

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

Course: SOWO 604I, SOCI 824I, PSYC 904I, DPET 604I, NURS 782I, MEDI 604, HMSC 904I, FMME 480, EPID 620I, DENT 604, PHYT 904I, PHCY 604I

Course Title: Aging and Health

Semester: Fall 2008; Tuesdays, 5:00 – 7:50 p.m.

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Course

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Location: Room 150, Sheps Center for Health Services Research, 725 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

NOTE: The building that houses the Sheps Center is secure, which means it is LOCKED at all times. With that in mind, all students should make every effort to arrive on time for class at 5:00 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Students will develop a basic understanding of the aging process and issues related to caring for older adults.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the following:

1. Knowledge of normal aging phenomena and experiences, including common diseases and functional problems, effects of aging on body systems, and mental health and aging.
2. Appreciation for racial, cultural, socioeconomic, and other differences among older adults.
3. Understanding of components of the health care system relevant to older persons, including medication use, long-term care, and health care policies.
4. Ability to apply knowledge and skills in the basic concepts that are relevant to living and working with older persons.
5. Appreciation for the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary nature of aging and related ethical issues.

REQUIRED READINGS

- Ferrini, A., & Ferrini, R. (2008). *Health in Later Years* (4th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill. This text is available at the Health Affairs Bookstore on Medical Center Drive.
- Other readings are available on Blackboard (under Course Documents).

TEACHING METHODS

Aging and Health is a three-credit interdisciplinary course sponsored by UNC's campus-wide Institute on Aging. The course is designed to provide students in all disciplines, including graduate students and upper level undergraduates, with a general background in aging and the problems of older persons. Its content is relevant to students who plan to work with older persons, to researchers in fields related to aging, and to students who want to better understand their own aging or that of their relatives or friends. The course is cross-listed in a variety of departments and schools, including dentistry (DENT 604), epidemiology (EPID 620I), family medicine (FMME 480), medicine (MEDI 604), nursing (NURS 782I), pharmacy (PHCY 604I and DPET 604I), physical therapy (PHYT 904I and HMSC 904I), psychology (PSYC 904I), social work (SOWO 604I), and sociology (SOC 824I). There are no prerequisites.

Most classes will address two topics which will be presented by experts in the field. Lecturers are drawn from a variety of schools on the UNC-CH campus and elsewhere, and represent medicine, nursing, orthopaedics, pharmacy, psychology, public health, social work, sociology, dentistry, and other disciplines. Students will be encouraged to discuss material presented in the lecture and readings. Course directors (Drs. Zimmerman, Sloane, and Callahan) will help to integrate the material across topics and sessions.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Students are expected to be prepared for each class session by having read the required material in advance. A reading will be assigned for each topic – either a chapter, an article, or on a few occasions, both a chapter and an article. Students also are expected to participate actively in class discussion through sharing of disciplinary information, experiences, and perspectives. Additional requirements include:

- Conduct and report (in writing [3-5 pages] and verbally) on a site visit of a service delivery program that benefits older adults and/or on an interview with an elderly person, provider, advocate, or policy maker. The visit/interview must be planful and focused. It must (1) be designed to answer a specific question (e.g., how is adult day care individualized to meet the different needs of its clientele?; how does an elderly person compensate for limited function?); (2) interpret the information to answer the question; and (3) conclude with a new question (e.g., what is the cost of individualized care? what happens when the compensatory mechanism fails?). The visit/interview must be pre-approved by a course director. Students who have taken SOWO 803 (Human Behavior of Aging) or SOWO 843 (Direct Practice with Aging Populations) must meet with Dr. Zimmerman to assure that this assignment extends learning from those courses.
- Complete an academic paper (limit of ten text pages; up to three optional pages of figures and tables; ten or more citations) related to the student's interests and approved by the course directors. It must be literature-based, use existing data (e.g., to address prevalence of the issue), and synthesize relevant multidisciplinary perspectives. The paper must be well-organized and clearly written.
- Complete an in-class mid-term and final examination (multiple choice, short-answer format), based on lectures and readings.

The proportionate value of each requirement is shown below:

Component	Proportion
Site visit/interview	10%
Academic paper	40%
Mid-term exam	20%
Final exam	20%
Class participation	10%

GRADING SYSTEM AND POLICY ON INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Numeric scores will be combined in their proportionate value and converted for the assignment of a final grade using the scale shown below. Undergraduate and pharmacy students will receive grades of A, B, C, D or F, while all others will receive grades of H, P, L or F, unless specific arrangements are made to the contrary. Late assignments will be accepted and/or incomplete grades assigned only in special situations with prior approval.

