

## Colonnade Program Course Proposal: Explorations Category

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### 1. What course does the department plan to offer in Explorations?

The Department of Diversity & Community Studies proposes to offer GERO 100, Introduction to the Aging Experience (Social & Behavioral Sciences subcategory)

### 2. How will this course meet the specific learning objectives of the appropriate subcategory?

1. Demonstrate knowledge of at least one area of the social and behavioral sciences.

Gerontology is the study of aging and older adults and emerged as a distinct academic discipline in the 1970s. Specifically this discipline investigates the processes associated with bodily changes from middle age through later life and provides multidisciplinary frameworks for understanding societal changes resulting from an aging population. The field also examines applications of this knowledge to policies and programs. The introductory gerontology course (GERO 100) provides students with broad knowledge about gerontology's unique method of inquiry for investigating the impact of aging on individuals and society.

2. Apply knowledge, theories, and research methods, including ethical conduct, to analyze problems pertinent to at least one area of the social and behavioral sciences.

GERO 100 introduces students to a range of gerontological theories and practices as they relate to specific individual, cultural, and historical contexts (primarily U.S.) of aging. Students examine the contributions and limits of multidisciplinary gerontological research and explore important historical and contemporary issues relating to gerontology, evaluating and critically respond to academic scholarship. The underlying social and behavioral theories of life course perspective and critical gerontology form the primary theoretical foundations used in this course. Students develop skills in using empirical methodology, reviewing scholarly literature, and applying theoretical and/or practical approaches. The course articulates the ethical controversies inherent in gerontological theories and encourages informed value judgments regarding application of aging-based theories in every-day life.

3. Understand and demonstrate how at least one area of the social and behavioral sciences conceptualizes diversity and the ways it shapes human experience.

The examination of individual and societal experience on the basis of chronological age is central to the discipline of gerontology. In fact, the discipline recognizes that the meaning of "diversity" (gender, race/ethnicity, social class, religion and ability) is difficult to disentangle from age. Research and course materials investigate understandings of age through multi-dimensional analyses that recognize interconnectivity of aspects of diversity and focus on ways in which these categories shape people's experiences.

4. Integrate knowledge of at least one area of the social and behavioral sciences into issues of personal or public importance.

GERO 100 draws on current and historical readings and theories in order to address how individuals and society can approach the rapid aging of our population. Populations are aging world-wide. Every 8 seconds, someone turns 60 in the United States. Many people born today can expect to live beyond their 75th year. The age group growing fastest in our society and in many other countries is the "very old," people aged 85 and older. Gerontology students work singly and in groups dissecting theories to understand the both individual and societal opportunities and public costs of population aging.

5. Communicate effectively using the language and terminology germane to at least one area of the social and behavioral sciences.

This course encompasses the interdisciplinary perspectives of gerontology which is theoretically grounded in life course and critical gerontology. Key concepts include successful and optimal aging, ageism, disability, environmental gerontology, filial responsibility, longevity, death and retirement.

**3. Syllabus statement of learning outcomes for course. NOTE: In multi-section courses, the same statement of learning outcomes must appear on every section's syllabus.**

Upon successfully completing this course, students should be able to

- a. Define basic terms used within social gerontology.
- b. Identify societal and individual consequences of demographic changes in an aging society.
- c. Explain how individuals are shaped by societal and cultural factors as they age
- d. Illustrate how social, biological, and psychological aging are related
- e. Discuss current issues in social gerontology and aging, and
- f. Complete a life-history review by interviewing an elder and analyzing the results.

**4. Brief description of how the department will assess the course for these learning objectives.**

The assessment will be coordinated by an "Assessment Committee" made up of instructors who regularly teach GERO 100, and under the auspices of the Department of Diversity & Community Studies yearly assessment. This committee will 1) ensure that all sections comply, 2) evaluate the evidence using the scale noted below, and 3) communicate recommendations and strategies for improvement.

Typically, this course will be assessed every Fall. All students enrolled will be asked to respond to 60 objective questions which assess the 6 learning objectives (10 questions per objective). The assessment will be graded within Blackboard and item analysis will be used to identify objectives which are more and less "successful" using the following rating system.

An "exceptional" rating on a given objective = at least 70 % of the students answered 9 out of 10 questions correctly.

An "average" rating for a given objective = at least 70% of students answered 7 out of 10 questions correctly.

A "below average" rating for a given objective = less than 70% of students answered 7 out of 10 questions correctly.

**5. How many sections of this course will your department offer each semester?  
4-6 sections each term.**

**6. Please attach sample syllabus for the course.**

# Gerontology 100 SEMESTER

## DATE/TIME MEETING

Professor:  
Phone: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx  
E-Mail: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx  
Office: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx  
Office Hours: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Gero 100 is a required course for the Gerontology Minor and the Aging Specialist Certificate (see [ww.wku.edu/aging](http://ww.wku.edu/aging)) and qualifies for credit as a General Education Course in Section C. "Social and Behavioral Sciences."

