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 the final exam you will get 0 points and your final grade will be averaged from all the exams, assigned tasks and class participation as specified in this syllabus. There will be no retro-grading after the final session/final exam. There will be no make-up final exams. Job related excuses and other exams or 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.

ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

At the beginning of the course, students will be assigned a controversy. When there is an assigned class to discuss a controversy, as defined below in the syllabus, the student assigned that controversy will hand in their assigned paper, and also present using a PowerPoint to the class.

The student assigned that controversy will make a POWERPOINT presentation to the class. THE PRESENTATION WILL BE A POWERPOINT, AND A PAPER ON THEIR ASSIGNED CONTROVERSY. The paper will be around 5000 words (10 PAGES.) No references are required. You will write it as though you are writing it for a newspaper.

If you are absent for this presentation you will be required to present your section during another class. Everyone is required to present, or forfeit 20% of your final mark.

ASPECTS

The presentation, PowerPoint and paper will cover the following headings:

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.

This is your practical exercise for the whole course. You will write an article and present on one controversy. You will be graded on your paper (40%) at the end of the course. Your presentation (20%) will be aggregated at the end of the course with your final grade.

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?
- Controversy 12. Will the world age into oblivion?
- Controversy 13. Is diversity an issue in public policy?
- Controversy 14. Will the world become demented?

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.

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 Catalogue, will be followed. Students will be graded on the following:

- Class participation 10%
- Presentation 20%
- Paper 40%
- Exam 30%

All grades will use the following designated point distributions:

- 90-100= A
- 80-89 = B
- 70-79 = C
- 60-69 = D
- Below 60 = F

NOTE: The paper will be graded with attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation in mind. It is important to note that the ability to communicate effectively is expected from you in the professional world.

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

Also try here for a free digital copy of excerpts.

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.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

1. Class 1 Tuesday 28-Aug
2. Class 2 Thursday 30-Aug
3. Class 3 Tuesday 4-Sep
4. Class 4 Thursday 6-Sep
5. Class 5 Tuesday 11-Sep
6. Class 6 Thursday 13-Sep
7. Class 7 Tuesday 18-Sep
8. Class 8 Thursday 20-Sep
9. Class 9 Tuesday 25-Sep
10. Class 10 Thursday 27-Sep
11. Class 11 Tuesday 2-Oct
12. Class 12 Thursday 4-Oct
13. Class 13 Tuesday 9-Oct
14. Class 14 Thursday 11-Oct
15. Class 15 Tuesday 16-Oct
16. Class 16 Thursday 18-Oct
17. Class 17 Tuesday 23-Oct
18. Class 18 Thursday 25-Oct
19. Class 19 Tuesday 30-Oct
20. Class 20 Thursday 1-Nov
21. Class 21 Tuesday 6-Nov
22. Class 22 Thursday 8-Nov
23. Class 23 Tuesday 13-Nov
24. Class 24 Thursday 15-Nov
25. Class 25 Tuesday 20-Nov
26. NOVEMBER 22 THANKSGIVING ENJOY THE BREAK
27. Class 26 Tuesday 27-Nov
28. Class 27 Thursday 29-Nov
29. Class 28 Tuesday 4-Dec
30. Class 29 Thursday 6-Dec
31. EXAM Week December 10-14 (see schedule posted on SDSU's website.)

CLASS 1: Introduction to the course

CLASS 2: The need for age-specific policies

History of Policies on Aging

International perspective

Process

CLASS 3: Older Americans Act

Inception. Context, and Funding

Impact

Re-authorization

CLASS 4:

Aging as A Policy Issue

CLASS 5: 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 6: CONTROVERSY 10
Is Retirement Obsolete?

CLASS 7: Age Discrimination Act

Uniqueness

Effectiveness

CLASS 8: CONTROVERSY 3

Housing and Transportation

HUD Housing Policies

Transportation Policies. Paratransit and ADA

CLASS 9: 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 10: CONTROVERSY 9

What is the Future of Social Security?

CLASS 11: Medicare

Inception. Context, and Funding

Costs and comparable administrative costs

Projections PDF Notes Updated for 2011 Section 1

PDF Notes Updated for 2011 Section 2

CLASS 12: CONTROVERSY 8

Should Age or Need be the basis for Entitlement?

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

CLASS 13: Health Care Reform
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.

CLASS 14: CONTROVERSY 4

Should We Ration Health care for Older People?

Seven Deadly Myths

CLASS 15: Americans w/ Disabilities Act

Inception. Context, and Funding

Subsuming Older American Act “is aging a disability?”


CLASS 16: CONTROVERSY 1

Does Old Age have Meaning?

CLASS 17: Long Term Care Policies

Costs and Coverage

PACE, pooling of resources

CLASS 18: CONTROVERSY 5

Should Families Provide for their Own?

CLASS 19:

Does Intellectual Functioning Decline with Age?

CLASS 20: CONTROVERSY 11

Aging Boomer: Boom or Bust?

CONTROVERSY 2
Why Do We grow Old?


CLASS 21: 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.

CLASS 22: CONTROVERSY 6

Should older people be Protected from bad Choices?

CLASS 23:

Controversy 14. Will the world become demented?

Ethics and Controversies

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?

CLASS 24: CONTROVERSY 7

Should People have the Choice to End Their Lives?

CLASS 25: The Options from Independent living to Nursing Homes: Accountability. Oversight and Monitoring.

NORCs. Community Living

Retirement communities

CLASS 26:

Controversy 13. Is diversity an issue in public policy?

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

RCFEs

Eden Alternative (this is a part of nursing homes)

CLASS 27: The Options from Independent living to Nursing Homes: Accountability. Oversight and Monitoring.

Nursing Homes

Hospice

Hospital

CLASS 28: CONTROVERSY 12

The New Aging Marketplace: Hope or Hype?

CLASS 29:

Controversy 12. Will the world age into oblivion?

FINAL EXAM.

Please refer to SDSU’s scheduling for exam week.

th examples of real-life research. Critique of recently published research papers.