University of Central Oklahoma  
Department of Sociology and Substance Abuse Studies  

Spring 2013  
SOC 4053/5053, CRNs 28069/28088 – Sociology of Aging  
12:00 p.m.-12:50 p.m.    MWF    LAR 138  

Syllabi

Instructor: Kathryn M. Williams  
Location: LA 138  
eMail: kwilliams1@uco.edu  
Office: LA 201B  
Office Hours: MWF-11 to 12, MW 1 to 2


Graduate students must choose two of the following for book reports, and/or 1 book (not Morrie) and 10 hour volunteer option.  
Albom, Mitch, Tuesdays with Morrie, Doubleday ISBN 0767905923 must be combined with 2 hours of volunteering at Mitch Center.

Course Description

This course is designed to acquaint students with the magnitude of the aging situation in America and to become informed about the social, psychological, economic and political problems associated with the increasing number of people reaching retirement age in America.

Students will examine an overview of the sociological aspects of aging and social gerontology. Each major area of human aging-health care, socioeconomic trends and the life course, will be studied from both the conceptual and controversial aspects. By combining textbook information with guest speakers, films and field trips, students will explore the nature and composition of the elderly populations in the United States today, along with various issues such as the solvency of Medicare/Social Security, rationing health care and should people be allowed to end their own lives.
Course Objective
1. Upon completion of this course, students should have a broad understanding of the aging process and how demographic changes and medical advances are impacting aging.
2. Current theories of aging, both biological and sociological will be examined.
3. Students will have gained specific topic information through the research and writing of an assigned paper or a volunteer experience.
4. Students are expected to use the knowledge gained in this course in their personal aging experience and those of family and friends.

Course Requirements
- There will be three (3) standard tests. Most will be combination essay and multiple choice.
- There are 2 group presentations; Health Care model and typical diseases of old age
- 1 field trip.
- Undergraduate students must be accepted and complete 10 hours of selected site volunteer (service learning) or
- Complete one book report from designated list. Note Tuesdays with Morrie has a 2 hr. volunteer requirement at Senior Center, Mitch Park

GRADUATE STUDENTS have the additional requirement of a second book report. Or one book report and to one volunteer project. If Tuesdays with Morrie is selected, an additional 2 hours of volunteer work is required.

- All papers prepared outside of class will be graded on syntax, spelling and grammar and must be typed in a standard, Times New Roman 12-point font., double spaced with 1 ¼ inch margins. ASA to be used by sociology majors, APA for psychology majors.
- Any Paper without a reference page or proper citations is unacceptable.
- Any student with five (5) to seven (7) absences shall have 4 points deducted from their final average for each additional class missed. Any one having seven (7) or more absences will receive an “F” for the course. The only excused absences are those from confirmed university sports/debate with both written and verbal confirmation of dates.
- Students who miss class are responsible for what took place in class. Make up exams may be scheduled with the professor, if the student has documentation validating the absence or on the last day of class. Only one exam may be made up at professor discretion per semester.
- Late papers will be penalized from 20 to 50% prior to grading. All grading decisions are based on the instructor’s judgment and facts concerning absences. Work/tests taken after the deadline will be graded when there is time.
• Class discussion is welcome. Student input is a vital part of the learning process, however, private conversations that interfere with others ability to hear will result in those students being counted as absent for the day.

• Students are expected to dress appropriately. Shirt and shoes required. Please do not bring children to class.

• Cell phones are to be silenced. You may keep the cell phone on the desk to check time, Central Alert or weather reports, etc, or to take an emergency call out of the room. (Such as being a single parent with sick child at home, family member in hospital, on-call for military duty, etc. Please notify professor in advance of possible phone call) **Students who text message during class will be counted absent. There is no late admittance for guest speakers.**

Any student with a documented disability that may require adjustments to maximize the learning opportunity is requested to contact the professor and Student Disability room 415, at 974-2549 during the first two weeks of class. Any accommodations will be made as needed. ADA Statement: The University of Central Oklahoma complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students with disabilities who need special accommodations should make their request by contacting the Coordinator of Disability Support Services at 974-2549.

Cheating, which includes, but is not limited to: representing another person’s work as your own, copying answers or using work used in other classes, will result in a zero for that assignment and reporting the incident to academic affairs for any actions they may wish to take.

If severe weather or national emergency should occur, call 974-2002 or go to UCOnect to find out if classes have been canceled.

Grading:
Undergrad- 90%-100% A  80-89% B  70-79% C  60-69% D
Graduate:  92%-100 A  82-91 B  72-81 C  62-71 D
Estimated points- may vary, so percentage given.

