**THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK**

**Course Syllabus: Human Behavior in the Social Environment II (SOWK 4500)**

**Fall 2025**

**Class Time & Location**: Chilton Hall 274, Thursdays, 2:00pm-4:50pm

**Instructor Information:**
Jessica Grace, PhD, LMSW
Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work.
Jessica.grace@unt.edu (preferred way to reach me)

**Office location:** Chilton Hall 390E.  **Office Hours:** Tuesdays 10am-12pm, or by appointment

**Office Phone:** 940-369-7095
**Response Time:** I will do my best to respond to all emails within 48 hours (Monday - Friday during the hours of 8 - 5 p.m.) unless it is a holiday or break. Please send a follow-up email if you do not hear back from me within this timeframe.

# COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is the second course of the two-semester Human Behavior in the Social Environment (HBSE) sequence. It examines a multidimensional, person and environment framework addressing the interactions between the varied biological, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual factors that influence behavior in a multicultural society. Students will analyze theories of human development, functioning, and well-being in the second half of the life span from middle adulthood to older adulthood and end of life.

Secondary goals for the course are familiarization with current topics of debate within the profession, an understanding of different perspectives, and exposure to professional social work values and ethics in practice with diverse client systems across the lifespan. Social work services within the community will be explored, the requirements for social work practice will be presented, and opportunities provided to discover various practice opportunities in the field.

# COMPETENCIES & PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) approved the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) for accredited programs in 2022. This course will emphasize the competencies and performance behaviors as indicated below.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Core Competency** | **Course Objectives** | **Assessment** |
| Competency 1: Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior (2022 EPAS) | 1. Students will demonstrate ethical and professional decision-making by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to the context. | * Exams
* Discussion posts
* Movie Review Group Presentation
* Life story paper
* In class activities
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| Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice (2022 EPAS) | 2. Students will apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies. | * Movie Review Group Presentation
* Life Story Interview paper
* In class activities
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| Competency #4: Engage in practice informed research and research- informed practice (2022 EPAS) | 3. Students will use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy and service delivery. | * Movie Review Group Presentation
* Life Story Interview Paper
* Reflection Activity
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# REQUIRED MATERIALS

* **Required Textbook:** Hutchison, E. D (2015). *Dimensions of Human Behavior: The Changing Life Course* (5th/6th Edition) Los Angeles: Sage.
* This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, ***students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas Learning Management System.***
* All other required readings/materials will be made available in Canvas as relevant to the topics in this course.

# SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

* American Psychological Association (2020). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association
* [Guidelines for Respectful Discussion](https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/guideline%20for%20discussions.pdf)[Online Writing Lab provided by Purdue University](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html)

# TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

My philosophy focuses on an empowerment approach to teaching. My goal for students is not to simply to learn the foundational concepts or skills of social work practice, but to empower them to become effective agents of change in their communities. This perspective informs how I view my role as an educator and my approach to teaching. I do not see my role as merely to disseminate knowledge, but as an active facilitator of learning. This tends to lead me to more constructivist teaching strategies, emphasizing collaboration, active learning, and learner-focused tasks.

Because social workers often engage in complicated societal problems, it is imperative that students learn how to apply their coursework to similar situations. My goals in class are that students develop their critical thinking skills through activities that present conflicting values or priorities to resolve and teach students how to effectively collaborate with peers. Small group discussions, problem-based learning activities, and case studies are my preferred strategies for active learning. My evaluation of students is based on their ability to apply social work concepts to these scenarios and articulate their rationale for their proposed solutions.

# INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

The primary teaching approach in this course is collaborative learning. This class will be taught using a variety of online methods, including lectures by the instructor and online components, including discussions, videos, small group exercises, articles, guest speakers, examinations, readings, and lectures. The content for this course will challenge you to think more critically and explore your feelings regarding sensitive and provocative issues. All modalities are geared toward helping you develop as future professionals in whatever discipline you are pursuing.

## COMMUNICATION

Information/updates on this course can be found on Canvas. You are responsible for checking at least once a week for updates/changes to the course readings and assignments. You are also responsible for checking your UNT email account. Your UNT email account is an official means of communication, and **it is the only account used for all emails**. Not checking email is not an excuse for missing any coursework.

