COURSE SYLLABUS

OVERVIEW

Major population changes are happening in the composition of our communities. Issues related to older persons impact every level of society. Economists, health professionals, the media, as well as individuals discuss the impact of the aging of the population, and this generates controversy. This course covers public policies that have the greatest influence on the lives of older persons and, therefore, of society. As the title implies, the course looks at the interrelationship between policy and gerontology: how to prepare for an aging society.

• The course will prepare students to evaluate and develop policies, to get involved in the advocacy process, and also to understand the forces and processes that establish and change policies. In the process of learning about social policy, students will develop the skills of critical thinking and acquire an appreciation for the ethical issues and concerns involved in aging policy.

• The course will consider national and state initiatives, leadership, implementation processes, interest groups and other involvement in the policy process. Aging policy will be presented as both a process and a framework for action.

• The course will include describing, analyzing and evaluating selected policies and programs for the aged, such as the Older Americans’ Act, Social Security, health programs (Medicare, Medicaid, Long-Term Care), retirement planning and other social support services and policies.
OBJECTIVES

Students are expected to:

1. Develop social policy analysis and policy development skills.

2. ---Be conversant with the Older Americans Act of 1965—as amended in 2006—as the major social policy that governs most social programs for older Americans.

3. Discuss the major problems and controversies in the U.S. surrounding the aging of the population, especially its impact on Social Security and Medicare.

4. Identify major social policies and programs designed primarily for the elderly.

5. Describe eligibility requirements for most social service programs helping the aged.

6. Learn the value and components of advocacy as it relates to impacting aging issues.

7. Propose policy alternatives for existing and future service needs of the elderly.

TEACHING METHODS

Primary teaching methods will be lecture, class discussion and exercises. Video material from national experts in the field will supplement class presentations and the textbook. There will be opportunities for guest speakers. All the required readings and information for every session, as well as summaries of
Powerpoint class presentations, will be posted on google sites a couple of days before each class. Additional information complementing the textbook will be posted on a regular basis on google sites. Sometimes there might be information sent by e-mail with late breaking stories, articles, or any other references to policy related news: for instance, budget deliberations or special hearings on aging from the U.S. House and Senate Committees.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Each student is expected to attend class on a regular basis and actively participate in class discussions and activities. Reading of assigned texts in advance of class discussion is required. Check this site on a weekly basis to receive updates.

Attendance - Students are responsible for arranging their schedules around classes. In cases of absences for medical or other personal needs the student is encouraged to contact the instructor beforehand and request for leave of absence. The instructor has the right to request documentation. In this case, to still receive credit for attendance, the instructor has the right to request the student to write a three page (double-spaced) paper summarizing/integrating required reading and Powerpoint materials for that day. The same requirements apply to absences from class for religious observances.

Class Participation - Students are expected to complete all exercises, assignments and tests as identified in the syllabus. For turning in late assignments there will be a deduction of 10 points from the maximum possible 100 points assigned to that task, and after one week the deduction will be 20 points. Late means any time after the class has ended that day. A week before the final exam is the deadline to submit any late materials.

If you miss a quiz or a presentation you will get 0 points and your final grade will be averaged from all the quizzes and assigned tasks and class participation as specified in this syllabus. There will be no retro-grading after the quiz or presentation unless 1) prior permission in writing 2) a medical or religious emergence as allowed by university policy. There will be no make-up final exams. Job related excuses and other conflicting schedules are not acceptable.

Incomplete - University policy on "incomplete" is restricted to situations where a student is doing passing work in a course, but is unable to complete course requirements due to significant, documented circumstances beyond the student’s control. If, during the semester, students experience serious work,
family, or medical problems that might affect their ability to complete the course requirements, students are required to contact the instructor as soon as possible. There are strict guidelines and you are responsible for understanding the requirements.

SCHEDULE

Class 1    August 27
Class 2    August 29
Class 3    September 3
Class 4    September 5
Class 5    September 10
Class 6    September 12
Class 7    September 17
Class 8    September 19
Class 9    September 24
Class 10   September 26
Class 11   October 1
Class 12   October 3
Class 13   October 8
Class 14   October 10
Class 15   October 15
Class 16   October 17
Class 17   October 22
Class 18   October 24
Class 19   October 29
Class 20   October 31
ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

There will be eleven quizzes. Each quiz will be based on the textbook:


The course is arranged so that one class is a formal presentation (lecture) while the second class starts off with a 30 minute quiz and then followed by a short introduction by the lecturer and then a group presentation. Each student will be assigned a group, and each group will be assigned a controversy. There will be 11 controversies. You will be assigned a group at the beginning of course in class 1. Your assigned number relates to the controversy. Each controversy will be discussed in class, one every week. Your group will present in order of assignment. When it is your turn to present the group will come to the front of the class and start a discussion with the class. Each member of the group will present a short (1-2 minutes) argument on the basis of the following aspects of your controversy (choose one):

1. For
You agree with the proposition and provide evidence for the argument identified in the controversy.

2. Against
You disagree with the proposition and provide evidence against the argument identified in the controversy.
3. Wrong issue

This is not the question to ask but we should be looking at...

