*, 46(3), 318-324.

**March 21<sup>st</sup>                      Technology, access, and care**

Schulz, R., Wahl, H. W., Matthews, J. T., Dabbs, A. D. V., Beach, S. R., & Czaja, S. J. (2015). Advancing the Aging and Technology Agenda in Gerontology. *The Gerontologist*, 55(5), 724-734.

Sawchuk, K. & Lafontaine, C. (2015). Precarious Ageing: Questioning Access, Creating InterACTion. In P. Dias da Silva & A. Alves (Ed.), *TEM 2015: Proceedings of the Technology & Emerging Media Track – Annual Conference of The Canadian Communication Association* (Ottawa, June 3–5, 2015).

**March 28<sup>th</sup>                      The question of ‘Age’: Considerations of life course policy**

Settersten, Jr., R. A. & Trauten, M. (2010). On time and ties: Why the life course matters for old age policies. In R. B. Hudson (Ed.), *The new politics of old age policy* (pp. 141-159).

Available at:

<http://richardsettersten.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/the-new-politics-of-old-age-policy-on-time-and-ties.pdf>

McDaniel, S., & Bernard, P. (2011). Life course as a policy lens: Challenges and opportunities. *Canadian Public Policy*, 37, S1-S13.

Available at:

[http://muse.jhu.edu.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/journals/canadian\\_public\\_policy/v037/37.S.mcdaniel.html](http://muse.jhu.edu.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/journals/canadian_public_policy/v037/37.S.mcdaniel.html)

**April 4<sup>th</sup>                      In-class presentation of knowledge transfer activity & Wrap-up**

There are no readings for this week.

Instead, you will present your knowledge exchange activity to the class.