LOCATOR INFORMATION:

Semester: 
Course Number and Name: SWRK 470: Aging & Social Work
Semester Hour of Credit: 3
Day/Time Class Meets:
Room/Bldg:
Telephone:
FAX:
Instructor:
Email:
Office Location:
Office Hours:

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DISABLED STUDENT SERVICES: In accordance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ACA) of 1990, if you have a disability or think you have a disability, to please contact the Center for Personal Development in the Spaulding Building, Room 155 (1st Floor); 910-672-1203.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course places emphasis on the biological, psychological, and sociocultural aspects of aging and service delivery to elders. Examination of the forces and critical issues that impact elders across the life span will be emphasized. Additionally, this course incorporates and adheres to each of the applicable findings contained in the University of North Carolina Tomorrow Commission’s Final Report. Gerontological social work is an area of increasing demand. Indeed, with the "graying of America" social workers and other professionals will find themselves working more with people over age 65. It is the intent of this course to inform students of the social, psychological, biological, economic, legal and health related issues confronting the elderly, their families and society in general. The course provides a generalists
knowledge base in a predominately rural area, which is necessary for practice with the elderly, and explores the service settings responsive to their needs. Understanding, critical thinking, and advocacy skills will be stressed as the plight of at-risk special populations such as older minorities and women is examined.

III. REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

IV. Course Objectives:
1. Understand the basic demography of aging in America and its impact on policy, planning and service by reading textbook, video’s, writing assignments and class discussions.

2. Enhanced understanding and student preparation to engage in a relationship with individuals and agencies that provide services to the elderly thru writing assignments and direct contact.

3. Expanded understanding of the challenges facing our elderly in the areas of biological, psychological and social issues by textbooks reading, videos’, speakers, direct contact and written assignments.

4. Increased knowledge of various aging theories and aging process by textbook reading, lecture and direct contact.

5. Enhance social work skills crucial to working with the elderly and their families from videos, class discussion and textbook reading.

6. Increased knowledge of social policy and community resources in a rural area as it relates to the elderly population by reading, class discussions, videos and written assignments. Improve student efficiency in soft skills including oral and written communication, critical thinking and analytical reasoning.

7. Enhance communication skills and use of professional self by direct contact with an elderly person and local community service agencies.

8. Evaluate current research on aging and begin to relate this to practice by written assignments and readings

9. Employ the beginning steps of the social work model of relationship building, assessment, evaluation and termination skills by direct contact assignment.

10. Embrace UNC‘s interests in increasing access to its educational programs including academic courses, degree programs at all levels, and certificate program for traditional students, non-traditional students, and lifelong learners.

11. Embrace UNC‘s interests in serving as a model for accommodating the needs of persons with disabilities, including students, faculty, staff and the general public.
12. Embrace UNC’s interest in assuming a leadership role regarding the compelling for improving the health and wellness of all people and communities in North Carolina. 400.1.1230

V. Teaching Format:
This course will utilize lectures, class discussions, videotapes, field trips, guest speakers, direct contact and experiential exercises to appreciate and understand the issues facing our elderly, their families and society. Additional time and commitment outside the classroom is required to complete the social assessment.

Attendance:
Attendance and participation is essential in this course. Reading assignments have been made to support weekly topics and students are expected to have read the assignment before class. You are responsible for all material presented in class, including announcements about course procedures. Exams, quizzes, and homework often include questions on material presented only in class, so performance on these indirectly reflects attendance.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Assignments:
Examinations (200 points- 4@ 50 points each):
There will be four exams which will include multiple choices, true/false and short answer questions relying upon the text, class lectures and speaker information. Integration of the concepts and theories of aging will be central to the exams. Each exam is worth 50 points.