You will argue that the question is not the real issue that we should be focusing on, but instead should be focusing on another issue for which you will provide evidence for.

4. Historical

You neither agree or disagree but put the controversy in a historical context by arguing how the issue has changed over the years.

5. Individualistic

You agree with the issues but will argue that each individual is unique and there are exceptions to this controversy. You will provide arguments for AND against the issue and use individual variability as your argument.

After all your group members have presented, there will be a discussion among the whole class. Remember that the following week the quiz will be about the preceding controversy. So everyone needs to had read up on the controversy. So if in Week 3 the controversy was on Controversy 3. Does Intellectual Functioning Decline With Age? in Week 4 the quiz will be on this topic. The student presentation will be a week before the quiz.

CONTROVERSIES

Controversy 1. Does Old Age Have Meaning?

Controversy 2. Why Do Our Bodies Grow Old?

Controversy 3. Does Intellectual Functioning Decline With Age?

Controversy 4. Should We Ration Health Care for Older People?

Controversy 5. Should Families Provide for Their Own?

Controversy 6. Should Older People Be Protected From Bad Choices?

Controversy 7. Should People Have the Choice to End Their Lives?

Controversy 8. Should Age or Need Be the Basis for Entitlement?

Controversy 10. Is Retirement Obsolete?

Controversy 11. Aging Boomers: Boom or Bust?

GRADING:

Final grades are the result of several components that you put together during the semester. I will not adjust the final grade. I do not give make up assignments or additional work for extra credit. Please bring a GREEN Scantron for each quiz.

The final grade will be computed on the aggregate of points for all assignments. University guidelines, as outlined in the “Grading System” of the current Catalog, will be followed. Students will be graded on the following:

- Class participation: 15%
- Group Presentation: 30%
- 11 Quizzes 5 points each: 55%

All grades will use the following designated point distributions:

- A 100%-94%
- A- 93% - 90%
- B+ 89% - 87%
- B 86% - 83%
- B- 82% - 80%
- C+ 79% - 77%
- C 76% - 73%
- C- 72% - 70%
D+ 69% - 67%
D 66% - 63%
D- 62% - 60%
F 59% and below

TEXTBOOK:


http://www.sagepub.com/books/Book237195

There is also an open-access student study site at www.pineforge.com/moody6study: Contains flashcards and self-quizzes to help students check their understanding of key concepts, as well as video and audio clips, web resources, and journal articles.

Recommended Reading: Attached to this Syllabus is a list of articles for recommended reading. The articles will be described in class. They are required reading for the course, by everyone including those students not presenting. At the end of each presentation by the group, the rest of the students are expected to ask questions on the controversy under question.

CLASS 1: Introduction to the course

CLASS 2: Age-specific Policies
The need for age-specific policies
History of Policies on Aging
International perspective Process
CLASS 3: Controversy 1. "Does Old Age Have Meaning"

Does Old Age Have Meaning

Class 4: The Legislative Process

Advocacy and Lobbying

Importance, requirements

Advocacy Organizations: How do they work

Creating Coalitions. Pooling of resources

Review main examples: AARP, ASA, GSA, Alzheimer’s, etc.

Levity Video: How Bills DO NOT become Laws

Older American Act of 1965

Older Americans Act

Inception. Context, and Funding

Impact

Re-authorization

CLASS 5: Quiz Controversy 1. "Does Old Age Have Meaning" Bring green Scantron

Controversy 2. "Why Do Our Bodies Grow Old?"

