

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS
Department of Sociology
SOC 4550: Sociology of Aging
Spring, 2022, MWF 10:00-10:50, Wooten Hall, Room 116

Dale E. Yeatts, Ph.D.
Office Hours: by appointment

Sycamore Hall, Suite 288J
Phone: 940-565-2238
email: <http://www.yeatts.us>

I. Learning Objectives

- A. to understand the social, biological, and psychological aspects of Aging
- B. to gain knowledge of Aging norms, statuses and stereotypes
- C. to gain knowledge of the theories and research methods relevant to Aging
- D. to gain knowledge of Aging and its relationship to politics, religion, family, and work
- E. to understand the use and evolution of assisted-living, nursing homes, and health services
- F. to understand social security, Medicare, Medicaid, and health insurance for the Aged

II. Learning Components

- A. Readings: To help meet the objectives, the following books are required reading (available on Amazon.com and at UNT bookstore):

Required:

Harris, Diana (2007). The Sociology of Aging. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

- B. Class time: will be focused on the objectives through class lectures, discussions, videos, and when it can be arranged professionals speaking to the class

III. Course Policies

- A. Class Attendance: regular and punctual class attendance is expected. It will be difficult to master all the material if class is missed. While students will not be penalized for missing class (unless a student misses more than half the semester) *they will be penalized for coming to class late or leaving class early since these disrupt the class*. If you need to come late or leave early, please let Dr. Yeatts know beforehand. Students can gain extra credit points by attending class (see below). Students who miss a lot of class will be given no leeway in grading while students who miss no or only a few classes will be given much leeway in grading (e.g., a grade of 88 might be moved up to a 90 and an "A").
- B. Academic integrity: as the student guidebook points out, academic integrity is required. Plagiarism and cheating will result in failure and a report to the Dean.
- C. Acceptable Student Behavior: Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and

disruptive and will not be tolerated. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior (including continual texting during class) will not receive extra credit for class attendance and may be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr

- D. Special Needs: UNT's counseling center provides free career and personal counseling to UNT students (up to 8 sessions per year). Appointments can be made by calling 940-565-2741. I strongly encourage you to use this service particularly if you are struggling through a difficult time in your life. It certainly can't hurt and it may help a great deal (the Dept of Psychology also offers counseling services). For our class, appropriate adjustments and auxiliary aid are available for persons with disabilities. See Dr. Yeatts and/or call 817-565-2456 (TDD access 1-800-735-2989).
- E. Cell Phones, texting, and not giving attention: you should know that many professors and instructors find it insulting when a student in class is constantly texting or using his/her phone or otherwise focused on other things than class. Consequently, if the time comes that the student wants some "leeway" in her/his grade, and the student has constantly not paid attention during class, no leeway will be given and *points could be removed*.
- F. Laptops may not be used in class unless the student sits in the front row. Unfortunately, past experience shows that some students with laptops use them for purposes other than the class and this, in turn, distracts students around them.
- G. Grading: final grades will be based on the following:
1. Four (4) tests will be given worth 25% each of your final grade. The tests are cumulative only to the extent that it may be difficult to understand one chapter without having read and understood the previous chapters. The format is expected to include multiple choice, true/false questions and discussion questions. Grades will be posted on Dr. Yeatts' web page. (go to www.yeatts.us, click on 4550: Sociology of Aging, click on grades).

You are responsible for using the restroom prior to the beginning of a test so **do not ask to use the restroom** in the middle of a test (unfortunately a few of us would use this as an opportunity to review our notes in the middle of taking the test).

2. Test Dates:

Feb. 16 (Wednesday) Test 1	25%
March 9 (Wednesday) Test 2	25%
April 13 (Wednesday) Test 3	25%
May (7 th , Saturday, 8:30-10:00am) Test 4 (during exam week)	25%

3. Make-up Tests: may be allowed within one week from the original exam day. The test score will be reduced by one letter grade unless there is documentation or other means of verifying an illness or other serious situation.
4. Class Participation: Those who contribute meaningful, thoughtful, and knowledgeable comments/ideas will receive extra points added to their final grade if their final grade is close to the next higher grade (unless the student has missed a lot of class). For example, an 88 could be raised to a 90. Similarly, those who attend all (or almost all) classes will receive extra points.
5. Extra Credit Opportunities: There are two ways to obtain extra credit. Please see the “**Opportunities for Extra Credit**” below for details.

H. How to Study for Tests:

1. Read carefully and give thought to the assigned chapters to be covered on the test (ideally keep up weekly; there are not a lot of pages to read but there is a lot of information and thought provoking ideas within the pages).
2. Learn the major concepts and ideas presented in the chapters.
3. Learn the information provided during class and on Power Point slides provided on Dr. Yeatts’ webpage (www.yeatts.us).
4. **Study guide questions** will be placed on Dr. Yeatts’ web page (www.yeatts.us) a few days before the test is given (the study guide will not be created until after the test has been created which is a few days before the test is given). The study guide questions will be developed from the test questions. The study guide will provide a good “practice test.” If you can answer the study guide questions you will increase your chances of knowing the answers to the test questions. On the other hand, only using the study guide questions to study for the test would make it difficult to obtain a high grade.

