

University of North Texas  
Department of Sociology and Applied Gerontology  
Course Syllabus

**AGER 4550.001 CRN 23114**  
**Sociology of Aging**  
**Tu/Th 12:30 – 1:50**  
**Chilton Hall Room 270**

FACULTY INFORMATION:

**Faculty Name:** K. Whisnant Turner, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of Applied Gerontology  
Phone: 940-390-1619 (Cell)  
Email: [Keith.Turner@UNT.edu](mailto:Keith.Turner@UNT.edu)  
Office: 302G Chilton Hall

Contacts

If you have any questions or concerns about the course, please email me or call me directly at 940-390-1619 and leave a voice mail message including the number where you can be reached.

I usually return calls the same business day that they are received, but please allow 24 hours for a return call. If for some reason you have not received a return call within a day, please send me an email message at [Keith.Turner@UNT.edu](mailto:Keith.Turner@UNT.edu); please leave a detailed message including your cell phone number. I routinely check my email and phone messages.

**Short Bio:** Dr. Turner is Associate Professor of Applied Gerontology at the University of North Texas. He received the Interdisciplinary Doctoral Degree from the University of Cincinnati in Geriatrics, Health Policy/Administration, and Urban Planning. His current research addresses developing and evaluating community level programs and services for the aged, disabled, and populations with special healthcare needs. He instructs undergraduate and graduate students in a variety of professional practice courses including mediation, grant proposal writing, community needs assessment, program planning and evaluation. He directs field internship placement for undergraduate and graduate students in Applied Gerontology. Dr. Turner also provides volunteer leadership assistance to local community organizations including the Denton County Geriatric Services Workgroup, the North Central Texas Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging, the Denton County MH/MR Authority, and the Denton County Health Department.



For kicks, Dr. Turner conducts non-profit agency board leadership training and provides strategic planning technical assistance to non-profit agency boards of directors and designs dispute resolution systems and is a professionally trained mediator in interpersonal and organizational conflicts.

**Course Information:**

**Course Dates:** Fall August 26, 2010 – December 17, 2010

**Course Location/Time:** Chilton 270 Tuesday/Thursday 12:30PM – 1:50PM

**Course Catalogue Description:** (From 2010-2011 Undergraduate Course Catalogue) 3 hours. Twenty-somethings, generation Xers, baby boomers—all will be senior citizens sooner or later. Their sex, race/ethnicity and social class will affect their experience of aging. Course explores issues related to successful aging, including what young adults should be doing now to ensure that they have happy, healthy, wealthy and creative golden years. Prerequisite(s): SOCI 1510 or equivalent. (Same as SOCI 4550.)

**Required Text:** Harry R. Moody. *Aging Concepts & Controversies*; California: Pine Forge Press. (2006) ISBN 9781412915205.

**Reference Text:** American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (5<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Washington DC.

**Learning Outcomes:**

This course is designed to provide students an introduction to social forces impacting upon the elderly and their families. Students will learn how demographic, social, economic, political, environmental, and organizational factors have an impact upon the society's readiness to respond to an increasingly aging population. Objective data are provided to illustrate the differential and combined impacts of gender, age, ethnicity, and race with respect to health status, work+income+benefits disparities, retirement opportunities and other quality of life issues. Special emphasis is given to the social and economic support needs of women who, throughout adulthood, often make bold sacrifices to fill care providing roles to their children and to increasingly complex parental structures. Because women outlive men in later life, they experience greater frailties and dependencies.

Therefore, other issues addressed include public policies pertaining to the special needs of older women and their consequent risk exposures to isolation and inadequate access to housing, health care, social services, and other transitional needs as they age in urban, suburban, exurban, and rural venues. Social approaches to community development and inclusion (such as recognition, affirmation, validation, empowerment, and collaboration) are introduced as alternative methods to plan for the pending diversity of aging populations. Advocacy approaches to unmet needs include valuation, stakeholder analysis, and constituency formation.

The required textbook provides a unique overview of aging concepts and controversies. Classroom lectures address research, social policy, aging processes and their differential impacts. Lectures are designed to highlight specific aging issues and facts and present challenging viewpoints for consideration. Videos are presented to help illustrate and amplify some of the major issues involved in aging and their consequences to the elderly and their families. Internet resources are identified to direct students to some of the organizational, political, and social resources in aging practice.

### **Grading Criteria:**

- (10 pts) **Participation:** Students must attend all scheduled class meetings, complete all assigned reading materials prior to class, and actively participate in class discussions based upon assigned readings.
- (10 pts) **Article Review:** Students will prepare one (1) journal article review, make a 5 minute oral presentation of the article review, and submit a typed one page summary for that article review and a hard copy for the article.
- (30 pts) **Term Paper:** Students will prepare and submit one (1) typed term paper drawing upon internet searches (related to an instructor-approved aging issue of particular sociological interest) and will present a 5 minute oral abstract of the paper
- (50 pts) **Final Exam:** Students will complete a final examination (T/F and/or M/C) drawing upon assigned readings, the textbook, lectures, videos, and other course content

### **Grading Scale:**

A 90-100 pts

B 80-89 pts

C 70-79 pts

D 60-69 pts

F ≤ 60 pts

WF Failure to attend class sessions.