Why Do Our Bodies Grow Old

CLASS 6: Aging as a Policy issue

Aging as A Policy Issue

CLASS 7: Quiz Controversy 2. "Why Do Our Bodies Grow Old?" Bring green Scantron

Controversy 3. "Does Intellectual Functioning Decline with Age?"
Does Intellectual Functioning Decline with Age

CLASS 8: Employment and Retirement 1

Employment and Retirement

Employment/retirement trends

Pension Programs

Retirement and Volunteerism (Serve America Act) http://www.encore.org/news/quick-summary-quiet-revo

Study: National Institute on Aging: The Health & Retirement Study: Growing Older in America

CLASS 9: Quiz Controversy 3. "Does Intellectual Functioning Decline with Age?" Bring green Scantron

Controversy 4. "Should We ration Health Care for Older People?"

Should We ration Health Care for Older People

CLASS 10: Employment and Retirement 2

International Retirement Policies

CLASS 11: Quiz Controversy 4. "Should We ration Health Care for Older People?" Bring green Scantron

Controversy 5. "Should Families provide For Their Own?"

Should Families provide For Their Own

CLASS 12: The Age Discrimination Act

Age Discrimination Act

Uniqueness

Effectiveness
CLASS 13: Quiz Controversy 5. "Should Families provide For Their Own?"
Bring green Scantron

Controversy 6. "Should Older People Be Protected From Bad Choices?"

Should Older People Be Protected From Bad Choices

CLASS 14: Housing Issues for Older Adults

Housing

HUD Housing Policies

A short film on the foreclosure debacle in 2008-2012

CLASS 15: Quiz Controversy 6. "Should Older People Be Protected From Bad Choices?"
Bring green Scantron

Controversy 7. "Should People Have The Choice to End Their Lives?"

Should People Have The Choice to End Their Lives

CLASS 16: Transportation Issues for Older Adults

Transportation

Transportation Policies. Paratransit and ADA

CLASS 17: Quiz Controversy 7. "Should People Have The Choice to End Their Lives?"
Bring green Scantron

Controversy 8. "Should Age or Need Be The Basis for Entitlement?"

Should Age or Need Be The Basis for Entitlement

CLASS 18: The History of Social Security

Social Security

Inception. Context, and Funding
Trust "Fund"

“The Future of Social Security” or Proposals to fix it in the Future

Check out Life Expectancy Calculator.

CLASS 19: Quiz Controversy 8. "Should Age or Need Be The Basis for Entitlement?" Bring green Scantron

Controversy 9. "What is the Future of Social Security?"

What is the Future of Social Security

CLASS 20: Generational Conflict

Generational Conflict

See: Generational accounts and lifetime tax rates, 1900-1991. Auerbach, Alan J; Gokhale, Jagadeesh; Kotlikoff, Laurence J. Economic Review - Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland; First Quarter 1993; 29, 1; ABI/INFORM Global

IOUSA film


Controversy 10. "Is Retirement Obsolete?"

Is Retirement Obsolete

CLASS 22: Health Care Reform

Health Care Reform in San Diego

Why. Main players and issues.

What form will the reform take

Outcomes
Health Reform Hits Main Street: Confused about how the new health reform law really works? This short, animated movie -- featuring the "YouToons" -- explains the problems with the current health care system, the changes that are happening now, and the big changes coming in 2014.


Controversy 11. "Aging Boomers: Boom or Bust?"

Aging Boomers: Boom or Bust

Class 24: The Options from Independent living to Nursing Homes: Accountability. Oversight and Monitoring.

Guest Speaker: Chris Murphy

Guest Speaker: Amy Abrams

Geriatric Case management

AARP and their profit

CLASS 25: Quiz Controversy 11. "Aging Boomers: Boom or Bust?" Bring green Scantron

End-Of-Life Issues

Euthanasia

Is age a valid proxy for need? i.e. should we keep age as an eligibility for many programs for older Americans.

Should families be paid (or given tax brakes, etc.) if they care for elder relatives?

Are the elderly receiving more benefits than the young, and at their expense?

Seven Deadly Myths

CLASS 26: The American with Disabilities Act and how it relates to Older Adults
Americans w/ Disabilities Act

Inception. Context, and Funding

Subsuming Older American Act “is aging a disability?”


Census 2010

CLASS 27: Title 18 of the Social Security Act: Medicare

Medicare and Medicaid part I

Inception. Context, and Funding

Costs and comparable administrative costs

Projections PDF Notes Updated for 2011 Section 1

CLASS 28: Long Term Care Policies in the Continuum of Care

Medicare and Medicaid part II

Inception. Context, and Funding

Costs and comparable administrative costs

Projections

PDF Notes Updated for 2011 Section 2

CLASS 29: What does the future hold for Policy on Aging? A discussion to close the course to create cohesiveness among all the different issues discussed through the course.