Please remember to keep all communication with your instructor professional. Keep in mind that anytime you write something in an email message, it is there forever. All emails should be written in a professional manner and spell checked before being sent. It is unacceptable to send an email as one might send a text message with abbreviations, text-like acronyms, no capitalization or periods. If I receive an email from you like this, you will be asked to compose a professional e-mail before I respond. Also remember that emailing your instructor should not take the place of face-to-face conversation. Students who are encountering problems are invited to make an appointment or come during office hours to talk with the instructor.

Connect with me through email and/or by attending office hours. My inbox becomes rather full during busy times, but I will do my best to respond to all emails within 24 hours (Monday-Friday) unless it is a holiday or break. Please send a follow-up email if you do not hear back from me within this timeframe.

**COURSE POLICIES**

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| --- | --- |
| **Student Expectations*** Please be active and participate in class.
* Listen and respect others.
* Be comfortable taking risks.
* Complete all assignments.
* Turn off your cell phones and take out earbuds/headphones during class.
* Be punctual for all classes.
* Discuss class concerns either after class or during designated office hours.
* Be prepared for class by completing assigned readings prior to lesson.
 | **Instructor Expectations*** Be active and enthusiastic to facilitate student learning.
* Listen and respect students’ views.
* Be in class at least 5 minutes before and after class.
* Respond swiftly and effectively to student concerns.
* Turn off cell phone during class.
* Grade objectively, consistently, and in a timely manner.
* Be prepared for class.
* Accommodate differences in student learning.
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**ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION POLICY**

Student participation is a basic and expected requirement of the course. Respectful dialogue with peers and engaging in group activities is an essential part of the learning process. Points for attendance are factored into your final grade. Because we only meet once a week, every class meeting is essential to your success. Furthermore, arriving late and/or leaving early may also negatively impact your grade. Attendance will be taken during each class period. **If you are more than fifteen minutes late or leave more than fifteen minutes early (without prior approval), you will be counted as absent for the entire class. Each student will be allowed two excused absences in this class without penalty.** No documentation is required for these absences. However, each additional absence after that will result in a 30-point reduction from the student’s overall class points for attendance. Students are responsible for any materials or assignments that are missed during any absences. In all cases, communication with your instructor is essential.

Additional absences may be excused only with documentation in accordance with UNT attendance policy as stated in the [Student Attendance and Authorized Absences Policy (PDF)](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-039) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-039>).

# ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity emanates from a culture that embraces the core values of trust and honesty necessary for full learning to occur. As a student-centered public research university, UNT promotes the integrity of the learning process by establishing and enforcing academic standards. Academic dishonesty breaches the mutual trust necessary in an academic environment and undermines all scholarship. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, forging the signature of the instructor or of another student, fabrication, and/ or facilitating or sabotaging the academic dishonesty of other students.

Any suspected occurrence of academic dishonesty will be investigated and handled in accordance with UNT policy and procedures. The following academic penalties may be assessed at the instructor’s discretion upon the determination that academic dishonesty has occurred. *Admonitions and educational assignments are not appealable.*

1. *Admonition*. The student may be issued a verbal or written warning.
2. *Assignment of Educational Coursework*. The student may be required to perform additional coursework not required of other students in the specific course.
3. *Partial or no credit for an assignment or assessment*. The instructor may award partial or no credit for the assignment or assessment on which the student engaged in academic dishonesty, to be calculated into the final course grade.
4. *Course Failure.* The instructor may assign a failing grade for the course.

Should the procedure for appeal of a case of academic dishonesty extend beyond the date when the instructor submits course grades for the semester, the student will be assigned a grade that reflects the

penalty, which shall be adjusted, as appropriate, at the conclusion of any appeal process.

Specific details and description of UNT’s Policy on Student Standards of Academic Integrity (18.1.16) and student's right to appeal are available at https://policy.unt.edu/policydesc/student-standards-academic- integrity-18-1-16

# REGARDING AI:

## In this course, I want you to engage deeply with the materials and develop your own critical thinking and writing skills. For this reason, the use of Generative AI (GenAI) tools like [ Claude, ChatGPT, and Gemini] is not permitted. While these tools can be helpful in some contexts, they do not align with our goal of fostering the development of your independent thinking. Using GenAI to complete any part of an assignment, exam, or coursework will be considered a violation of academic integrity, as it prevents the development of your own skills, and will be addressed according to the [Student Academic Integrity policy](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>)

# DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access) website (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

# STUDENT CONDUCT

Any student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct the class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in any instructional setting at UNT. This includes traditional face-to-face classes, online or blended classes, labs, discussion groups or boards, field trips, and verbal and/or written (including email) communication with the instructor and/or other students. Examples of unacceptable behavior include but are not limited to, disrespectful treatment of other students (verbal or written), disrupting lectures, and use of inappropriate or profane language or gestures in class or other instructional settings.

