

San José State University
Department of Psychology
PSYC/GERO 114, Psychology of Aging (Sec 80)
Fall 2022

Instructor:	Sylvia H. Branca, Ph.D.
Office Location:	Virtually via Zoom (link on Canvas course home page)
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Office Hours:	Tuesday and Thursday 12:00-1:00pm and by appointment
Class Days/Time:	N/A – Asynchronous, online course
Classroom:	N/A – Online Course
Prerequisite:	PSYC 001

Course Format and Technology Requirements

This is an *asynchronous*, fully online course. This means that all aspects of our class will occur online through the **Canvas website** for our course (<https://sjsu.instructure.com>). You will progress through Modules for each week (you may go at your own pace) and I will communicate with you weekly through Canvas. I am also available via Zoom and email to support your learning all semester!

You must have **reliable internet connection and a computer that can sustain video** to access the course material (including exams, assignments, etc.).

Course Description

In this class, we will study the psychological development of middle-aged and older adults emphasizing normative (typical) development in the context of cognitive, socioemotional, biological, and cultural processes. Course content also includes age-related health problems and their prevention.

Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

CLO1: Explain and identify changes in the structure of our population with regards to the changing demographic of older adults in the U.S. and internationally.

CLO2: Explain and identify the biological/physical processes that occur during the aging process.

CLO3: Be able to identify and discuss typical research designs used in the study of aging.

CLO4: Identify lifespan changes in cognitive functioning, physical and mental health, personality, and social relationships, including which components of these domains do not change substantially with age.

CLO5: Identify components of and explain theoretical models (psychological and biological) relevant to aging (socioemotional selectivity theory, continuity theory, random error theories, etc.).

CLO6: Report on the aging process through the perspective of an older adult through completion of interviews and experiential exercises; integrate these experiences with theoretical models presented in class.

CLO7: Discuss different viewpoints on the aging process gleaned from online interactions with your peers.

CLO8: Identify relevant legislation that pertains to older adults, including issues of nursing home care, Medicare, employment of older adults, and end-of-life care.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Upon successful completion of the psychology major requirements...

PLO1 – *Knowledge Base of Psychology* – Students will be able to identify, describe, and communicate the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.

PLO2 – *Research Methods in Psychology* – Students will be able to design, implement, and communicate basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretations.

PLO3 – *Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology* – Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes.

PLO4 – *Application of Psychology* – Students will be able to apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues.

PLO5 – *Values in Psychology* – Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society.

Required Reading

Textbook: Yochim, B. P., & Woodhead, E. L. (Eds.) (2018). *Psychology of Aging: A Biopsychosocial Perspective*. New York, NY: Springer. ISBN: 9780826137289

Additional Course Content

Educational videos, readings, reading quizzes, etc. all available on our Canvas course shell.

Class Structure and “Classroom” Protocol

Since all of our course activities will occur online asynchronously, there are no required meeting times during the week for our class. Each week you will work on assignments that correspond to a module in Canvas. The module will include a reading quiz, and a class activity that you will complete and upload in Canvas. You will also be required to post a discussion each week and reply to another classmate’s post. For each module, there may also be links to outside materials (videos, articles) that are relevant to the class for you to view that week. **Note that this is not a lecture-based course.** “Class time” will be used for reading quizzes, completing discussion posts, and completing class activities. Each student is responsible for reading the textbook as the primary way of obtaining course content.

This course is self-paced and will require you to time manage and self-motivate appropriately. Scheduling time each week to complete course activities will help support your success in the course!

Class Environment

In an effort to create an environment conducive to sharing one’s thoughts, I require the following etiquette when engaging in online discussions:

- Be polite and respectful to the other people in our class
- Do not use profanity in posts

Respect for the rights and opinions of others is required. The free and open exchange of ideas is the cornerstone of higher education, but we must always remain respectful of others, even if we disagree strongly with them.

Disagreement is acceptable, but discourteousness is not. Behavior that creates a threatening or harassing environment will not be tolerated. Severe and pervasive disruptions of course activities are a violation of the Student Code of Conduct will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development.