Numeric Grade	Letter Grade	Letter Grade
94 – 100	H	A
80 – 93	P	B
70 – 79	L	C
≤ 69	F	D or F

POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Please refer to the *APA Style Guide* for information on the attribution of quotes. All written assignments should contain a signed pledge stating “I have not given nor received unauthorized aid in the preparation of this work.” In accordance with the UNC Honor Code, if reason exists to believe that academic dishonesty has occurred, a referral will be made to the Office of the Student Attorney General for investigation and further action, as required.

POLICY ON ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities that affect their participation in the course and who wish to have special accommodations should contact the University’s Disabilities Services and provide documentation of their disability. Disabilities Services will notify the instructor that the student has a documented disability and may require accommodations. Students should discuss the specific accommodations they require (i.e., change in instructional and/or examination format) directly with the instructor.

POLICY ON THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN THE CLASSROOM

Electronic devices including laptops may be used, but the use of these devices for non-class related activities such as reading or writing e-mail is prohibited.

Class Date (Tuesday, 5:00-7:50)	AGING AND HEALTH 2008: COURSE SCHEDULE Topic, Presenter (Reading)	Course Master
<u>Week 1: Aug. 26</u> **No class Aug 19**	5:00-7:50 S. Zimmerman – Views, Trends, Myths, and the Future Course overview (Chapter 2)	SZ
<u>Week 2: Sept. 2</u>	5:00-6:20 M. Helton – Aging changes in the body (Chapter 3)	SZ
	6:30-7:50 J. Armstrong – Aging / disability simulation	
<u>Week 3: Sept. 9</u>	5:00-6:20 L. Callahan – Chronic illness (Chapter 4)	LC
	6:30-7:50 N. Erdem – Acute illness (Chapter 6)	
<u>Week 4: Sept. 16</u>	5:00-6:20 P. Dilworth-Anderson – Minority aging (Chapter 1)	LC
	6:30-7:50 L. Callahan – Demography of aging	
<u>Week 5: Sept. 23</u>	5:00-6:20 Guests – Aging through the eyes of older persons (Chapter 12)	SZ PS
	6:30-7:50 J. Busby-Whitehead – Common geriatric syndromes (Chapter 5)	
<u>Week 6: Sept. 30</u>	5:00-6:20 P. Sloane – Alzheimer’s disease (Chapter 7 and article*)	PS
	6:30-7:50 L. Clark – Mental health and illness	
<u>Week 7: Oct. 7</u> Site Visit Due	5:00-6:20 <i>Student site visit presentations</i>	SZ
	6:30-7:50 <i>Student site visit presentations</i>	
<u>Week 8: Oct. 14</u> Midterm Exam	5:00-6:20 MIDTERM EXAMINATION	SZ
	6:30-7:50 S. Benedict – Physical activity and health (Chapter 9)	
<u>Week 9: Oct. 21</u>	5:00-6:20 T. Holt – Older persons in film and literature (Article*)	LC
	6:30-7:50 T. Holt – Older persons in film and literature	
<u>Week 10: Oct. 28</u>	5:00-6:20 S. Coppola, V. Mercer, A. Samuelson – OT, PT, Dentistry (Article*)	SZ
	6:30-7:50 S. Coppola, V. Mercer, A. Samuelson – Panel	
<u>Week 11: Nov. 4</u>	5:00-6:20 J. Ivey – Medication Use in Older Adults (Chapter 8)	PS
	6:30-7:50 J. Ivey – Medication Use in Older Adults	
<u>Week 12: Nov. 11</u>	5:00-6:20 S. Zimmerman – Couplehood (Article*)	SZ PS
	6:30-7:50 P. Sloane – Sexuality (Chapter 11)	
<u>Week 13: Nov. 18</u>	5:00-6:20 L. Hanson – Death, dying, and grief (Chapter 15)	LC
	6:30-7:50 V. Marshall – Retirement (Article*)	
<u>Week 14: Nov. 25</u>	5:00-6:20 B. Lamb – Public policies relevant to aging and health (Chapter 13)	LC
	6:30-7:50 B. Lamb – Financing medical care / health policy	
<u>Week 15: Dec. 2</u> Paper Due	5:00-7:50 L. Gwyther – Informal caregiving (Chapter 14 and article*)	SZ
	6:30-7:50 S. Zimmerman – Residential long-term care	
<u>Week 16: Dec. 9</u> Final Exam	FINAL EXAMINATION and course evaluation	PS

ARTICLES

Week 6: Sept. 30 Alzheimer's disease

Desai, A.K., & Grossberg, G.T. (2005). Diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer's disease. *Neurology* 64(3), S34-S39.

