GERO 30656
PSYCH 30656
GERO 51095
HDFS 51095

Psychology of Aging
Tuesdays: 4:25 – 7:05 PM
Room 201 - Nixson Bldg.

Instructor:
Dr. Greg Smith
144 Nixson Bldg.
Phone: 330 672-9993
email: gsmith2@kent.edu

Office Hours: Generally M-F 9:30 AM – 5:30 PM
(Appointments preferred)

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course provides a broad overview of the major theories, research methods; empirical findings; and aspects of clinical practice within the psychology of aging from the perspectives of various divisions of psychology (e.g., cognitive, developmental, personality; clinical; social; health). Students will also conduct structured interviews with older adults on an individual level to reinforce factual information presented in required readings and weekly lectures/discussions. Collaborative research teams will analyze and interpret the data resulting from the older adult interviews. Self-exploration of students’ own aging will also be encouraged.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
This course will assist students to:

1. Understand the diverse ways in which psychologists contribute to scientific knowledge and clinical practice within the multidisciplinary field of gerontology.

2. Explore their own future development, including becoming familiar with career opportunities within geropsychology.

3. Apply basic principles from lifespan developmental psychology to the study of aging.

4. Recognize important distinctions between normal and pathological age-related changes.

5. Learn key theories, concepts, and research findings associated within different specialty areas of geropsychology (e.g. developmental, cognitive, neuro; clinical, health, social, environmental).

6. Gain experience in conducting basic research with older adults.

COURSE FORMAT
Each class session will begin with a 10 point quiz that tests both the material covered in the prior class session and the required readings for the present week. The remainder of each class session will involve a lecture, possible video, and class discussion of the content contained in the required readings. Occasionally, students will break into small group discussions to process important content. During several class sessions, time will also be devoted to working on the collaborative team research project. The last session will be a poster display session where the collaborative research teams present their findings.
COURSE MATERIALS
Required readings and other key materials are on electronic reserve. These can be accessed from the KSU Library home page by using the password aging12. All readings on the course outline are mandatory and must be reviewed by students prior to the given class session they are listed for to facilitate success on weekly quizzes (see below) and lively class discussions. Comprehensive guidelines for all class requirements will be provided on Flashline.

GRADING PROCEDURES and POLICY (Undergraduate only)
1. There will be 14 scheduled quizzes worth 10 points each (grand total = 100 points). The student’s lowest four quizzes (including missed quizzes) will be dropped from the overall total. Quizzes will cover both the material presented in the prior week’s class, as well as the material from the present week’s readings. Quizzes will not be cumulative in the content areas tested. Items on each quiz will be of an objective format (e.g. true false; multiple choice; matching).

2. There will be an optional final exam that will allow students who are unsatisfied with their quiz score total to substitute a final exam score instead in the calculation of their final grade. The optional final exam will (a) be worth 100 points; (b) occur on the regularly scheduled final exam date and time; (c) cover cumulative course content from the entire semester; and (d) be comprised of true-false; matching; multiple choice; and short essay type questions. There is no risk in taking the final exam.

Either 1 or 2 will automatically be worth 50% of each student’s final grade, depending on which ends up being the higher value.

3. Each student will also be required to complete structured interviews with at least 3 older adults of different ages and enter the resulting data into a computer file established by the instructor (see separate instructions). Each student will write a 10 page reflection paper based on their experiences with conducting the required interviews (see separate instructions). Papers will be scored on a range from 0 to 100 points and calculated as 25% of the total grade.

4. Each student will be assigned to a collaborative research team that will be responsible for analyzing and interpreting a specific portion of the interview findings and presenting their findings as a poster display at the last scheduled class session (see separate instructions). Each group will then receive a total score (based on both peer and instructor ratings) for its poster display that can range from 0 to 100 points. In turn, this score will be calculated as 15% of each student’s total grade.

5. Each Student will be rated by their peers regarding their contribution to collaborative team research project. Teammates will anonymously rate each other on critical dimensions of completing the assignment with total scores ranging from 0 to 100 points. This will comprise 10% of each student’s final grade.