<http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/Student%20Conduct%20Code%202013.pdf>

If we all show each other courtesy and respect we can maintain a pleasant classroom climate - thank you.

Distribution of Class Content

The materials in this class can be used for your private, study purposes only. Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor. You may not publicly share or upload instructor-generated material for this course such as lectures, exam questions, classroom activities, or discussion material. You must not share other students’ discussion material outside of the Canvas environment.

Honor Code

(Reference: Academic Integrity Policy at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/Policies/>)

In order to ensure fairness and have a single standard of representing knowledge acquired, all students participating in online SJSU courses must agree to abide by the following code of conduct.

1. My work will be my own in this course.
2. I will not give any answers for individually graded assignments to anyone else or share assignments on the internet via course tutoring websites.
3. I will not engage in any other activities that will misrepresent my own work or improve my results falsely. I will not engage in any activities that will misrepresent others' work.
4. I will not download, save, or otherwise retain materials from the course for anything but personal use.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. For our online course, this means that you'll need to spend about 9-10 hours per week on the course.

Late Submission Policy

Assignments: Assignments will be considered late if they are not submitted through Canvas by the submission deadline (*usually 11:59pm on the due date*). It is the student's responsibility to ensure that assignments are uploaded correctly. Late assignments are subject to a penalty of 10% per day, including weekends and holidays, beginning the day the assignment is due. Assignments will not be accepted after the last day of classes.

Exams and Quizzes: Since you have a week to complete quizzes and Exam 1 and 2 in our class, if you do not complete a quiz or exam in the time-window required as noted on Canvas, you will receive 0 points for that quiz or exam. No late submissions will be accepted for our Exam 3 – any submission after the due date will receive 0 points.

Course Assignments and Requirements

Assessment Items, Their Value, and Connection to Learning Outcomes				
Item	How Many	App. % of Final Grade	Points	Relevant CLOs
Course Orientation Activities	3	15/410=3.6%	15 total (5 points each)	Introductory Post, Online Assessment, Class Activity 1
Exams	3	150/410=36.5%	150 total (50 points each)	CLOs 1-5, and 8
Quizzes	10	90/410=21.9%	90 total (10 points each, lowest score dropped)	CLOs 1-5, and 8
Class Activities	12	60/410=14.6%	60 total (5 points each)	CLO 6
Discussion Posts and Replies	12	60/410=14.6%	60 total (5 points each)	CLO 7
Paper: Older Adult Interview (& Questions)	1	35/410=8.5%	35	CLO 6
Total Points			410	

Course Orientation Activities = 15 points (5 points for the Introductory post, 5 points for the online assessment quiz, 5 points for the first class activity)

There will be three short activities during the first week to get you oriented to the course and make sure that you are prepared for the expectations of an online course. First you will make a discussion post that will introduce you to me and your classmates (5 points). This will help you learn to use the discussion boards if you aren't familiar with them and

will help us begin to develop our class community. Next, you will take a short quiz to help you be successful in our asynchronous, online environment (5 points). Finally, you will complete your first class activity that involves making a schedule of when you will do course assignments during a typical week.

Exams = 150 points (3 @ 50 points each)

There will be three, open book, open notes exams in this class. The first two exams will be 25 multiple choice and T/F questions (2 points each). The final exam (not cumulative) will be 25 multiple choice and T/F questions (2 points each). The exam items will be based on your weekly quizzes, so you should familiarize yourself with these questions prior to the exams. You will have 1 hour and 15min to complete the exam. Please keep in mind that the clock will keep running if you log out of Canvas, so the exams will likely need to be completed in one sitting. There are no make-ups for the exams since you have a one-week window in which to complete the exams.

Final Examination or Evaluation

The final examination will be the third exam, which is not cumulative. The final exam will count the same as any other exam. The exam will be available online through Canvas.

