COURSE NUMBER: GERON 5001/6001  
TITLE: Introduction to Aging  
PREREQUISITE: none  
TOTAL CREDITS: 3  
DIDACTIC CREDITS: 3 (3 hrs/wk)  
ACADEMIC TERM(S) OFFERED: Fall, Spring or Summer Semesters  
FACULTY: Katarina Friberg Felsted, PhD  
Assistant Professor  
801-585-7438  
katarina.felsted@nurs.utah.edu  
Skype: katarina.felsted  
Office Hours  
By appointment - in person, via Skype, phone, or email.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This introductory course is designed to present a broad overview of the field of gerontology by examining some of the major issues, problems, and solutions related to an aging society. We will also investigate research methodology, theories of aging, and future implications of an aging society at local, national and international levels. The value of interdisciplinary and life course perspectives will be emphasized.

Please note: This is a course where all identities are respected.

DIDACTIC OBJECTIVES:
The student will:
1. Understand and indicate competency for the interplay of biological, psychological and social factors as they influence the life-long course of aging.
2. Appreciate and apply the value of the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary nature of the field of gerontology.
3. Describe and use several prominent theories of aging in written assignments.
4. Identify several specific demographic trends and discuss the implications for individuals, communities, states, nations and the world.
5. Identify a broad range of issues and concerns of older adults and make recommendations for improving their quality of life.
6. Explain the functions of various service and professional organizations that are part of the aging network.
7. Understand some of the unique features of doing gerontological research.
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH COLLEGE OF NURSING

8. Understand their own attitudes and beliefs about aging and older adults and make their views more consistent with information gained from the course.

9. Become more familiar with career opportunities related to aging.

10. Meet their own personal goals for the course, particularly to recognize the value of engaging in community service as a method of gaining knowledge while helping others.

TEACHING METHODS:
Lectures, discussions, videos, assigned readings, case studies.

STUDENT NAMES & PERSONAL PRONOUNS
Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name as well as “Preferred first name” (if previously entered by you in the Student Profile section of your CIS account). While CIS refers to this as merely a preference, I will honor you by referring to you with the name and pronoun that feels best for you in class, on papers, exams, etc. Please advise me of any name or pronoun changes (and update CIS) so I can help create a learning environment in which you, your name, and your pronoun will be respected.

EVALUATION:
Evaluation includes the quality and depth of participation in discussions, assigned exercises, and written assignments. Online attendance is gauged by CANVAS analytics, where individual student participation is assessed through such means as participation in discussion boards and accessing CANVAS modules. Participation may be evaluated in additional ways as specified by the individual faculty’s syllabus. Dismissal from a course and/or the college can result from unprofessional behavior.

TOPICAL OUTLINE:
1. We are growing older
2. The evolution of aging
3. Physical changes and the aging process
4. Health, wellness, and normal aging; sexuality
5. Mental health and mental abilities
6. Death, dying and bereavement
7. Living environments of older adults
8. Economics of aging: Work and older persons
9. Retirement
10. Primary support systems – family and other
11. Formal support systems
12. Medical care, Medicare, and medications

13. Assisted living/ Long-term care; elders at risk; elder abuse

14. The policies and politics of aging: A new paradigm

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK and LEARNING RESOURCES:

Textbook & Reading Materials
The text for this class will be Introduction to Aging: A Positive, Interdisciplinary Approach, by Sugar, Riekse, Holstege & Faber, first edition, published by Springer Publishing Company, ISBN-13: 978-0826108807. You may purchase this book at the Campus Store or online. Optional books to read for additional credit: How We Age by Mark Agronin - I highly recommend this book, but it is optional reading - you can receive extra credit for completing a report due at end of term - check with me about the details.

Canvas
Canvas is the where course content, grades, and communication will reside for this course. http://utah.instructure.com
Your username is your U#, and your password is your global password (the same one you use for CIS or UMail).
For Canvas questions, contact the Teaching and Learning Technologies Help Desk. 801 581-6112 Option 2 classthelp@utah.edu
For passwords, or any other computer-related technical support contact the IT Help Desk. 801 581-4000 http://it.utah.edu. helpdesk@utah.edu

COURSE POLICIES

Canvas Notification Preferences
Please make sure your Canvas notification preferences are set so that you will receive course announcements ASAP or Daily (click the appropriate link to set your preference).