**Attendance Policy:** (From 2010-2011 Undergraduate Course Catalogue) “Regular and punctual class attendance is expected. Although in general students are graded on intellectual effort and performance rather than attendance, absences may lower the student’s grade where class attendance and class participation are deemed essential by the faculty member. In those classes where attendance is considered part of the grade, the instructor should so inform students at the semester’s beginning by a written notice.” See *Enrollment* section of the 2010-2011 Undergraduate Course Catalogue for entire policy.

**Academic Integrity:** Cheating and plagiarism are serious matters. The usual penalties for these offenses include failure for the assignment, failure in the course, and a written report to the Dean of Students. Plagiarism is the act of taking the ideas and/or words of others and presenting them

as your own. If you are uncertain how to cite your sources, please contact the course instructor for assistance.

**Americans with Disabilities Act Policy:** It is the policy of your instructor to comply fully with the American with Disabilities Act and to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written request for accommodation at the start of the semester.

**Syllabus Not A Contract:** The University attorney advises faculty members to notify students that the syllabus is not a contract and is therefore subject to change. We will try to adhere to the schedule provided, but it is important to note that changes may be necessary to meet unforeseen needs and events.

**Diversity Statement:** The Department of Sociology and Applied Gerontology at the University of North Texas prepares students to serve populations with diverse socioeconomic and educational experiences. The academic curriculum is designed to provide an environment in which students can develop the skills and attitudes essential to working with people from a wide range of backgrounds.

**Assignment Submission Instructions:** The final examination is due and must be submitted along with all other assignments on the last class meeting date (December 9, 2010). Exams and assignments submitted after the last class meeting date will result in up to one grade level penalty for each 24 hours late. Any exceptions would be at the discretion of the instructor and would require documentation of a severe emergency. Also to be submitted along with the exam on the last class meeting date are the written article review plus hard copy for the article reviewed as well as the written term paper assignment.

**Presentation:** Article review and term paper presentations must be in MS PowerPoint. Presentations must be between 5 and 8 minutes in length.

**Article Review:** Choose a theme from the textbook or from lectures. Select 1 article of your choice based upon that theme from a peer reviewed journal. Get instructor approval of that article. When presenting the article review in PowerPoint and in writing, please include a complete APA style reference for the article. To receive credit for the article review, it must be presented orally in class on a specified date. The article review should clearly indicate the following:

- A. General awareness.
  - a. Who are the authors
  - b. What is the title for their work
  - c. Identified issues, problems, or concerns
  - d. To who are these matters important
  - e. Proposals or recommendations offered
  - f. Implications for proposals or recommendations if followed
- B. Critical understanding.
  - a. What did the authors fail to consider
  - b. What are some alternative proposals or recommendations

- C. Advanced reasoning.
- a. Taking all this into account, what actions are now called for
  - b. Who should benefit from such actions if taken
  - c. Who should be held accountable for taking such actions

**Participation:** To gain class participation points students must engage themselves in open discussions, be punctual and be present when attendance is taken. Respect will be shown to the instructor and other students at all times, especially during lectures and presentations. It is important to share in the responsibility for educating yourself and fellow students through the quality of your research and presentations.

**Advising:** Students seeking advisement or consultation should meet with the instructor after class to schedule an office appointment. Requests for appointments also can be made by phone or email.

### **PARTIAL LISTING OF COURSE AGENDA:**

**Please note that special topics are covered through lectures, videos, and data analyses. Where feasible, these topics make special use of data with reference to age, gender, race, and other sociological variables. Videos are presented on Thursdays and must be viewed by all enrolled in the course. Should you miss a video, you may view it privately in the media library in Chilton Hall.**

**August 26<sup>th</sup> – Week 1**

*Course orientation: overview of textbooks, assignments and due dates, other requirements*

**August 31<sup>st</sup> – Week 2**

*Lecture #1 DEMOGRAPHY OF AGING [Age, Gender, Race, Ethnicity]*

**September 2**

**(57 min.) The granny myth MV 3752 1995**

[videorecording] / KCTS Television ; producer, **Leila Gorbman**. Covers issue of importance to older people and a society which must accept their increasing numbers, including job discrimination, health care, retirement, etc. Introduces viewers to a variety of smart, busy, and powerful older women. National Media Owl Award Winner.

**September 7 – Week 3**

*Lecture #2 DIVERSITY ISSUES [Family Structures, Co-Residence, Lifestyles]*

**September 9 (57 min.) How the body ages MV 2355 v.2 1993**

[videorecording] / produced by the University of Hawaii, Center on Aging ; executive producer & project director, **Anthony Lenzer** ; director, **Jay Curlee** This program describes the changes in appearance and organ function that accompanies aging and how other changes can be prevented.

