

**SAULT COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY**

**SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO**



Sault College

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**COURSE TITLE:** Introduction to Gerontology – Quality of Life and Aging  
**CODE NO. :** GER126 **SEMESTER:** All  
**PROGRAM:** Social Services Worker  
**PROFESSOR** Judi Gough, MSW, RSW  
**DATE:** Sept/04 **PREVIOUS OUTLINE DATED:** Sept/03  
**APPROVED:**

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**DEAN**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

**TOTAL CREDITS:** 3

**PREREQUISITE(S):** None

**HOURS/WEEK:** 3

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**CLASS DATES:** September 9, 16, 23, 30, October 7, 14, 21, 28, November 4, 11, 18, 25, December 2, 9, 16

## **I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In this course, the factors that influence “quality” of life for the aged population will be explored. Since people are living longer, the quality of life as they age becomes more important. Most of our population will have many more leisure years out of the workforce than ever before and the use of recreational time assumes new importance. With a longer life expectancy, such factors as health, housing, transportation, finances, family and community support systems become important issues. We will examine these factors and others throughout this course.

## **II. LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will:

1. understand terms and concepts related to aging.
2. review demographic information related to the aged.
3. identify the factors that influence the quality of life for the aged in our society: family support systems, work, retirement, finances, leisure, housing, health, loss, and end of life experiences.
4. understand the way in which these factors influence the aging process and quality of life for the aging person and their families.
5. understand the interplay among these factors and develop skills to address barriers to successful aging.
6. develop critical thinking skills that challenge racism, sexism and ageism, and the myths and stereotypes of aging.
7. explore social problems that impact on the quality of lives of the elderly: victimization, addictions, poverty, isolation, etc.
8. gain a foundation for social service practice with a diverse population of elders that addresses social justice issues, and the importance of family, friends, and community supports.
9. apply the OCSWSSW Code of Ethics to issues that impact the lives of the elderly.

## **III. REQUIRED RESOURCES**

Novak, Mark & Campbell, L. 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. (2001). *Aging and Society: A Canadian Perspective*. Scarborough: Nelson Thomson Learning.

Other readings will be assigned throughout the course, or may be noted on the course outline within each class date. Supplementary assigned readings will be available either through the college's databases, or at the library reserve desk.

## **IV. METHODOLOGY**

The course will include lecture, class discussion, guest speakers as appropriate and available, audiovisual resources, and class presentations. Students will be expected to actively contribute to, and participate in, each class. Participation marks will be awarded based on the attached Participation and Professional Development Outline.

The provisions of the “Social Service Worker Program Policies” will apply at all times in this course, especially in regards to confidentiality.

V. CLASS OUTLINE

Date	Topic	Assigned reading: Text	Assigned reading: supplementary * available in library	Assignment due dates
Weeks 1, 2 September 9/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions, review of course outline, critical thinking skills, introduction to gerontology</li> <li>• Current demographic trends related to aging in Canada</li> <li>• Myths and Stereotypes of aging</li> <li>• Aging process: theories of aging</li> </ul>	Assigned reading: Chapters 1 and 4		Reflective Paper: Myself at 75 September 16 : (5%)  Visit the website of the Canadian Association on Gerontology: <a href="http://www.cagacg.ca">http://www.cagacg.ca</a> Go to "links", 'Ontario Gerontology Association', 'Aging Quiz. Bring the test and if possible, a copy of your test results, to the September 16 <sup>th</sup> class.
Weeks 3, 4 September 23/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective practice and Strengths based practice with elderly clients</li> <li>• Biopsychosocial approach to assessment and intervention</li> <li>• Video: You Won't Need Running Shoes, Darling. (NFB)</li> </ul>	Chapter 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assigned reading: *Chapter 4: Conducting a biopsychosocial assessment, in McInnis-Dittrich, K. (2005). <i>Social Work with Elders: A Biopsychosocial approach to assessment and intervention</i>. Pearson Education, Inc.</li> </ul>	Visit the website of the Canadian Association on Gerontology: <a href="http://www.cagacg.ca">http://www.cagacg.ca</a> Go to "links" and explore: 'Student Connection Web Site". Find out what careers and other educational opportunities exist for students of gerontology. Go to 'Related Links' to view other important site which will be of interest/use.
Week 5 : October 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aging process: health and illness</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assigned reading: Chapter 5, *Desselle, D. &amp; Proctor, T. (2000). <i>Advocating for the elderly hard-of-hearing: The deaf people we ignore</i>. <i>Social Work</i>, 45,(3), 277-232.</li> </ul>	