Instructor Feedback/Communication
I will be in the course several times a week. Please allow 48 hours during the week for turnaround time on questions, requests, or feedback. I do not expect you to be available on weekends and ask you for the same courtesy.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Discussions
This course encourages student interaction via the DISCUSSION BOARD. You are expected to participate in a discussion thread each week. These postings are intended to encourage independent thought about important aging issues. A topic or question will be initiated by the instructor. For each thread you will need to post a response to the question by Wednesday at 11:00 am. You will need to reply twice to your peers before Friday at 11:00 am. Please do not wait to post your two responses until Friday morning - the goal is to spread out your posting and reading of other posts and as importantly, give other students time to respond again.
Assignments

Journal Article:
The purpose of the Research article analysis assignment in the Introduction to Aging course is based on the following reasons (or the overarching rationale):
To prepare students to learn about the importance of peer-reviewed journal articles in the field of aging as the optimal experience to discover scientific findings about aging issues.
To have student appreciate the importance of data-driven (empirical-based) research in the field of aging so that evidence-based policies, programs and services, and interventions can be implemented to better serve older adults and their families.
To facilitate the understanding of the role of theory, methodology, and practical applications (and implications) of scholarship in the field of aging.
To have students realize and discern the strengths and limitations of research in the field of aging. Why?
Students must be able to become "consumers" of research; that is, to be able to acknowledge and discover that virtually all publications have facets of good and "not so good" dimensions of research activity (if compared to an ideal). Some research is lacking in theory; some research is weak in methodological structure, some research is lacking in any practical or applied aspects. Our goal here is to have students take a critical role in evaluating all research so that they (we) are careful in our interpretation of what is being published as "science" or research or "facts."
Students will know that our knowledge on aging issues is incremental, evolving, and to some degree provisional. The process of knowledge is an ongoing activity. We must be careful and to some degree skeptical - as to the validity and reliability of findings. We proceed with caution and robust diligence to what we know - and do not know.

Requirements: Students will select a total of 2 journal articles from an approved list of gerontological journals (see list), and write a minimum 2-page summary (typed, double spaced) of each. Pick research based articles that are of interest to you personally or that relate to your major field of study and your research articles MUST be associated with KEY TERMS found in the textbook and module overview pages. Please analyze each article separately in terms of: What is (are) the key term(s)? What are the research questions? What is the reason for conducting the study? What was the sample size or profile? Identify major findings and conclusions. Are there implications for the future? What were the limitations and weaknesses of the each article? And, what was your opinion about the study or what did you learn?
I suggest using the AgeLine or Academic Search Premier database to help locate, identify, and select your research articles. You can find out more about AgeLine or Academic Search Premier by going to the database home page. at the Marriott library. The articles must come from different journals. The journal articles should be published in the last 2 years or so (2015 to present) and students must provide the full reference in APA format (e.g., author(s), year, title, journal, volume, number, and pages) to the article along with the summary. Simply replicating or using the abstract of the article, or any part of it, for the assignment is plagiarism and this would result in no credit for the assignment. Further sanctions would be pursued as necessary including a failing grade for the entire course.
This assignment allows students to individualize the course readings to meet their own personal and professional interests and will help students become more familiar with the professional gerontology literature.
*Please view the Library Tutorials and Help learning module prior to beginning this assignment. Also, there is a list of acceptable journals. The use of any other journal will require permission.

Older Adult Interview:
Each student will conduct three interviews with ONE (1) person (the same person) age 65 or over (preferably 85+) using a semi-structured guide prepared by the instructor. The interviews will take about 30-
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH COLLEGE OF NURSING

45 minutes each and deal with the elder's sense of subjective well-being, self-concept, attitudes about aging, predictors of optimal aging and life satisfaction, and specific needs and concerns of the elder.