**September 14 – Week 4**

*Lecture #3 HEALTH STATUS ISSUES [Geriatric Assessment, Morbidity, Mortality, Longevity]*

**September 16 (56 min.) Advance directives MV 3932 v. 1 1996**

[videorecording] : assisting patients with end of life decisions / Mosby ; a production of the Naples Studio. A training package that integrates staff and patient education on the subject of pre-planning and/or making end-of-life decisions.

#### September 21 – Week 5

**Lecture #4 CAREGIVING ISSUES [Functional Limitations, Disability, Dependency]**

**September 23 (25 min.) Show two videos: Caring for the Caregiver MV 8915 2003**

[videorecording] / Wiland Bell Productions ; directed by Harry Wiland & Dale Bell ; produced, written, edited & narrated by Beverly Baroff. "Without scheduled respite, caregivers run the risk of burnout, exhaustion or other stress-related illness, thus endangering the very person they are caring for. Caregiver support groups, retreats, adult day care and anger management groups are just some of the tools that enable caregivers to cope. This video covers a variety of respite scenarios and explores safeguarding the well-being of caregivers."

#### September 28 – Week 6

**Lecture #5 FAMILY STRUCTURES & SOCIAL SUPPORT [Assessing Support Networks]**

**September 30 (25 min.) Elder abuse interventions MV 7521 2000**

[videorecording] : the social worker's role. Highlights some of the risk factors leading to elder abuse, with emphasis placed on the intervention phase; discusses legalities and ethics surrounding elder abuse, the role of Adult Protective Services, and options available for treatment and further prevention

#### October 5 – Week 7

**Lecture #6 GEOGRAPHY & SERVICE ACCESS ISSUES [Urban, Suburban, Exurban, Rural]**

**October 7 (57 min.) Aging in America MV 9568 2003**

[videorecording] : the years ahead. "A search of what it means to have a 'good old age'" Julie Winokur and photographer Ed Kashi traveled across the country and collected scores of personal histories in order to show different aspects of **aging** in America.

#### October 12 – Week 8

**Lecture #7 ECONOMIC ISSUES [Work, Income, Benefits, Assets, Quality of Life]**

**October 15 (28 min., 30 sec.) Intimate relationships and the sandwich generation MV 7210 v.3 2000**

[videorecording] / [presented by] Magna Systems, Inc. ; written & produced by Max Pictures, Inc. for Magna Systems, Inc. (Producer) Examines intimate relationships and how they adapt and change in middle adulthood. Includes discussion of gender convergence, and an overview of issues that middle adults confront such as when they must continue to care for their children while assuming greater responsibility for their **aging** parents.

#### October 18 – Week 9

**Lecture #8 FINANCE OF HEALTH CARE [Cost of Care, Payment Sources]**

**October 22 (27 min.) Intimacy, sexuality and aging MV 9082 2002**

[videorecording] : essential information / produced by Grand Rapids Community College Media Technologies Department. Love, intimacy, communication, and sexual expression are affirmations of our being human. Physical and emotional bonding with another human being is

both natural and essential. It is a true confirmation of life and living and a vital part of our existence as we age. This program provides important information on issues related to intimacy, sexuality and **aging**.

**October 26 – Week 10**

***Lecture #9 DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE [Entitlement & Means Test Programs]***

**Lecture #10 RETIREMENT [Issues, Opportunities, Determinants for Success]**

**October 29 (40 min.) Big mama MV 7445 2000.**

**[videorecording] / a film by Tracy Seretean ; produced and directed by Tracy Seretean.**

Depicts a devoted, elderly grandmother's struggle to raise her orphaned grandson in South Central Los Angeles. She must contend with her own declining health and a bureaucratic and legal system that continually threatens to force them apart.

## **DATES FOR STUDENT PRESENTATIONS & SUBMISSIONS**

**Nov 2 5 MIN ARTICLE PRESENTATIONS & DISCUSSION**

**Nov 4 5 MIN ARTICLE PRESENTATIONS & DISCUSSION**

**Nov 9 5 MIN ARTICLE PRESENTATIONS & DISCUSSION**

**Nov 11 5 MIN ARTICLE PRESENTATIONS & DISCUSSION**

**Nov 16 TERM PAPER ABSTRACTS (5 MIN ORAL PRESENTATIONS)**

**Nov 18 TERM PAPER ABSTRACTS (5 MIN ORAL PRESENTATIONS)**

**Nov 30 TERM PAPER ABSTRACTS (5 MIN ORAL PRESENTATIONS)**

**Dec 9 TERM PAPER ABSTRACTS (5 MIN ORAL PRESENTATIONS)**

**SUBMIT FINAL EXAM**

**SUBMIT INTERNET TERM PAPER**

**SUBMIT 1 1-PAGE TYPED ARTICLE REVIEW WITH ARTICLE**

**COMPLETE THE ONLINE COURSE EVALUATION**