Social Assessment (200 points):
Students are expected to invest a minimum of 60 - 90 minutes a week, for 8 weeks with an elderly person who resides either in a nursing home, in a group living arrangement, independently or has been identified by a social agency as needing additional social interaction. The elderly person cannot be a relative or someone whom you have known previously and must be 75 or older. The goal is to have the opportunity to build a relationship with an elderly person while being able to enhance communication and assessment skills needed. A journal of these visits should be kept, documenting observations and hours and will be endorsed by the elderly person. Each journal should be a minimum of 2 pages. The journals must be handed in within one week of the visit. At mid-term there should be at least 5 visits made. Students are expected to construct a social history assessment based on the information they gain in the course of their weekly visits and discussions with the elderly person. You will also need to interview a family member and a service provider of the elderly person. An outline of the assessment areas is included in the syllabi. Students are advised to utilize their log in writing an 8 -10 double space social assessment paper. The paper should paint a realistic picture of the elderly, the feelings and process experienced by them and their family and the concerns of the service provider. The elderly person is required to sign a form that defines the purpose of the interview and expectations. This form is to be returned to the instructor by the 3rd week of Fall semester 400.1.1231. An outline of information on what needs to be assessed for the social history is included. Several class periods will be utilized to discuss these visits and how the assessment is going. Each journal is worth 20 points for a total of 160 points and the social assessment is work 40 points.
Social Work Agency (25 points)
Pairs of students will be assigned a community agency that provides services to the elderly population. The pair will be responsible to
1) personally visit the agency,
2) assess what services are provided to the elderly, families and to the community,
3) how services are provided,
4) discuss what type of services Social Workers provide in this agency, and
5) discuss areas of services lacking within the agency. Pairs of students will be assigned to present this community agency to the class. Information to be handed in to the instructor will be written verification from the agency of your visit, a 3-4 page typed paper which will include the name & address of the agency, the person you visited at the agency, the services provided by the agency, eligibility and process to receive services, your evaluation of the services provided and ways in which this service will help an elderly person and/or their family. The overall grade will be based on complete and accurate information given to the instructor and the presentation to the class. This activity is intended to increase knowledge of the various community agencies available to provide services to the elderly.

Course grades will be assigned as follows:
A: 92%–100%  382-425
B: 83%–91%  340 - 381
C: 73%–82%  297 - 339
D: 64%–72%  255 - 296
F: below 63%  254

Class Policy
Academic dishonesty will result in a course grade of F. There will be no excused lateness for computer-related failures. Back up your work regularly and plan ahead. All exams, programs, and homework must be completed in order to complete this course, regardless of lateness. Unexcused late course work will lose 5 points for each weekday that it is late. Papers are considered late after the class period has ended on the due date. Students are expected to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics in their conduct with educators, peers, and the elderly person they are visiting.

This syllabus constitutes a contract between the professor and the students, the terms of the contract are subject to change in order to accommodate unforeseen events/concerns, and promote flexibility in learning and teaching. Students will be notified of changes in a timely fashion.

Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance: Students having any form of special needs should notify the instructor immediately so that available accommodations can be discussed.

Social Assessment
Report Writing Guidelines
Complete a comprehensive psychosocial assessment of an older adult (75 +). The purpose of this assignment is to provide an opportunity for students to practice their interpersonal skills and to allow an older person to serve as a resource for better understanding of the needs of the elderly. The assessment should be 10-12 double-spaced pages in length and should reflect the assessment
concepts and strategies covered in the course readings and lectures. Your psychosocial assessment should be multidimensional focus on these areas:

A. Demographics of the person: (age, gender, ethnic background, marital status, number of children, employment status past/present, living arrangements)

B. Physical status: disabilities, chronic or acute illnesses, nutrition status, sensory impairments, medications, mobility, general satisfaction/dissatisfaction with current health status, overall view of health, and level of being able to provide own daily living needs

C. Psychological status: cognitive ability and emotional health: mental status, general outlook on life, coping abilities, affect, cognition, memory, orientation, clarity of thought and the role of spirituality and religion.

D. Social functioning: availability and functioning of support systems, social activity level, social skills, and relationship with others (family, friends, neighbors, and staff). Include a summary of what you learned from the family member and from the service providers you talked to. Give a brief description of your relationship with the person including the circumstances of your interactions. Describe a typical day for this person.

E. Formal service usage: services the elderly person receives in and out of their residence. Assess the physical environment in which the person lives and the services provided.

