COURSE SYLLABUS
SALEM STATE COLLEGE
PSY 322 - S1 Adulthood and Old Age
Thursdays 4:30-6:50

'Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things
that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off
the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds
in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.”

Mark Twain, 1835-1910

Office Hours: Before and after class; appointments arranged as needed
Phone: 978-741-7878 x20 (off campus voice mail)
Email: pbschmidt@earthlink.net
FAX: 978-741-8383

SSC Catalog: The development of the human being beyond adolescence into adulthood and old age. The impact of biological, psychological, and social factors upon the aging process is stressed.

Course Description: This is a dynamic 3 credit hour survey course. We will define and probe what aging means to the American psyche. Students will study many areas of adulthood including but not limited to developmental theories about young, middle and later adulthood, and issues concerning physical health, mental health, intimacy, creativity, and loss.

Methods: This class will be taught heuristically using lecture, discussion, and videos. Interaction is highly encouraged. Due to time constraints, I will not be able to cover all the material in each chapter of the textbook and in the supplemental readings. It will be up to you to complete a careful understanding of all assigned reading material. Lectures will relate theoretical information to real life application. I encourage your active participation, questions, and comments.

Course Goals: 1. Learn principles and theories of adult development.
2. Gain factual knowledge about life span development and aging
3. Relate theoretical information to real life application.
Requirements: The course requirements consist of completion:
1. Mid Term Examination
2. Final Examination
3. Three critical thinking assignments

Grading: Mid Term Exam and Final Exam 50%
Three Critical Thinking Assignments 50%
100%

Weather: Classes may be cancelled due to inclement weather.
Please call 978.542.6000 to check on class cancellation.
In the event of a school cancellation due to inclement weather,
an exam scheduled for that day will be given at the next class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Reading Assignments: With the exception of the first day of class, assigned readings from the text, articles, and Annual Editions are to be completed before each class so that there are opportunities to discuss the material and gain deeper understanding of the text. Students will work in small groups to summarize assigned articles for class discussion.

2. Examinations:
Mid Term Exam & Final Exam are constructed in a multiple choice and short essay format.
Exam Study Guides will be provided in advance of each exam.
Each examination is valued at 25% of the course grade. Exam dates are:
March 11: Mid Term: Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 13; articles; video; and Annual Editions
May 6: Final Exam: Chapters 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12; articles; Annual Editions articles

In the event of a missed examination, students must contact me prior to the examination date. Examinations need to be made up before the next scheduled class. Make up examinations are constructed in an essay format.

3. Three Critical Thinking Assignments: Critical Thinking Assignments are designed to expand knowledge and bring interactive experiences into this process. Each critical thinking paper is designed to move you
beyond the textbook and examine a critical issue facing adults today. Critical Thinking Assignments are to be submitted on the due dates listed or be at risk for 50% grade deduction. If there are extenuating circumstances, students must contact me prior to the assignment due date.

The three critical thinking assignments are due:
February 26: Critical Thinking Assignment #1
March 25: Critical Thinking Assignment #2
April 22: Critical Thinking Assignment #3

Critical Thinking Assignment #1
How Our Society Perceives Aging

As the U.S. population grows ever older, the question of how our society perceives aging and its elders becomes more and more relevant. By 2030, the number of Americans age 65 and older will double, to make up 20 percent of the population. Yet the media are saturated with images of youth and advertisements for products that promise to counteract signs of age. Aging is often pathologized -- associated with loss of function, dementia, or death. Such views influence self-image and social relations as we age, changing expectations at work, at home, and within medical institutions.

Questions to consider:
What does it mean to age?
What are the implications of aging in a youth-driven culture?
What is agesim and how is it reflected in our culture?
How might aging be reimagined?

Critical Thinking Assignment #2
Is Aging a Disease?

In 1900, the average life span was 47 years old. Today, our life span has almost doubled in years. Does this mean that in another 100 years, our life span will double again? Is aging a disease that needs to be cured? Is it a fatal condition or can it be eradicated? What are our expectations of the anti-aging medicine of the not-so-distant future? Is human life, as our ancestors understood it and as our
faiths and our philosophies describe it, really just a problem to be solved? Is the finite life span a condition to be healed?