Interview Guide and Forms for Older Consultant Assignment
Interview guide and Forms: OA Interview Guide.docx

Students will complete the interview forms and write a 5-page paper (double spaced) describing the circumstances of the interview and their reactions to what was learned through the experience of conducting the interview. The paper should integrate class lecture and/or text reading with the interview experience. You will receive a higher (better) grade if you weave in class concepts and issues. The completed interview/reaction paper will be graded on a scale up to 60 points. No record of the interviewee's names will be kept to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. This assignment is due by the end of the semester.

Quizzes
Each week you will take a five question multiple choice quiz based on the textbook readings. These weekly quizzes take the place of a multiple choice final exam at the end of the course.

Cumulative Essays
This is the final assignment of the course. These are not discussion questions, nor are they something quick to dash off an answer to. These are full questions and require full answers. The bad news, and the good news, is that there are only two questions.
Please consider your entire semester, remember what you have learned and discovered, and provide a comprehensive, detailed, insightful answer to each of these. Use examples from the text, the course, the video lectures, and the supplemental assignments.
These are not opinion pieces. You must be able to support your answers.
Your question 1 answer should be a page at minimum and your question 2 answer should be two pages minimum. Limit your submission to six pages

LATE ASSIGNMENT/MISSED ASSIGNMENTS POLICY:

Please notify me in advance when you have a situation that will affect your timeliness in submitting assignments. It is understood that emergencies can arise that may require special arrangements with the instructor. To receive any partial credit, all work must be turned in by the final project due date and time.

Assignments are due the dates and times specified in the syllabus. The course does not have extra credit. You may, however, turn in work after the due date, or re-submit substandard work, for a single grade deduction (i.e., a B instead of an A, a C+ instead of a B+).

PLAGIARISM POLICY:

Refer to UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS- Chapter X - CODE OF STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ("STUDENT CODE") Section I.B.2.” “Plagiarism” means the intentional unacknowledged use or incorporation of any other person’s work in, or as the basis for, one’s own work offered for academic consideration or credit, or for public presentation. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, representing as one’s own, without attribution, any other individual’s words, phrasing, ideas, sequence of ideas, information or any other mode or content of expression. While students may not realize they are plagiarizing, the consequences may be significant and may affect program progression. The complete University of Utah Code of Student Rights can be found on the University web site, at http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php. The complete College of Nursing Handbook can be found on the College of Nursing website, at http://nursing.utah.edu/pdfs/dnphandbook.pdf. It is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with these documents.
This syllabus is meant to serve as an outline and guide for our course. Please note that I may modify it with reasonable notice to you. I may also modify the Course Schedule to accommodate the needs of our class. Any changes will be announced and posted on Canvas under Announcements.

**GRADING SCALE:**

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**ONLINE GUIDELINES:**

There are unique responsibilities that come with taking an online course.

**Electronic or equipment failure:** It is your responsibility to maintain your computer and other equipment needed to participate in online forums. **Equipment failures are not an acceptable excuse for late or absent assignments, quizzes, or exams.**

**Computer literacy:** You will need to gain access to a computer and to the Internet at least three (3) times per week, as well as to MS Word®, & PowerPoint®. It is assumed that you have a basic knowledge of computers, including but not limited to how to navigate the Internet, attach a document to an email and send the email with the attachment, and use basic software packages (e.g. MS Word®).

**Assignment archiving:** To prevent problems involving corrupt or lost files, each assignment should be saved in at least two places (e.g. on hard and flash drive; and on drive or as attachment to an email message you send to yourself). Each student is responsible for making sure assignments (including attachments) are submitted before the deadline, via the Assignment Dropbox, using the requested software in the required version, with the required extension. This generally means a MS Word® (.doc or .docx) or MS PowerPoint® (.ppt or .pptx) files.