A student engaging in unacceptable behavior may be directed to leave the classroom or other instructional setting and may also be referred to the Dean of Students to consider whether their conduct violates UNT’s Student Code of Conduct. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [www.unt.edu/csrr.](http://www.unt.edu/csrr)

# SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct.

If you are a survivor of relational or sexual violence, there is support for you. There are on- and off-campus resources available to survivors at no cost. Counseling and Testing Services can provide confidential mental health counseling. They are in Chestnut Hall 311. You may also call (940) 565-2741 to schedule an appointment. Denton County Friends of the Family is a community agency that offers free counseling and 24/7 crisis hotline services to survivors. Contact them at (940) 387- 5131. The UNT Survivor advocate can assist in reporting options, arrange for academic and housing accommodations, schedule appointments and help connect students to UNT and other community resources. They are in Union 409 and can be contacted at (940) 565-2648. To report sexual misconduct to Equal Opportunity & Title IX, visit report.unt.edu. The UNT Police Department can be contacted at (940) 565-3000.

**PROFESSIONAL ETIQUETTE**

The college experience is intended to assist in preparing students for professional and career pursuits. That preparation includes learning to use professional etiquette in dealing with people in positions of authority. The appropriate way to address your instructor depends on their particular educational credentials. These are usually indicated on the course syllabus. If your instructor has a:

* Doctorate (Ph.D. or Ed.D.), you should address them as Dr. Instructor’s last name
* Master’s degrees (MA, MS, MSW, MSSW) you should address them as Professor Instructor’s last name

If you are not certain about an instructor’s education credentials, you should address them as “Professor.” It is not appropriate to call the instructor by their first name unless given permission.

Professional etiquette extends to all types of communication with your instructor. Written communication—including email—forms a permanent record and so it is important to use care about how you make requests, ask questions, or express concerns. Slang (*e.g.,* Hey, Yo) and texting abbreviations should be avoided. The use of profanity is not permitted.

Any type of communication—verbal or written—is most likely to achieve the intended result when it is polite or courteous. Please note that communication can be polite even if there is some type of conflict involved. Instructors may choose not to respond to emails or other forms of communication that is perceived as insulting, disrespectful, or unprofessional.

# REQUESTS TO DROP THE CLASS

We want you to succeed in this class and at UNT. If you are concerned about your progress in the course or believe you need to drop for other reasons, it is important that you contact the instructor as soon as possible. We want to make sure that dropping the course is your best or only option.There are consequences to dropping classes that extend beyond losing your invested time, money, and effort. Dropping one or more classes may make you ineligible for financial aid. There are also limits on the number of courses you can drop. You can learn more about this at <http://registrar.unt.edu/registration/> dropping-class. Check with the Registrar’s Office or UNT Academic Calendar on deadlines for withdrawing or dropping a class

**REQUESTS FOR AN INCOMPLETE**
Students must meet specific criteria to be eligible to receive an incomplete in a course. Review these guidelines on UNT’s Incomplete Grade policy is available at [http://registrar.unt.edu/grades/incompletes.](http://registrar.unt.edu/grades/incompletes)

# RETENTION OF STUDENT RECORDS

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Coursework completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual records; however, information about students’ records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University’s policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

UNT is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty that prevents students from completing a time-sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and contact the UNT Student Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu or 940.565.2324 and obtain a ticket number. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time. Always keep a copy of your work before submitting it in case glitches or errors occur.

## Academic Support & Student Services Student Support Services

## *Mental Health*

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

* + Student Health and Wellness Center (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-

center)

* + Counseling and Testing Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
	+ UNT Care Team (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care)
	+ UNT Psychiatric Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/ services/psychiatry)
	+ Individual Counseling (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/ individual-counseling)

*Chosen Names*

A chosen name is a name that a person goes by that may or may not match their legal name. If you have a chosen name that is different from your legal name and would like that to be used in class, please let the instructor know. Below is a list of resources for updating your chosen name at UNT.