Date	Topic	Assigned reading: Text	Assigned reading: supplementary * available in library	Assignment due dates
Weeks 6 and 7: October 14/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aging process: the psychosocial aspects of aging</li> <li>• Mental health: issues and assessment tools</li> <li>• Guest Speaker (if available)</li> </ul>	Chapters 6 and 7		October 14: Quiz #1 (15%)  Visit websites: <a href="http://www.mooodisorderscanada.ca/depression/elderly">http://www.mooodisorderscanada.ca/depression/elderly</a> <a href="http://www.alzheimer.ca">http://www.alzheimer.ca</a>
Weeks 8 and 9: October 28/November 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family life and social relations</li> </ul>	Chapter 13		Interview due: November 4  (25%)
Week 10: November 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leisure and recreation</li> </ul>	Chapter 12		
Week 11: November 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elder Abuse</li> </ul>		Bergeron, L.R.& Gray,B. (2003). <i>Ethical Dilemmas of reporting suspected elder abuse</i> . <i>Social Work</i> , 48,(1), 96-106	Case Study (20%)
Week 12: November 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social problems and elderly populations</li> <li>• addictions in the elderly populations, (gambling and substance abuse)</li> <li>• poverty and the elderly</li> <li>• homelessness</li> </ul>			

Date	Topic	Assigned reading: Text	Assigned reading: supplementary * available in library	Assignment due dates
Week 13: December 2	Finances and Economics	Chapters 9, 10		Quiz (15%)
Week 14: December 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Coping with loss, grief, death and dying</li></ul>	Chapter 14	Poulin, J. & Walter, C. (1993). <i>Burnout in gerontological social work</i> . <i>Social Work</i> , 38, (3), 305-310	Reflective paper: Myself at 75 revisited (10%)
Week 15: December 16	Summary of course and application to the role of social services workers  Final exam			

## VI. EVALUATION PROCESS/GRADING SYSTEM

A variety of assignments as well as attendance will be used to evaluate student achievement of the course objectives

### ASSIGNMENTS

(1) Reflective paper: "Myself at 75". You are seventy-five years of age. Write about where you are living, how long you have lived there, and with whom you are living. Describe your family and the contact you have with them. Describe your friends and the contact you have with them. What is your amount and source of income, and savings, if any? Describe your health status. Identify your personal characteristics, such as gender, race and ethnic background, economic class, and sexual orientation and explain how have these characteristics impacted your life of seventy-five years? As you reflect on your life, what are you proudest of, and what are your biggest regrets?

Length: minimum of 3 pages, maximum of 5. Typed, double spaced, 12 font, 1" margins.

Value: 5%

Due: September 16<sup>th</sup>

(2) Documented Interview: Life Course and Strengths Assessment Interview.

In this assignment, you will interview a person at least 65 years of age with whom you are familiar. This will be an in-depth interview and you should plan on at least two to three hours of conversation over one or two visits with the person. Be sure to be sensitive to the fact that talking about many of these issues may create feelings in the person you are interviewing. You will need to use your skills to acknowledge those feelings and to allow time for them to express those feelings. **Be sure that you have left enough time to allow the person you are interviewing to talk at their own pace.**

You will record the person's life story by learning information about:

1. Date and place of birth, ethnicity, culture, early childhood experiences, siblings.
2. School years and experiences, education, impact of their education (or lack of).
3. Work: what type(s) of work did they have, did they experience unemployment, how did they cope with the period(s) of unemployment?
4. Family years: Important events and persons: ie., marriage, births of children, separations, divorce, etc. Who do they consider 'family'? Friends? Who are these persons (ages, names, gender, etc.)? What do they say about the value of family and friends?
5. Retirement years, experiences, and if the actual experience differed from the expectations they might have had as a younger person.
6. Current life experience: what makes a good day, is there some kind of activity that causes them to lose track of time and get totally absorbed? What creates the greatest challenges for them? What wouldn't they change about their life today? What might they change, if they could?
7. What is their current state of health? Do they have any chronic health problems, and how do they cope with the illness(es)?
8. What kind of service do they perform for others? What service do others perform for them?

## ASSIGNMENTS

9. What are their most effective coping strategies that they use from day to day?
10. Who are the most important people in their life now? What is important about those relationships?
11. What are the most important things (actual items) they have in your life, and why?
12. What are the greatest limitations or losses in their life? How have they coped with the loss?
13. What are their greatest strengths and abilities, and how have these influenced your life?
14. How do they define 'wisdom'?

Include at least one page on how the person impressed you, the student. What did they share that had the most impact on you? How will this information be useful to you as you mature?

If you have the individual's permission, you may want to tape the interview so that you can recall all of the information shared, rather than have to write the entire time that you are with them.

Format and Length of paper: Minimum of 6 and maximum of 10 typed pages. Double-spaced, 12 font. 1" margins. Cover sheet not included in count. Do not provide the actual name of the person, or the actual names of their family members and friends in order to maintain confidentiality. Write the paper using the questions as headings.

Value: 25 % of total mark  
Due: November 4

(3) Case Study: Details to be provided in class.

Length: 8-10 pages, double spaced, 12 font, 1" margins, APA style used for writing and documenting references.

Value: 20%  
Due: November 18

(4) Reflective paper: "Myself at 75 Revisited": Review your first paper, Myself at Seventy-five. How has the information explored during this course change your perception of you at the age of 75 as projected in the first paper? In what ways will the information be useful to you personally?  
Length of paper: Minimum of three pages, maximum of five, double spaced, 12 font, 1" margins.