Week 9: Oct. 21 Older persons in film and literature

Kristeva, J. (1982). *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. New York: Columbia University Press. Chapter 1. Read through the section "As Abjection – So the Sacred".

Note from the instructor:

Kristeva's discussion of the psychology of horror draws on European traditions in philosophy and psychology, much of which will seem alien to the American reader. Which is part of the point: our urge to pull away from her argument and throw the book across the room is just what she's trying to elicit, because it's precisely what she's writing about. With that in mind, as you read this chapter perhaps the most important thing to register is not the exact structure of her argument so much as your own responses to it, how it makes you feel more than how it makes you think.

The simplest part of this chore is to notice the way we tend to cringe at her language, the specific objects of horror she mentions, etc. A more important task might be to notice that we can have the same response to the overall tendency of her argument as well. Kristeva argues (in part) that the basis of horror is our primal fear of anything that suggests our own fundamental incoherence (one postulate of the tradition she's working in is that our personalities are not the unified and coherent things we [would like to] feel them to be, but actually a complex, ongoing juggling act intended to create the illusion of coherence over a fundamental incoherency).

So when we recoil in horror from the disintegrating image of a mummy, or when we recoil from an argument that challenges our foundational concepts of the world and our being in it, the object of horror in both cases is the same: our own (original, inevitable) dis-integration. And the reassuring imaginative response is to conjure up an image in which Everything Holds Together and Everything Makes Sense. But (and this is how abjection comes in) it's hard to conjure that image, or at least be reassured by it, without doing something to expel the threat that mummy--or any other suggestion that there is ultimately no entirely and eternally adequate answer to everything--represents. That expulsion is what she calls "abjection."

Much of the rest of her discussion hinges on (and here's another postulate, sort of) the notion that these beliefs about our identity are not adopted willingly; we're not even conscious of them: they are part of the vocabulary through which we understand ourselves and our world--part of our selves, really--shaped in our early struggles to come to terms with our existence in these mortal bodies, and generally invisible to us as the air we breathe. Until somebody constructs a compelling narrative that brings the whole thing almost into our consciousness. It is us in our struggle (not) to see this aspect of ourselves, with our tragic sense that in our incoherence we are unique, and uniquely flawed (think of Frankenstein's monster), that Kristeva characterizes as the "deject."

So: to boil this down and suggest an application: how does *Cocoon* exploit the powers of horror? What images/events/characters from the film might suggest incoherency? What essential fact do these images/events/characters seem to be pointing toward? What does the film offer as the consoling, reassuring cover story? What has to be abjected to make that consolation work? Are there characters or events that seem to embody or enact that abjection? And who, ultimately, is this film's "deject"?

Finally: this essay will be impossible to read if you approach it as you might approach other readings. It's not a handbook so much as a specimen. Do not try to memorize it or any part of it. Do not try to abstract "facts" from it. Do not try to make sense of it. If what you get out of it is nothing more than a gut feeling for how horror might have the power it holds over us, you've done everything you need to do.

Week 10: Oct. 28 PT, OT, Dentistry

Brach, J.S., Simonsick, E.M., Kritchevsky, S., Yaffe, K., & Newman, A.B. (2004). The association between physical function and lifestyle activity and exercise in the health, aging and body composition study. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* 52, 502-509.

Clark, F., Azen, S.P., Zemke, R., Jackson, J., Carlson, M., Mandel, et al. (1997). Occupational therapy for independent-living older adults. A randomized controlled trial. *JAMA* 278(16), 1321-6.

MacEntee, M.I., & Prosth, D. (2005). Caring for elderly long-term care patients: oral health-related concerns and issues. *Dental Clinics of North America* 49, 429-443.

Persson, R.E., & Persson, G.R. (2005). The elderly at risk for periodontitis and systemic diseases. *Dental Clinics of North America* 49, 279-292.

Week 12: Nov. 11 Couplehood

Prigerson, H.G., Maciejewski, P.K., & Rosenheck, R.A. (2000). Preliminary explorations of the harmful interactive effects of widowhood and marital harmony on health, health service use, and health care costs. *Gerontologist* 40(3), 349-357.

Week 13: Nov. 18 Retirement

Toder, E.J., Johnson, R.W., Mermin, G.B.T., & Lei, S. (2008). *Capitalizing on the Economic Value of Older Adult's Work: An Urban Institute Roundtable*. Retirement Policy Program, Occasional Paper Number 9. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.

Week 15: Dec. 2 Informal caregiving

Wolff, J.L., & Kasper, J.D. (2006). Caregivers of frail elders: updating a national profile. *Gerontologist* 46(3), 344-356.