This class introduces you to contemporary issues in aging. Through-out the semester you will become familiar with key facts, theories and concepts to help you reflect on the most important topics confronting our aging society. The fun and challenge of this class will be for you to decide how to resolve these issues in a well-reasoned and argued manner.

GERO 100 qualifies as a General Education Course in Section C. "Social and Behavioral Sciences." **Add statement about Colonnade when approved.**

### Required Texts:

**Novak, Mark. *Issues in Aging* (Pearson)**

**Izzo, John. *The Five Secrets You Must Discover Before You Die* (Berrett-Koehler)**

### Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon successfully completing this course, students should be able to

- a. Define basic terms used within social gerontology.
- b. Identify societal and individual consequences of demographic changes in an aging society.
- c. Explain how individuals are shaped by societal and cultural factors as they age
- d. Illustrate how social, biological, and psychological aging are related
- e. Discuss current issues in social gerontology and aging, and
- f. Complete a life-history review by interviewing an elder and analyzing the results.

### Class Information

Make up work is only possible with permission from the instructor.

The class will include discussions on possibly controversial topics. The student is free to express personal opinions and experiences, but is also expected to respect the opinions and experiences of others. We will enjoy the right to "agree to disagree".

### Evaluation

Quizzes/Homework: 100 points

Oral History Project (written): 50 points

Oral History Project (presentation): 50 points  
Writing Assignments: 2 @ 50 points  
Exams (2): 100 points  
TOTAL: 400 points

### **Classroom Environment**

All students taking this course are expected to have read policies regarding *Academic Integrity*:  
<http://www.wku.edu/Dept/Support/StuAffairs/StuLife/handbook/PIPolicy/14AcademicOffenses.htm>.  
Please be aware that plagiarism will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

**Student work may be checked using plagiarism detection software.** The penalty for plagiarism will be a zero for the assignment. If you have any questions as to what constitutes plagiarism, ask me! Furthermore, cheating on exams and/or assignments will not be tolerated, and the penalty is an automatic “0” for the test or an “F” in the course. This penalty works both ways. This means that if you copy someone else’s work OR allow someone else to copy your work then it is an automatic zero. Do not put yourself in this unfortunate situation—risking a poor grade does not begin to compare with getting an “F” for the entire course. Be advised that I will not hesitate to enforce this policy if necessary. This applies to **all** assignments including discussion board postings.

In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services in the Student Success Center. Please **DO NOT** request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

## Gerontology 100: Introduction to the Aging Experience

Instructor: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Office: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Office Hours: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Phone: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

E-Mail: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

This class introduces you to contemporary issues in aging. Throughout the semester you will become familiar with key facts, theories and concepts to help you reflect on the most important topics confronting our aging society. The fun and challenge of this class will be for you to decide how to resolve these issues in a well-reasoned and argued manner.

Gero 100 qualifies for credit as a General Education Course in Section C. "Social and Behavioral Sciences."

### **Course Description & Student Learning Outcomes**

This course is designed to provide an introduction to the social, psychological, and physical dimensions of aging. We will examine the aging process experienced by the individual and how the aging of the population affects our society as a whole.

Upon successfully completing this course, students should be able to

- a. Define basic terms used within social gerontology.
- b. Identify societal and individual consequences of demographic changes in an aging society.
- c. Explain how individuals are shaped by societal and cultural factors as they age.
- d. Illustrate how social, biological, and psychological aging are related.
- e. Discuss current issues in social gerontology and aging.
- f. Complete a life-history review by interviewing an elder and analyzing the results.

### **Required Books**

1. Novak, Mark (2012). Issues in Aging (3rd edition). Pearson.
2. Izzo, J. (n.d.). The Five Secrets You Must Discover Before You Die. Tata McGraw Hill.
3. Supplemental readings will be available through Blackboard.

### **Attendance**

It is expected that students will attend class. Students will be asked to sign an attendance sheet at the end of each class. If absences do occur, it is the student's responsibility to make up missed work and to be aware of any schedule changes or assignments that were made in the class(es) missed.

### **Evaluation**

The final course grade will be determined based on the following:

- 1.) 10 short assignments worth 10 points each for a total of **100 points**. These assignments may be given as homework or in-class work. Instructor may ask that some assignments be turned in via Blackboard.
- 2.) Two in-class examinations comprised of a combination of multiple choice, true/false and short answers worth 100 points each for a total of **200 points**
- 3.) Oral History Project consisting of paper and in-class presentation worth **100 points**
- 4.) Two reaction papers (1-2 pages each) worth 50 points each for a total of **100 points**
- 5.) Class Participation: Quality participation will be considered as extra points when a student's final grade is on a borderline and will move the student to the higher letter grade.