Value: 10%  
Due: December 9<sup>th</sup>

(5) Quizzes: There will be two quizzes throughout the course based on the material covered in the text and classes. The quiz dates will be October 14 and December 2. Value: 15% each for a total of 30% of the grade.

(5) Participation: Worth 10% of final grade, and will be determined based on the criteria set out in the 'Participation and Professional Development Guidelines'.

The following semester grades will be assigned to students in post-secondary courses:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Grade Point Equivalent</u>
A+	90 - 100%	4.00
A	80 - 89%	3.75
B	70 - 79%	3.00
C	60 - 69%	2.00
F (Fail)	59% and below	0.00
CR (Credit)	Credit for diploma requirements has been awarded.	
S	Satisfactory achievement in field /clinical placement or non-graded subject area.	
U	Unsatisfactory achievement in field/clinical placement or non-graded subject area.	
X	A temporary grade limited to situations with extenuating circumstances giving a student additional time to complete the requirements for a course.	
NR	Grade not reported to Registrar's office.	
W	Student has withdrawn from the course without academic penalty.	

**VII. SPECIAL NOTES**

Special Needs:

If you are a student with special needs (e.g. physical limitations, visual impairments, hearing impairments, or learning disabilities), you are encouraged to discuss required accommodations with your instructor and/or the Special Needs office so that support services can be arranged for you.

Retention of course outlines:

It is the responsibility of the student to retain all course outlines for possible future use in acquiring advanced standing at other post-secondary institutions.

Class Etiquette:

- Respect the person who is talking by listening to them without interruption.
- Beverages allowed. Preference that eating occur during break periods.
- No cell phones in class.
- Promptness at the beginning of class and when returning from breaks will allow class to start and stop on time.

Plagiarism:

Students should refer to the definition of “academic dishonesty” in *Student Rights and Responsibilities*. Students who engage in “academic dishonesty” will receive an automatic failure for that submission and/or such other penalty, up to and including expulsion from the course/program, as may be decided by the professor/dean. In order to protect students from inadvertent plagiarism, to protect the copyright of the material referenced, and to credit the author of the material, it is the policy of the department to employ a documentation format for referencing source material.

Course outline amendments:

The professor reserves the right to change the information contained in this course outline depending on the needs of the class/learner and the availability of resources.

Substitute course information is available in the Registrar's office.

**VIII. PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT**

Students who wish to apply for advanced credit in the course should consult the professor. Credit for prior learning will be given upon successful completion of a challenge exam or portfolio.

**IX. DIRECT CREDIT TRANSFERS**

Students who wish to apply for direct credit transfer (advanced standing) should obtain a direct credit transfer form from the Dean's secretary. Students will be required to provide a transcript and course outline related to the course in question.

## CLASS PARTICIPATION & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

### ALL EXPECTATIONS MET 10 points

- Demonstrates excellent preparation for class: has read assigned material and references this in class
- Analyzes and applies readings to other course material and personal/professional experience
- Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussions, keeps analysis focused responds thoughtfully and respectfully to other students' comments
- Takes the risk of verbalizing questions, concerns, disagreements
- Demonstrates consistent, active, on-going involvement in all aspects of the course
- Demonstrates good level of self-understanding and commitment to personal and professional development

### MOST EXPECTATIONS MET 8-9 points

- Demonstrates good preparation for class, knows some of the material
- Is prepared with questions and insights from course material
- Contributes regularly to ongoing discussions, generates discussion with questions or insights, responds thoughtfully and respectfully to others' comments
- Takes responsibility for asking questions/seeking clarification
- Demonstrates consistent involvement in most aspects of course
- Demonstrates adequate level of self-understanding and commitment to personal and professional development

### SOME EXPECTATIONS MET, SOME CONCERNS NOTED 6-7 points

- Demonstrates adequate preparation, knows basic material
- Appears interested in content of course material
- Initiates and contributes occasionally to class to class discussions, usually respectful of others' opinions and views,
- Usually takes responsibility for asking questions/seeking clarification
- Demonstrates involvement in some aspects of the course
- Demonstrates a low level of self-understanding and may lack commitment to personal and professional development
- Occasionally disruptive, (involved in side discussions and reading other material during class etc.)

### FEW EXPECTATIONS MET, SERIOUS CONCERNS NOTED 0-5 points

- Demonstrates minimal preparation, lack of knowledge of material
- Body language has given the impression of disinterest in content of class
- Participates usually only when called on
- Can be disrespectful of others opinions, can display tendency to dominate discussions or intimidate in ways that may discourage others from participating
- Does not take responsibility for asking questions/seeking clarification, and/or projects blame on others
- Demonstrates minimal involvement in most aspects of the course
- Demonstrates a noticeable lack of self-understanding and lack of commitment to personal and professional development
- Is disruptive (frequent side discussions, reading other materials during class, etc.)