Available points:
Undergraduate
Exams:  3
**Health insurance group work**- 100 (50 pts. group grading of individual, 50 pts. 1-2 page paper of which health plan you would choose for your country and why.
**Group project** on medical models- 30 pt.  **Tour**- 15 pts.
**Option**- book report- 100 pts. @ or volunteer/book report= 100 pt.
Extra Credit: total of 20 pts.  events will be announced .5 pt for each positive aspect of aging in Basic Concepts 1- up to 5 pts. total

**Graduate students** are responsible for either 2 additional book reports or one book report 1 – 3 and volunteering 10 hours.
**Extra Credit**

Students may participate in any of these projects and receive extra credit points as noted. A 2-paragraph response to experience required within 1 week of attendance. No late extra credit work accepted. A **maximum of 20 points** may be earned throughout the semester.

- Guest Speakers to be announced
- Instead of taking a day off each year to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., UCO students spend the day doing service projects in the community. To get involved **MLK day at UCO**, contact the Volunteer Coordinator at (974-2621). – **12 points**
- Call a few weeks in advance!

**Volunteer Experience/ Paper on Tuesdays With Morrie**

Anyone selecting this option will be required participate in 2 hours of volunteer work which must be completed by April 14, 2011.

1 to 2 page paper: What was the most useful part of this experience for you and why? / Your personal response to the experience.

**Volunteer Experience:**

**Only site allowed for volunteering:**

Or

Use from below to verify completion of volunteer hours

Return to: Kathryn M. Williams
University of Central Oklahoma
Sociology/Substance Abuse
100 N. University,
Box 182, Edmond, Oklahoma 73034

This letter is to verify that __________________________________________ has selected the option to complete 10 hours of volunteer experience involving field work as a course requirement.

This student is responsible for “hands-on” interaction so that he/she may gain practical knowledge to compliment textbook information for the Sociology of Aging, University of Central Oklahoma.

It is requested that you return this form AFTER completion of 12 hours.

Site location:____________________________________________________
Name of person supervising work:__________________________________
phone #_____________________________________________________

**Book Reports**

Students may select this 100- point option. Papers over Heat Wave, A Different Shade of Gray or How We Die  should **6 to 10 pages in length, college quality.** (Morrie 2 to 3 pages and 2 hours volunteering)
There should be a brief summary of the book, a description of how the information could be applied to your studies/life and your reaction. **All papers MUST be referenced according to the ASA format** and all references must be listed according to ASA format in the body of the paper (see web-link). All citations must include page numbers. *May substitute APA if cleared with professor.*

ASA format ex:  [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/583/01/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/583/01/) also, book store has student writer manual

**Tuesdays with Morrie** 2 to 3 pages/combine with 2 hours of volunteer work
1. Synopsis of book
2. Close with your opinion of the book, what could be applied to your life, and would you recommend the book to others.
3. Briefly describe volunteer duties and your response

**How We Die**  (Good selection for Criminal Justice, medical field)
1. Synopsis of the book
2. Compare information in the text to theories of aging
3. Your reaction to James McCarty’s death, as a potential medical services provider (nurse, doctor), Horace Giddens’ death from a psychological/family dynamics perspective.
4. Respond to “Near Death Experiences” and the process of dying from a medical and spiritual/belief system perspective in Katie Mason’s death.
5. Close with your opinion of the book, and whether or not you would recommend it to others.

**Heat Wave**  (Good selection for Community Health)
2. Chapter 1 – Detail which groups of people are more likely to live in SRO’s (single room occupancy) and the correlation to the high concentrations of deaths.
3. Chapter 2- Compare and contrast the ethno-racial and ecological differences between North Lawnsdale and South Lawnsdale (Little Village) and how those differences created environments for victim and survivors of the heat wave. (How the deterioration of North Lawnsdale impacted senior citizens and made them more vulnerable to the heat wave.)
4. Chapter 3, Explain the author’s contention that “a systemic prioritization of cost containment over life preservation” (Klineberg pg. 134) and how disorganization such as, “The Fire Department’s refusal to meet it’s responsibilities… committing ‘Murder by public policy’” (ibid) created conditions for the high death rates.
5. Summarize conclusions.

**A Different Shade of Gray**  (Good selection for Sociology majors)
General Synopsis of book- Why is growing older more difficult for some groups of people?
What view is given of the present generation of lower SES people of color in contrast to their elders? (Work ethic, marriage/family, etc)
Chapter 2- discuss the various factors that affect whether one has adequate resources in retirement or no- cumulative advantage or disadvantage and how different racial/ethnic groups differ.

Explain what "shoot in the foot," mean from page 154?

"Race relations stuck in neutral" from page 164

What reasons are given for prejudice and discrimination among the various racial groups, particularly toward American-born African Americans?