**Questions to consider:**
Is aging a disease?
Is aging a condition to be treated or cured?
Is the purpose of medicine to ameliorate disease (live painlessly) or to eradicate disease and increase longevity?
Is the purpose of medicine to make us perfect, or to make us whole?
Do people die of old age?
Should biotechnology be used to go beyond the treatment of the sick (i.e. cloning vital organs, stem cell research, age-retardation, etc)
What future advancements would double our lifespan?
Assuming extending the life span is possible but costly, who should have access to the technology?

Paper should integrate critical thinking and knowledge about the complexity of these issues. Be sure to document all reference sources through footnotes and bibliography in APA format (American Psychological Association. Use a minimum of 2 scientific journals for research. Paper is to be a typed 2-3 page essay.

**Critical Thinking Assignment #3**  
**Creativity and Aging**

We are all born imaginative, curious, creative. Do these qualities change during our lifespan? How does neurobiology affect these skills? Do we all have the potential for self-actualization? Does creativity, imagination, and multidimensional thinking increase or decrease with age? What does the research tell us about this?

Paper should integrate critical thinking and knowledge about creativity and life span development. Be sure to document all reference sources through footnotes and bibliography in APA format (American Psychological Association. Use a minimum of 2 scientific journals for research. Paper is to be a typed 2-3 page essay.

**READING ASSIGNMENTS**

January 22  
Chapter 1: ADULT DEVELOPMENT & AGING IN A CHANGING WORLD

January 29  
Chapter 3: LONGEVITY AND PHYSIOLOGICAL AGING  
Annual Editions: Great Expectations (pg. 7)  
The Centenarians Are Coming! (pg. 14)
February 5
Chapter 4: HEALTH AND BODY SYSTEMS
Annual Editions: We Can Control How We Age (pg. 56)
Fighting Back With Sweat (pg. 33)
Homework: Examine this website for next week’s class (www.daliagottlieb-tanaka.com)

February 12
Chapter 5: MEMORY
Annual Editions: The Disappearing Mind (pg. 112)
All In Your Head (pg. 37)

February 19
Chapter 7: MATURE THOUGHT, WISDOM, MORAL INTELLIGENCE
Annual Editions: Eradication of Ageism Requires Addressing the Enemy Within (pg. 65)

February 26
Chapter 13: DEALING WITH DEATH AND BEREAVEMENT
Annual Editions: Preventing Late Life Suicide: National Institutes of Health Initiatives (pg. 162)
Critical Thinking Assignment #1

March 4
Video: Eat, Drink, Man, and Woman

March 11
Mid Term Examination

March 18
SPRING RECESS

March 25
Chapter 8: EDUCATION, WORK, LEISURE AND RETIREMENT
Annual Editions: Work/Retirement Choices and Lifestyle Patterns of Older Americans (pg. 151)
Critical Thinking Assignment #2

April 1
Chapter 9: INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS AND LIFESTYLES
Annual Editions: Women’s Sexuality as They Age: The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same (pg. 28)
Take One Pet and call Me in the Morning, Journal of the American Society on Aging, Summer 2001, page 93
April 8
Chapter 6: INTELLIGENCE AND CREATIVITY
Critical Thinking Assignment #2

April 15
Chapter 11: PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT
Aging on Television: The Picture in the Nineties, Journal of the American Society on Aging, Fall 2001, page 34
Video: Surfing for Life

April 22
Chapter 10: MATURE KINSHIP TIES AND LIVING ARRANGEMENTS
Annual Editions: Want a Longer Life? Connect (pg. 59)
Critical Thinking Assignment #3

April 29
Chapter 12: MENTAL HEALTH, COPING, ADJUSTMENT TO AGING
Annual Editions: Men and Women Aging Differently (pg. 51)
Reversing the Normal Condition of Aging: A Plastic Surgeon Describes the Techniques,

May 6
Final Examination