Unless otherwise noted by the instructor, writing assignments must be typed, double-spaced, in 12 point font with 1 inch margins all around. A cover page is preferred. Appropriate citations should be used for any information/quotes you use from sources other than your own personal knowledge.

Grades will be calculated as follows: A (450 – 500); B (400-449); C (350-399); D (300-349); F (299 or less).

### **Late Policy**

If a writing assignment is turned in late, but within two days (weekdays, not class periods) of the original due date, it will be accepted but will be marked down 10% per day. Written work will not be accepted after that. Short assignments cannot be turned in late or made up unless you make prior arrangements with the instructor OR you can provide a valid excuse for missing class. Valid excuses are written confirmations of athletic conflicts, illness, and religious conflicts from a reliable source. For exams, a doctor's note must be submitted to the instructor within one week of the exam and it must be for an illness that occurred the same week as the exam. The instructor is under no obligation to grant extensions and will do so at her discretion and only if the student has made prior arrangements OR you can provide a valid excuse.

### **Course Website**

Instructor will rely on Blackboard as the primary means of communicating with students. Class assignments and due dates will be posted on Blackboard. From time to time there may be

documents, articles, PowerPoint presentations or additional web resources posted for students to access. You will also be able to view your grade online. You are responsible for regularly monitoring the site for announcements about assignments and supplemental readings.

### **Classroom Environment**

All students taking this course are expected to have read policies regarding Academic Integrity: <http://www.wku.edu/handbook/academic-dishonesty.php>

Please be aware that plagiarism will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Appropriate citations should be used for any information/quotes you use from sources other than your own personal knowledge. **Student work may be checked using plagiarism detection software.** The penalty for plagiarism will be a zero for the assignment. If you have any questions as to what constitutes plagiarism, ask the instructor. Furthermore, cheating on exams and/or assignments will not be tolerated, and the penalty is an automatic “0” for the test or an “F” in the course. This penalty works both ways. This means that if you copy someone else’s work OR allow someone else to copy your work then it is an automatic zero. Do not put yourself in this unfortunate situation—risking a poor grade does not begin to compare with getting an “F” for the entire course. Be advised that I will not hesitate to enforce this policy if necessary. This applies to all assignments including discussion board postings.

The class will include discussions on possible controversial topics. The student is free to express personal opinions and experiences, but also expected to respect the opinions and experiences of others.

In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services in DUC A-200 of the Student Success Center in Downing University Center (270-745-5004). Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

## Tentative Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments Due
Week 1	Introduction	Syllabus	Assignment #1
	History and Culture Discussion: Our experiences with ageism. How can we curtail it?	Novak 1 Izzo Prologue	Assignment #2
Week 2	Models of Aging -Disengagement, Activity and Continuity Theory; Life Course Perspective	Novak pp. 39-43; Novak pp. 143-148	
	Successful Aging	Novak pp. 113-114 Izzo 1	Assignment #3
Week 3	Demographic Transition Discussion: How are we treating our elderly? Compared with whom? Compared with when?	Novak 3 Izzo 2	Assignment #4
	Relationships	Novak 12 and pp. 381-393	Oral History Paper Update (interview, paper, and presentation format)
Week 4	Gender and Race	Novak pp.34, 148, 253-255, 393-395  Novak pp. 157-166; 169-184; 193-197	Reaction Paper Guidelines
	Sexual orientation	Novak pp. 367-370 Izzo 3	
Week 5	Work Retirement and Leisure	Novak 9 and 11	Reaction Paper #1

	Pensions and Social Security	Novak 8 Izzo 4	Assignment #5
Week 6	Review for Exam		
	Exam #1		
Week 7	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK
Week 8	Anti-Aging	Novak pp. 115-116 Izzo 5	
	Why and How Do We Age?	Novak 4	Assignment #6
Week 9	Longevity Sensory Changes	Izzo 6	Assignment #7
	Medicare and Medicaid	Novak 7	Assignment #8
Week 10	Long-Term Care		
	Caregiving and Elder Abuse	Novak pp. 393-407 Izzo 7-8	Reaction Paper Guidelines
Week 11	Living Environments	Novak 10	Reaction Paper #2
	Cognition	Novak 5 Izzo 9 to the end	Assignment #9
Week 12	Personality and Mental Health		
	Alzheimer's Disease		Assignment #10
Week 13	Politics of Age	Novak 15	
	Generational Equity Future of Aging		
Week 14	Review for Exam		
	Exam #2		
Week 15	Oral History Presentations		Papers due at time of presentation
	Oral History Presentations		Papers due at time of presentation
Week 16	FINALS WEEK	FINALS WEEK	FINALS WEEK