F. Historical events: Have any large-scale events (e.g., Great Depression, presidential elections, etc.) influenced the person’s attitude toward life? Gather other personal history that is relative to this person’s assessment.

G. Economics: What financial resources are available for this person? Do they have health and/or life insurance? Interest is in their perception of finances and not how much they have. Address social policies and programs this person takes part in and explain how the policies have helped or hindered.

H. Personal philosophy of aging: What are the person’s personal views, attitudes, beliefs, and feelings about growing older? What social theory of aging best fits this person and why did you pick this particular theory?

I. Treatment Plan and conclusion: Please includes goals and treatment plans you would have for this person if you were to provide services for this person from a professional stand point. You may want to include in this gaps in services or needs that are not being met at this time as expressed by this person or assessed by you. Please include other things you feel are relevant to understanding this person. Overall assess this person’s current functioning, including strengths and vulnerabilities.

J. Describe how this person fits into the —normal aging profile from information gained from class material and readings. How is this person —abnormal from a gerontological standpoint?

Course Content Aging Service SW 470
Week 1 Syllabus Review/Overview/ Chapter 1: The Emergence of Gerontology

Week 2 Chapter 2: Doing Social Gerontology Research Information about conducting a Biopsychosocial Assessment.

Week 3 Chapter 3: Demography, Population and Housing: Field trip to Mt Carmel Home – Eden experience Student presentation – Military Families

**EXAM I – Chapters 1-3**

Week 4 Chapter 4: Social Perspectives on Aging Student presentation – Senior Hospitality Center Student presentation – Adult day care

Week 5 Chapter 5: Biological Perspectives Student presentation – Elderly Abuse Student presentation – RYDE program

Week 6 Chapter 6: Personality and Cognition
Student presentation – Video – Living with Grace

Week 7 Chapter 7: Mental Health and Mental Illness Video – A desperate act Suicide and the elderly
Student presentation – Cape Fear Hospital

**EXAM II - Chapters 4-7**

Week 8 Into Aging game – game simulating aging and social response. Discussion about visits and social assessment

Week 9 Chapter 8: Family Relationships and Social Bonds
Video- My Mother, My Father Video – My Mother, My Father 7 years later
Student presentation – Area Agency on Aging Student presentation – Meals on Wheels

Week 10 Chapter 9: Sexuality and Intimacy

Week 11 Chapter 10: Work, Retirement and Leisure Student presentation – Elderhostel
Student presentation – Social Security Student presentation – AAA senior employment

**EXAM III – Chapters 8-10**

Week 12 Chapter 11- Economic security, Public Policy and Politics. Student presentation – Medicaid- DHHS

Week 13 Field Trip - Fayetteville Retirement Community
Week 14 Chapter 12: Elders in the Health Care system Student presentation – Medication assistance program Student presentation – APS Video – Elder Abuse – Five Case Study Video – Old, Poor and Black

Week 15 Chapter 13: Death, Dying and Bereavement
Student presentation – Hospice Student presentation – Funeral preplanning

Week 16 Final Exam Chapters 11 thru 13
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Available online: www.naswdc.org/pubs/code


**RECOMMENDED JOURNALS**

The Gerontologist

Journal of Applied Gerontology

Journal of Aging and Social Policy

Journal of Gerontological Social Work

Journal of Social Service research

Research on aging

Social Service Review

Social Work

**RECOMMENDED WEB SITES**

400.1.1235

Administration on Aging www.aoa.dhhs.gov/default.htm

Alzheimer’s disease Education and Referral www. Alzheimers.org

American Association of Retired Persons www.aarp.org
American Society on Aging www.asaging.org
Gerontological Society of American www.geron.org
National Aging Information Center www.aoa.dhhs.gov/naic/
National Association for Home Care www.nahc.org
National Association of Social Workers www.naswdc.org
National Institute on Aging www.nih.gov/nia
National Family Caregivers Association www.nfcacares.org
Strengthening Aging and Gerontology Education for Social Work www.cswe.org/sagesw