* + UNT Records
	+ UNT ID Card
	+ UNT Email Address
	+ Legal Name

*\*UNT euIDs cannot be changed at this time. The collaborating offices are working on a process to make this option accessible to UNT community members.*

*Pronouns*

Pronouns (she/her, they/them, he/him, etc.) are a public way for people to address you, much like your name, and can be shared with a name when making an introduction, both virtually and in person. Just as we ask and don’t assume someone’s name, we should also ask and not assume someone’s pronouns. You can add your pronouns to your Canvas account so that they follow your name when posting to discussion boards, submitting assignments, etc.

Below is a list of additional resources regarding pronouns and their usage:

* + - * What are pronouns and why are they important?
			* How do I use pronouns?
			* How do I share my pronouns?
			* How do I ask for another person’s pronouns?
			* How do I correct myself or others when the wrong pronoun is used?

## Academic Support Services

* + Academic Resource Center (https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources)
	+ Academic Success Center (https://success.unt.edu/asc)
	+ UNT Libraries (https://library.unt.edu/)
	+ Writing Lab ([http://writingcenter.unt.edu/)](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/%29)

# EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS & PROCEDURES

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

## Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students’ access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student’s Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail to Eagle Connect (https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect).

# SUCCEED AT UNT

UNT endeavors to offer you a high-quality education and to provide a supportive environment to help you learn and grow. And, as a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student. Here’s how to succeed at UNT: Show up. Find support. Take control. Be prepared. Get involved. Be persistent. To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can achieve success, go to succeed.unt.edu.

# COURSE EVALUATION

The Student Perception of Teaching (SPOT) is required for all classes at UNT. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. The SPOT survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you with a chance to comment on how this class is taught. Please visit my.unt.edu and fill out the evaluation form when it is available.

***Please note that the instructor for this course has the option to revise or alter the course syllabus at any time as class needs dictate.***

# ASSIGNMENTS

**ASSIGNMENTS, FEEDBACK, AND MAKE-UP POLICY**

It is the expectation of this course that all assignments are completed on time. Students will receive adequate time to complete all course assignments. Please review the syllabus at the start of the semester to plan accordingly. As a result, **late work will not be accepted**.

All written assignments will be turned in on Canvas. There will be no exceptions so please pay attention to all due dates on this syllabus. Do not wait until the last day to submit assignments, as potential problems are unpredictable! Also, do not submit assignments after the deadline, thinking there will be some exception made for you. Always allow yourself a minimum of several hours to upload documents – many students report their computers freeze! Remember, even one minute late means it is late! (Note: rarely will university policies supersede these requirements).

Assignments completed for this course should first be saved on your computer and then submitted in a readable format that is friendly to an online environment (for example, PDF, Microsoft Word, Word for Mac, or Rich Text). Assignments will be submitted using the Canvas Assignment drop box.

Students will not receive any points for group presentation assignments if they miss their class presentation time. This late work policy stands for all course assignments unless due to an emergency or student services verifies via direct email to the instructor.

In general, students can expect to get immediate feedback on the exams and quizzes. For written assignments, the instructor has the goal of providing feedback to students within 2 weeks.

# MEASUREMENT

The expected course outcomes will be measured using class participation, discussion posts, quizzes, exams, assignments, and presentations.

# TECHNOLOGY CLASSROOM USE

While laptops, tablets or other digital note taking devices are permitted for appropriate classroom use, phones and earbuds should not be used during class unless you have communicated appropriately with me via email. Please ensure you continue to demonstrate professionalism and respect during class time.

# CRITERIA FOR STUDENT EVALUATION

Student's progress will be evaluated utilizing the following criteria:

 Discussion Posts (10 total for the semester) 100 points

2 Exams: Mid-term and Final (100 points each) 200 points

Course Assignments:

* Aging Scavenger Hunt 100 points
* Movie Review Presentations 150 points
* Life Stories Interview Paper 250 points
* Dementia Reflection Activity 100 points

Attendance 100 points

 **1,000 points**

| **Assignments, Exams/Quizzes, Presentations, etc.** | **Percentage** | **Points** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Weekly Discussion Posts (10 total for the semester) |  10% | 100  |
| Course Exams * Exam 1 (10%)
* Final Exam (10%)
 | 20% | 200 |
| Course Assignments * Ageism Scavenger Hunt (100 points)
* Movie Review Presentations (150 points)
* Life Stories Interview Paper (250 points)