**Naming files for submission:** When submitting individual assignments, name files with your last name followed by an underscore and the assignment name (e.g., Harrison_endnote1.docx). **Do not put spaces in the file names** as Canvas inserts a %20 where the space is and may lead to assignment confusion.
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH COLLEGE OF NURSING

Classroom equivalency: Discussion threads, e-mails, and chat rooms are all considered to be equivalent to classrooms, and student behavior within those environments shall conform to the Student Code. Specifically:

- Posting photos or comments that would be off-topic in a classroom are still off-topic in a discussion thread.
- Off-color language is never appropriate.
- Using angry or abusive language is called "flaming", is not acceptable, and will be dealt with according to the Student Code.
- Do not use ALL CAPS, except for titles, since it is the equivalent of shouting online, as is overuse of certain punctuation marks such as exclamation points !!!!! and question marks ??????.
- E-mail, e-journals, and other online communications in the course are part of the classroom and as such, are University property and subject to GRAMA regulations and the Student Code. Privacy regarding these communications between correspondents must not be assumed and should be mutually agreed upon in advance, in writing.
- Instructors are required to respond to e-mails in a “reasonable” amount of time. If you have not received a reply to an email communication within 3 business days (Monday through Friday), please contact the instructor again - emails occasionally do not reach the intended recipient.

EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE:

- Email communication is the official communication medium of the University. Faculty will respond to your email correspondence within 3 business days (i.e. Monday through Friday) and expect that students will respond to faculty email correspondence in the same time frame. Please re-send your email and/or contact faculty by phone if you do receive a response to your email within these parameters.
- Faculty expects that students will check their Canvas email at least three (3) times per week.
- Students can email faculty through our Canvas email.
- Electronic communication etiquette includes respectfully addressing the recipient of the email and use of appropriate font (use of all caps, all bolded, or all italicized font is equivalent to yelling or ‘flaming’ and is unacceptable). Please write out all words. The use of acronyms may lead to misinterpretation. If you are uncertain of your electronic communication, please speak directly with us.

FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES:

Your faculty will:
- Treat students with respect
- Inform students at beginning of class of general content, course activities, evaluation methods, grading, and schedule
- Convene scheduled classes unless valid reason and notice are given to students
- Respond to email correspondence and phone calls in a timely manner*
- Perform high quality, constructive evaluations of written work and exams
- Return evaluations in a timely manner
- Make every effort to ensure an environment that is conducive to learning
- Enforce student code
ADA – Nondiscrimination and Disability Access Statement:

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. Reasonable prior notice is needed to arrange accommodations. Evidence of practices not consistent with these policies should be reported to the University’s ADA/Section 504 Coordinator: Director, Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 201 S. Presidents Cr., Rm 135, Salt Lake City, UT. 84112. (801)581-8365 (V/TDD).

Faculty and Student Responsibilities:

“All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee.”

“Faculty…must strive in the classroom to maintain a climate conducive to thinking and learning.” PPM 8-12.3, B.

“Students have a right to support and assistance from the University in maintaining a climate conducive to thinking and learning.” PPM 8-10, II. A.

Wellness Statement:

Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student’s ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness - www.wellness.utah.edu; 801-581-7776.

Veteran’s Statement:

If you are a student veteran, I want you to know that the U of Utah has a Veterans Support Center on campus. They are located in Room 161 in the Olpin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. Please visit their website for more information about what support they offer, a list of ongoing events and links to outside resources: http://veteranscenter.utah.edu/. Please also let me know if you need any additional support in this class for any reason.

LGBT Resource Center:

If you are a member of the LGBTQ community, I want you to know that my classroom is a safe zone. Additionally, please know that the U of Utah has an LGBT Resource Center on campus. They are located in Room 409 in the Oplin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. You can visit their website to find more information about the support they can offer, a list of events through the center and links to additional resources: http://lgbt.utah.edu/. Please also let me know if there is any additional support you need in this class.
Sexual Misconduct:

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran’s status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776.

Learners of English as a Second Language:

If you are an English language learner, please be aware of several resources on campus that will support you with your language development and writing. These resources include: the Department of Linguistics EAS Program (http://linguistics.utah.edu/eas-program/); the Writing Center (http://writingcenter.utah.edu/); the Writing Program (http://writing-program.utah.edu/); the English Language Institute (http://continue.utah.edu/eli/). Please let me know if there is any additional support you would like to discuss for this class.