Note. THERE WILL BE NO EXTRA CREDIT MECHANISMS IN THIS COURSE.

In summary, Final Grades will be calculated as follows:

Highest of quiz total or final exam X .50 = 50% of Final Grade
Total points on reflection paper X .25 = 25% of Final Grade
Total points for group poster X .15 = 15% of Final Grade
Total points for team contribution X .10 = 10% of Final Grade

Grand Total = 100%
Point Distribution for Assigning Final Grade:

- A = 90 - 100 pts
- B = 80 - 89 pts
- C = 70 - 79 pts
- D = 65 - 69 pts
- F = < 65 pts

ATTENDANCE POLICY
Class attendance is not mandatory per se. However, a huge component of the final grade is based on the material covered in class and the corresponding weekly quizzes. Also, ongoing tips by the instructor for successful comprehension of material and tips related to assignments are given during class periods. Infrequent attendance is generally associated with poor grades. Students are also expected to have read assigned materials prior to each class meeting to benefit the most from in class discussions.

Students who are absent (or late) for any regularly scheduled quiz will not be permitted to reschedule that quiz without a legitimate excuse in writing from a valid source. Otherwise, the student will receive a score of 0 for each quiz that is missed.

POLICY REGARDING STUDENTS with DISABILITIES
University policy 3342-3-18 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these through Student Disability Services (contact 330-672-3391 or visit www.kent.edu/sds for more information on registration procedures).

POLICY REGARDING ACADEMIC DISHONESTY
University policy 3-01.8 deals with the problem of academic dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism. None of these will be tolerated in this class. The sanctions provided in this policy will be used to deal with any violations. If you have any questions, please read the policy at http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/policydetails.cfm?customel_datapageid_1976529=2037779 and/or ask the instructor.

INFORMATION REGARDING DROP/ADD and WITHDRAWL DATES

* The last day to Drop/Add a course is September 9, 2012
* The last day to withdraw from a course (with a “W”) is November 4, 2012

POLICY REGARDING SWITCHING TEAM MEMBERSHIP
Students will be assigned to a particular research team by the instructor. However, students can present a written request for assignment to a different team. This request must be received by September 11, 2012 and must contain a clear and sensible rationale for switching to a different team (e.g., the content covered on the requested team better fits the student’s academic interests and/or career goals).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS for GRADUATE STUDENTS

Individuals enrolled as graduate students will meet with the instructor to develop an individual written learning contract that will specify course requirements and grading procedures.
# COURSE OUTLINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic &amp; Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 28</td>
<td>Introductions &amp; Course Overview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 4</td>
<td>Overview of the Psychology of Aging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>1. APA - Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Older Adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>2. APA – Careers in Aging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>3. APA – Geropsychology - It’s Your Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Basic Principles of Lifespan Developmental Psychology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COGNITIVE PROCESSES**

| 18         | Intellectual Change and Aging                       |
|           | [Team Interview Questions due]                       |
| 25         | Normal Age-Related Changes in Memory                 |
| October 2  | What are the Consequences of Normal Cognitive Aging? |
| Reading    | 8. Salthouse, T. (2012). Consequences of Age-Related Cognitive Declines |
| 9          | Age-Related Cognitive Impairments                   |

**PERSONALITY & SELF REGULATORY PROCESSES**

| 16         | Does Aging Affect Personality or Does Personality Affect Aging? |
|           | [Team Interviews Due]                                    |
October 23 **Self (Emotional/Developmental) Regulation in Later Life**


**MENTAL HEALTH & HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY**

30 **Psychological Disorders in Later Life**


November 6 **Resilience and Aging**


13 **Health Psychology with Older Populations**


**SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY**

20 **Social Relationships in Adulthood**


27 **Environmental Psychology and Aging**


December **4 STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**

[Individual Reflection Papers Due]
[Team Poster Presentation Due]
Course Readings


Reading 3: American Psychological Association (no date). Geropsychology – It’s your future.