Part 1: Intro Part 2: Complete Paper * Dementia Reflection Activity (100 points)
 | 60 % | 600  |
| Attendance & Participation | 10% | 100 |
| **TOTAL** | **100%** | **1000** |

Overall course grades will be assigned based on:
A = 900 - 1000 points
B = 800 - 899 points

C = 700 - 799 points

D = 600 - 699 points

F = < 600 points

# COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

It is expected that readings will be done **prior** to class discussions. The instructor reserves the right to modify the schedule, as class needs dictate.

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| **WEEK** | **GENERAL TOPIC IN CLASS** | **READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS** |
| **WEEK 1** | **Class Introduction**Course Overview & ExpectationsIntroduction Activity | * Review: Syllabus & Canvas Modules
* Get to Know You Survey
* Sign up for Movie Presentation Date
 |
| **WEEK 2** | **Human Behavior & Social Environment Frameworks**Life Course PerspectiveEcological SystemsSW Competencies  | * Chapter 1 (Hutchinson)
* Read/Watch: Posted materials in Canvas
* Complete: Discussion #1
 |
| **WEEK 3** | **Middle Adulthood (Ch 8)**Social Construction of Middle AdulthoodErikson’s Theory of GenerativityJung and LevinsonLife Span Theory/Gain-Loss Balance | * Chapter 8 (Hutchinson)
* Read/Watch: Posted Materials in Canvas
* Complete: Discussion #2
 |
| **WEEK 4** | **Biological Aspects of Middle Adulthood**Physical Health & DevelopmentSexual & Reproductive Health (Midlife Crisis/Menopause) | * Chapter 8 (Hutchison)
* Read/Watch: Readings/Materials in Canvas
* Complete: Discussion #3
 |
| **WEEK 5** | **Psychological Aspects of Middle Adulthood** Gender & Identity ExpressionHealth Disparities Personality Changes | * Chapter 8 (Hutchison)
* Read/Watch: Readings/Materials in Canvas
* Complete: Discussion #4
 |
| **WEEK 6** | **Social Aspects of Middle Adulthood**Family SystemsSpiritual DevelopmentWork & Economics **MOVIE REVIEW Presentations** | * Chapter 8 (Hutchison)
* Read/Watch: Readings/Materials in Canvas
* **ALL GROUPS: Movie review slide decks uploaded**
 |
| **WEEK 7** |  **Late Adulthood (Ch 9)**Defining Late Adulthood**MOVIE REVIEW Presentations** | * Chapter 9 (Hutchinson)
* Read/Watch: Readings/Materials in Canvas
* COMPLETE: Discussion #5
 |
| **WEEK 8** | **EXAM 1** | * NO CLASS READING
* **Complete: Exam 1 in Canvas**
 |
| **WEEK 9** | **Biological Aspects of Late Adulthood** The Aging Brain & Neurodegenerative Diseases | * Chapter 9 (Hutchinson)
* Read/Watch: Readings/Materials in Canvas
* Complete: Discussion #6
 |
| **WEEK 10** | **Course Workday** | * **Complete Part 1 Introduction of Life Stories Paper**
 |
|  **WEEK 11** | **Psychological Aspects of Late Adulthood** Theories of AgingGrief & Loss  | * Chapter 9 (Hutchinson)
* Read/Watch: Readings/Materials in Canvas
* Complete: Discussion #7
 |
| **WEEK 12** | ***Dementia Live Experience***  | * Chapter 9 (Hutchison)
* Read/Watch: Readings/Materials in Canvas
* Complete: Discussion #8
 |
| **WEEK 13** | **Social & Economic Aspects of Late Adulthood**Ageism Role Transitions & Life EventsPolicies & Resources for Older Adults  | * Chapter 9 (Hutchison)
* Read/Watch: Readings/Materials in Canvas
* Complete: Discussion #9
* **Complete: Dementia Reflection Activity**
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| **WEEK 14** | **Very Late Adulthood**Defining Very Late AdulthoodPalliative Care & HospiceAdvanced Directives  | * Chapter 10 (Hutchison)
* Read/Watch: Readings/Materials in Canvas
* Complete: Discussion #10
* **Complete Life Stories Paper: Part 2- Final**
 |
|  **WEEK 15** | **No Class: Thanksgiving Break** |  |
| **WEEK 16** | **Death & Dying Process**Dying with DignityPhysical Aspects of Death | * Chapter 10(Hutchison)
* Read/Watch: Readings/Materials in Canvas
* COMPLETE: Discussion #11
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|  **FINALS WEEK**  | **FINAL EXAM** | * **Complete Final Exam**
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# OVERVIEW OF COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

