Introduction to Gerontology CEGT5258

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Christian Education Division

Professor Name
Professor Title
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The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

Purpose of the Course

The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the major concepts and issues related to the aging process and to challenge students to minister effectively with older adults.

Core Value Focus

Doctrinal Integrity – Knowing that the Bible is the Word of God, we believe it, teach it, proclaim it, and submit to it. The doctrinal statements used in our evaluations are our Articles of Religious Belief and the Baptist Faith and Message Statement.
Spiritual Vitality – We are a worshiping community, with both personal spirituality and gathering together as a Seminary for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in His Word.
Mission Focus – We are not here merely to get an education or to give one. We are here to change the world by fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.
Characteristic Excellence – What we do, we do to the utmost of our abilities and resources as a testimony to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
Servant Leadership – We follow the model of Jesus and exert leadership and influence through the nurture and encouragement of those around us.
Annually, the President will designate a core value that will become the focus of pedagogy for the year. For 2013-2014 academic year that Core Value is *Doctrinal Integrity*.

Curriculum Competencies Addressed

This course will address the following curriculum competencies:

1. *Interpersonal relationships:* This course will encourage students to value all persons as being made in the image of God.

2. *Disciple making:* This course assists students in applying their knowledge and understanding of the aging process to ministry with older adults.

Course Description

This course is an interdisciplinary introduction to the major concepts and issues pertinent to the study of the aging process. Theoretical content is combined with practical issues. The course is designed to provide an overview for the generalist in ministry with the elderly and to offer stimulation for further detailed study for the specialist.

Learning Objectives

The student involved in this course should be able to accomplish the following:

1. Think critically about the aging process by considering the social, psychological, biological, and spiritual characteristics of older persons.

2. Articulate their views related to their own aging process.

3. Value older persons.

4. Demonstrate skill in utilizing community resources to assist older persons.

5. Develop a plan for churches to respond to the needs of older persons.

6. Relate effectively to aging persons.

Required Reading

The following text is required reading for class discussions and is to be read in its entirety unless otherwise specified.

Required Text

Wilmoth, Janet, and Kenneth Ferraro, eds. *Gerontology: Perspectives and Issues*, 3d ed. New York: Springer, 2007.

Course Teaching Methodology

Units of Study
Unit 1 Introduction to the Field of Gerontology
Unit 2 Demographics of the Aging Population
Unit 3 Physical Aspects of Aging
Unit 4 Mental Health
Unit 5 Disabilities
Unit 6 Nutrition and Exercise
Unit 7 Social Aspects of Aging
Unit 8 Friends, Family, and Community
Unit 9 Work and Leisure

Unit 10 Retirement and Finances
Unit 11Housing Choices
Unit 12 Death, Dying, and Bereavement
Unit 13 Policies and Programs
Unit 14 Conclusion

Teaching Method. This course will be taught in the classroom using in-class lecture, discussion, small groups, case studies, exams, and personal evaluation exercises.

Assignments and Evaluation Criteria

I. Interviews. Each student will conduct three interviews with adults representing three stages of senior adulthood: young old, 65-74; middle old, 75-84; and oldest-old, 85 and older. The focus of each interview is to be life satisfaction, particularly as it relates to the person's perception of the aging process. The interviews should contain basic information about the person including but not limited to physical health, mental well-being, emotional adjustment, support system, financial resources, living arrangements, activity level, church/community involvement. The interviews may be submitted as a verbatim or in summary format.

In addition to the interviews, each student should submit a 3-4 page reflection paper (typed, double-spaced, Turabian format) on the interview process, the persons interviewed, and the insights gained from the interviews.

II. Personal View of Aging Paper
Write a 4-5 page paper (typed, double-spaced, Turabian format) examining your personal view of aging. Include the following:
a) Describe your interaction with older persons when you were a child. How did these experiences influence your view of aging?
b) Describe your own process of aging. How do you feel about the age you are now? What are your fears about aging? What pleasant experiences do you anticipate as you age?
c) What is healthy aging? Discuss any role models you have had for healthy aging.
d) How do your religious beliefs affect your view of aging?
e) How has this course influenced your attitudes toward your own aging experience?

III. Web Research Exercise. Review 10 different websites on aging or aging-related topics. For each source, write a ½ page critique that includes: a) a brief description of the content of the site; b) an evaluation of the quality of the site; c) suggestions for using the site as a tool for working with older adults in churches and community agencies.

