PSYC 6124—PSYCHOLOGY OF AGING

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Office Hours: Almost anytime by appointment or drop by my office or Mon. before or after class.

Text: There is no required text for this class. Each week, toward the end of class, we will discuss many of the readings for that week’s topic(s). You are expected to have read these articles and, over the course of the semester, to present at least two of them for discussion.

<table>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 24</td>
<td>General Introduction, Demographics and Methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 31</td>
<td>Physiological changes with advanced age</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 7</td>
<td>LABOR DAY</td>
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| Sept. 14 | What Causes Aging and Can it be Stopped?
              | Theories of Senescence; Health and Longevity                         |
| Sept. 21 | Changes in Sensation and Perception; Slowing, Memory                  |
| Sept. 28 | Normal Changes in Cognition, Intelligence, Wisdom, & Creativity       |
| Oct. 5   | Levels of Personality: Change or Stability?                          |
| Oct. 12  | FALL BREAK                                                            |
| Oct. 19  | Social Relationships and Social Support                               |
| Oct. 26  | Pathology                                                             |
| Nov. 2   | Pathology                                                             |
| Nov. 9   | Death & Bereavement                                                  |
| Nov. 16  | Student Topic Presentation(s)                                         |
| Nov. 23  | Student Topic Presentation(s)                                         |
Nov. 30  Student Topic Presentation(s)

Dec. 7  Student Topic Presentation(s)

TBA  A Celebration of Aging

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Requirements:

1.  **Major Paper.** Each student must write a major review OR a research proposal of one area/topic in the Psychology of Aging. These papers must be written in APA style. Do not use quotations in your paper. This paper is worth 100 points and is due Dec. 7.

   (A) A review paper should summarize the recent work (at least 14 journal articles) in an area, draw conclusions, and suggest future direction(s) for research. This paper must show your own thought on your selected topic. It must not be just a summary of the work of others; it must show that you’ve carefully thought about the topic and have new ideas to offer.

   (B) A research proposal should summarize the recent research (at least 8 journal articles) on some topic and include your own hypothesis (es), and a detailed description of methods you would use to test your hypothesis (es).

You **must** discuss your area/topic with me by Oct. 5 and select a date for your presentation/discussion. Topics will go to those who choose them first; if a topic is already taken, you may have to select a different topic.

2.  **Presentation.** Each student must present the topic they have selected for their paper to the entire class. Do not expect to present your entire paper; focus on some important aspect of your topic. Strive to make your 30-40 minute presentation interesting and informative. Try to generate a good discussion. (50 pts)

3.  **Two Short Reaction Papers.** For the topics presented by the professor and discussed in class, you are expected to write a short reaction paper (3-5 pages) that goes beyond the material presented in class by suggesting an alternative view, applying the information to a topic/event in your experience, reading some additional article(s) on the topic and summarizing this outside reading, or suggesting a next step in a line of research. *Each of these reaction papers are due the week after the topic you are reacting to was presented in class.* Papers that are more than a week late will not be accepted. These papers are expected to show your reaction to and thought about a particular topic and **not summarize** what went on in class (20 pts each; 40 pts).

4.  **Article Summary/Critique.** On two occasions, you are expected to briefly summarize and/or critique one of the articles on the reading list during the second half of one of the classes. The first half of each class will involve presentations of material
by the professor and the second half will involve 2-4 of these summary/critiques. You should select the articles that you wish to critique asap (20 pts each; 40 pts)

5. **Participation.** You are expected to be an active participant in class. Graduate students are expected to be active and involved and to contribute meaningfully to class. Don’t be shy. You are interested in Gerontology so jump right in. You’re a bright person, you have a lot of knowledge, and we all want to hear what you have to say.

6. **Attendance.** You are allowed one free absence. If you must miss a second class and you have a documented reason, then you are expected to inform the professor ahead of time and to write a summary (3-5 pages) of the material presented in that class. This summary must be handed in no later than 2 weeks following the class you missed. If you must miss a class and do not have a documented excuse or fail to hand in a summary of the class you missed, you will lose one letter grade.

### READING LISTS

The following are selected Readings for PSYC 6124. For the most part, they add to the information presented in lecture. You are expected to read some of the selections for every class. Reading is very important. You are expected to give a summary/critique of two or three of these articles over the course of the semester.

Your Topic Area in the Psychology of Aging should build on and go beyond the material presented and discussed in class. The following readings should help you begin to do that for each of the presented topics.

1. **Physiological Changes, Health, and Longevity**


2. Cognition


3. **Personality and Adjustment**


4. Relationships


5. **Psychopathology**


6. **Death and Bereavement**