**Weekly Course Discussions (100 points)**

A total of 12 discussion posts will be given over the semester, **however only the top 10 scores will be included** in your final grade. All discussion posts are worth 10 points each for a total of 100 points. Specific requirements (including word counts) for discussion posts are listed in Canvas. Discussion posts are due weekly (unless otherwise noted on the course schedule) by Wednesdays at 11:59 pm CST. Discussion posts require watching/reading the posted material and responding to corresponding prompts.

**Course Exams (200 points)**

There will be two exams in this course: a midterm and a final. Each exam is worth 100 points, for a total of 200 points of your final grade. Exams may include a combination of multiple-choice, true/false, matching, short-answer, and essay questions. They will draw from readings, lectures, discussions, documentaries, and other in-class materials**.** Exams will be completed online through Canvas and will be available during a specified period. You are expected to complete your exams individually. As the student, you are responsible for having reliable Internet access. No “’do-overs” will be allowed unless there is a universal failure of technology.

**Perceptions of Aging Scavenger Hunt (100 points)**

The goal of this assignment is to explore how aging is represented in everyday life and evaluate societal attitudes toward older adults. For this activity, you will visit a store and examine at least **two aspects of aging** as they appear in products, marketing, or accessibility features (e.g., beauty products, greeting cards, advertisements, accessibility aids).

You will share your findings with the class through a **brief 5-minute video presentation**. Creativity in your presentation style is encouraged, but your final presentation materials must also be uploaded to Canvas.

Detailed instructions and grading rubrics are available in Canvas.

**Movie Review Group Presentations (150 points)**

In this assignment, you will work collaboratively to analyze how aging and development are portrayed in popular media. Each group will select a movie or television series that depicts characters in a particular stage of adulthood (middle, late, or very late life). Groups will sign up for a presentation date during the first class, and all materials must be uploaded to Canvas **by 11:59 p.m. the night before the first day of presentations.**

Each group will deliver a 15-minute presentation that includes:

* A clip from the chosen movie/series highlighting key issues.
* Background information on the main characters (viewed as your “clients”).
* Analysis of the characters’ experiences using assigned readings, theories, and classroom discussions.

Detailed instructions and grading rubrics are available in Canvas.

**Life Stories Interview Paper (250 points)**This is the major assignment for the course and serves as a culminating application of what you have learned. For this paper, each student will interview two older adults who differ in ethnic, racial, or cultural background, and conduct a comparative analysis of their life stories using relevant theories and concepts from the course.

To encourage fresh perspectives, interviewees should not be immediate family members (e.g., parents, grandparents, siblings, or spouse).

The paper will be submitted in **two parts**, each with separate due dates:

* **Part 1:** Introduction of both interviewees and a summary of the interview process.
* **Part 2:** Comparative analysis of their life stories, with application of course theories and concepts.

Specific assignment requirements and rubrics are provided in Canvas.

**Dementia Reflection Activity (100 points)**

This assignment is designed to deepen your understanding of the lived experience of dementia in older adults, as well as its impact on family members and caregivers. In class, we will engage in a series of activities—such as viewing a documentary or film, hearing from a guest speaker, and participating in a simulation exercise—that highlights different perspectives on dementia. Following these activities, you will complete a **1–3 page reflection paper** in which you respond to the provided question prompts. Your grade will be based on the depth of your reflection and the completeness of your responses to each question.

**Attendance & Participation (100 points)**Students will receive overall class points based on class attendance (see attendance policy) and participation in the course. Participation will be measured through in-class assignments and discussions. Students who follow the attendance policy(no more than 2 excused absences)and participate in class activities will receive the entire 100 points at the end of the semester.

**Extra Credit**  Extra credit opportunities may be offered during the course, and if so, will be posted in Canvas.