IV. **Schedule of Class Topics and Reading Assignments**

Week 1 (January 19):

Overview of class

Chapter 1: The Field and Its Methods (and theories of aging)

youtube: experience of being old

Week 2 (January 24):

Chapter 2: Population, Boomers, and Longevity

Week 3 (January 31):

Chapter 3: Age Norms and Age Statuses

Week 4 (February 7)

Chapter 4: Cultural Values

Test 1 on Chapters 1-4 (February 16, Wednesday)

(all PowerPoint slides shown in class will be provided before the test on Dr. Yeatts' webpage; films listed in the syllabus may or may not be shown depending on time available)

Week 5 (February 18):

Chapter 5: Social, Biological, and Psychological Aspects of Aging

- theories

Week 6 (February 21):

Chapter 6: Social Groups, Organizations, and Retirement Communities

- The positive side of aging

Chapter 7: Social Stratification and Class

- Healthy Lifestyles Paradigm
- Factors affecting hospital readmissions

Week 7 (February 28):

Chapter 8: The Minority Elderly

Test 2, Week 8, on Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 (March 9, Wednesday)

(all PowerPoint slides shown in class will be provided before the test on Dr. Yeatts' webpage; films listed in the syllabus may or may not be shown depending on time available)

Week 9: SPRING BREAK (March 14 – 18)

Week 10 (March 21)

Chapter 9: The Family and Education

Chapter 10: The Economy: Work and Retirement

Week 11 (March 28)

Chapter 11: Politics and Religion

- Older Americans Act
- U.S. Office on Aging
- Area Agencies on Aging

Week 12 (April 4):

Chapter 12: Deviance

Test 3 on Chapters 9, 10 11, and 12 (April 13, Wednesday)

(all PowerPoint slides shown in class will be provided before the test on Dr. Yeatts' webpage; films listed in the syllabus may or may not be shown depending on time available)

Week 13 (April 15)

Chapter 13: Assisted Living, Nursing Homes and Health

Week 14 (April 18)

Chapter 14: Death and Dying

Week 15 (April 25)

Chapter 15: Income and Health Security

Test 4 on Chapters 13, 14 and 15: taken on Exam Day for our class day/time (May 7th, Saturday, 8:30-10:00am)

Opportunities for Extra Credit

1. Library Research Paper

Collect cartoons and comic strips that focus on a “sustainable community development” topic (e.g., effects of traffic on health; effects of toxic industry on communities; public policy’s effects on a community). At the same time, do a library search on the topic to identify scholarly, peer-reviewed research articles on the topic (you can use popular magazines such as Time or “internet” sources but these should be no more than 10% of your citations/references). Write a 5 - 10 page paper, double spaced, and use comic sans font size 12 with one inch margins except for the left side which should be 1 ½ inches. You will receive up to 3 extra points added to your final grade depending on the apparent effort put into the paper (wasn’t written the night before) its organization, and how well it is researched and written.

For the paper do the following: (1) present copies of the cartoons and strips in color where possible (these do not count as part of the 5 – 10 typed, double-spaced pages), (2) discuss the topic using peer reviewed journal articles and citing them in the paper and providing the full citation at the end of the paper, and (3) for a **fourth extra-credit point** you can present your project to the class (but not necessary), if approved by the professor. The paper must be turned in two weeks before the end of the semester. If you present your paper, use PowerPoint or some other way of displaying some of the most interesting cartoons/comic strips. You will need to provide the PowerPoints to the professor several days before the presentation. If you wait until the last few days before deciding to do this, it will show in what you turn in and the number of points received will be less (or possibly none at all).

2. In-Class Assignments

Students will be given the opportunity to obtain extra credit points during class. For example, students may be asked to work in groups during class to solve one or more problems and then each student will turn in her/his own answer(s) before the end of class and one or more extra points will be added to the student’s next test grade. Students who are absent, or come to class late, or leave class early will not be eligible for these extra points. A student who does not miss class may accumulate as many as 8 points to be added to his/her next test grade.

Covid Related Information: The professor and students are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering during class. UNT's Student Health Center does Covid testing if you would like to get tested. If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>) please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your health care provider PRIOR to coming to campus. UNT also encourages you to contact the UNT COVID Hotline at 844-366-5892 or COVID@unt.edu for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure. While attendance is an important part of succeeding in this class, your own health, and those of others in the community, is more important.

*****If our class is moved on line, we will keep everything as it is currently planned but, instead of meeting in class, we will meet through zoom (meeting id: 9404537257). Students who log in to the class and are visible will receive an extra point for that day. The tests will be given on line through canvas.**