IV. Final Exam. Students will complete a final exam on the assigned date.

Course Evaluation

Assignment	Percentage of Grade	Due Date
Interviews	35%	
Personal View of Aging Paper	25%	
Web Research Exercise	15%	
Final Exam	25%	

Course Policies

Policies Regarding Assignments
All work is due on the assigned day and at the assigned time. Grades for late submissions will be reduced by 10 points.

Academic Integrity
Each student is responsible for the academic integrity of his/her work. The following are examples of violations of academic integrity: cheating on an exam, plagiarism, turning in work done by someone else, and submitting a paper which has been submitted in another class. These and other violations of academic integrity may result in failure of the course.

Academic Policies
Academic policies related to absences, examinations, and other topics can be found in the *New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Academic Catalog.*

Classroom Decorum
Each student is expected to treat the professor and other students with respect; arrive on time for class sessions; and use laptops and other technological devices for class purposes only.

Blackboard
Blackboard will be used in this class. Please make sure that your contact information on Blackboard is accurate and up-to-date. An access code for the course will be e-mailed to enrolled students. If you need assistance accessing Blackboard, please contact the Information Technology Center.

Netiquette
Appropriate Online Behavior. Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior when working online on Discussion Boards or whenever interaction occurs through web, digital, or other electronic medium. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity is expected at all times in the online environment.

Academic Honesty Policy
All graduate and undergraduate NOBTS students, whether on-campus, internet, or extension center students, are expected to adhere to the highest Christian standard of honesty and integrity when completing academic assignments for all courses in every delivery system format. The Bible provides our standard for academic integrity and honesty. This standard applies whether a student is taking tests, quizzes, exams, writing papers, completing Discussion Boards, or any other course requirement.

Course Schedule

Unit	Topics/Reading Assignments
Unit 1	Introduction to the Field of Gerontology

	Wilmoth & Ferraro, Chapter 1
Unit 2	Demographics of the Aging Population
	Wilmoth & Ferraro, Chapter 2
Unit 3	Physical Aspects of Aging
	Wilmoth & Ferraro, Chapter 3
Unit 4	Mental Health
	Wilmoth & Ferraro, Chapters 4, 6
Unit 5	Disabilities
	Wilmoth & Ferraro, Chapter 5
Unit 6	Nutrition and Exercise
	Wilmoth & Ferraro, Chapter 7
Unit 7	Social Aspects of Aging
	Wilmoth & Ferraro, Chapter 8
Unit 8	Friends, Family, and Community
	Wilmoth & Ferraro, Chapter 9
Unit 9	Work and Leisure
	Wilmoth & Ferraro, Chapter 10
Unit 10	Retirement and Finances
	Wilmoth & Ferraro, Chapters 12, 15
Unit 11	Housing Choices
	Wilmoth & Ferraro, Chapters 11, 14
Unit 12	Death, Dying, and Bereavement
	Wilmoth & Ferraro, Chapter 13
Unit 13	Policies and Programs
	Wilmoth & Ferraro, Chapters 16-17
Unit 14	Conclusion
	Final Exam

Selected Bibliography

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Braun, K. L., Cheang, M., and Shigeta, D. (2005). Increasing knowledge, skills, and empathy among direct care workers in elder care: A preliminary study of an active-learning model. *Gerontologist, 45*(1), 118-124.

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Gibson, M. J. and Houser, A. (2007). *Valuing the invaluable: A new look at the economic value of family caregiving* (pp. 1-12). AARP Public Policy Institute.

Goodman, C., and Silverstein, M. (2002). Grandmothers raising grandchildren: Family structure and well-being in culturally diverse families. *Gerontologist, 42*(5), 676-689.

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Soliz, J., and Harwood, J. (2006). Shared family identity, age salience, and intergroup contact: Investigation of the grandparent-grandchild relationships. *Communication Monographs*, *73*(1), 87–107.

Townsend, P. (2006). Policies for the aged in the 21st century: More 'structured dependency' or the realization of human rights? *Ageing & Society, 26*(2), 161-179.

Zhang, Y., Harwood, J., Williams, A., Ylänne-McEwen, V., Wadleigh, P., and Thimm, C. (2006). The portrayal of older adults in advertising. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 25*(3), 264-282.