Reading Quizzes = 90 points [10 @ 10 points each (*Lowest Quiz Dropped*)]

Most weeks (except as noted in the course calendar) you will complete a 10-point, multiple choice reading quiz in Canvas about the week's reading and activities. Each quiz will contain multiple choice and/or true/false items. Quizzes will remain open until Sundays at 11:59pm. There are no make-ups for the quizzes. Quizzes will focus on material presented in the textbook. There is no time limit for the quizzes, and you can come and go out of Canvas while taking the quiz.

Class Activities = 60 points total (12 @ 5 points each)

Discussion Posts and Replies about the Class Activity = 60 points (12 @ 5 points each)

Each week there will be an activity that goes along with the material for the week. Any specific instructions about the activity will be included on the activity assignment in Canvas. You will complete the activity independently and upload it by Sunday at 11:59pm. There are no make-up activity points. Activity points will be graded in an evaluative way (i.e., the number of points you receive will be based on the quality of your responses).

You will also be required to make a discussion post each week and reply to another student's post. Discussion prompts will vary each week and may be tied to the class activity or reading. Replies and posts are due by Sundays at 11:59pm. The post and reply need to be at least 150 words each and will be worth 5 points combined (2.5 each for the post and reply). Posts will be graded on depth (meeting the length requirement) and whether you've expressed substantive thoughts that are tied back to our course content.

Final Paper: Older Adult Interview= 35 points total (5 points for the interview questions, 30 points for the final paper)

The final paper in our class is an interview with one older adult (over age 65) about one of the topics covered in our textbook that is relevant to the current generation of older adults. For example, Chapter 3 of the textbook is about Age-Related Health Conditions, so the theme of your interview could be on how health has changed over time. The goal of the project is to have a professional interaction with an older adult and to see how our course content relates to real-world life experiences and scholarly research.

There are two assignments associated with this project. First, around the middle of the semester you will be asked to turn in a list of questions you will ask your interviewee (5 points). At the end of the semester, you will submit a paper that includes a brief introduction to your topic, a summary of your interview, a section connecting the interview to the textbook and literature, and a conclusion/reflection of the interview process, which should include a critical analysis of your interview. In the section where you connect your interview to relevant research, you will be asked to integrate the interview material with the textbook and one peer-reviewed articles. This paper cannot exceed 5 pages (excluding title page and references). You should not list your questions in your paper in a Q&A style. Instead, summarize the responses from the interviewee and choose a couple of interesting quotes from your interview.

The paper will be graded as follows:

More information about paper grading requirements will be available on Canvas.

5 points for the Introduction and Conclusion

10 points for the Summary of the Interview

10 points for the Text and Research Integration section (this includes use of appropriate references)

5 points for APA formatting and writing style.

I will include more information about paper content and grading on Canvas!

Remember, the questions you choose for the interview should be relevant to the experience of older adults but not overly personal. In planning your interview, you want to briefly introduce the interviewee to what you're doing and why, provide some basic background on the topic you selected, and plan to ask 10-12 questions about the topic. Plan to take notes during the interview so that you can use direct quotes in your paper.

Late policy for this paper: Papers are due in Canvas by midnight on the due date as listed on Canvas. A paper is considered late if it is not turned in by that time. Papers can be turned in up to 24 hours late with an automatic 10 point deduction. Papers that are more than 24 hours late will not be eligible for credit.

Grading Information

Your final letter grade will be based on a percentage obtained by dividing your points by the total points for this course. I will use the following grading rubric. *Work hard all semester to obtain as many points as possible so you do not find yourself at the cusp of a letter grade at the end of the semester.*

Grade	Percentage
A plus	>100%
A	100-94%
A minus	93-90%
B plus	89-87%
B	86-84%
B minus	83-80%
C plus	79-77%
C	76-74%
C minus	73-70%
D plus	69-67%
D	66-64%
D minus	63-60
F	59-00

SJSU Counseling Services

It is not always easy getting through college! As students, you must all navigate the many demands on your time, resources, and interpersonal relationships. **SJSU Counseling Services** is located on the corner of 7th and San Carlos St. (across from the Event Center) in the Student Wellness Center, Third Floor, Room 300B. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit the **Counseling Services** website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling> or call (408) 924-5910.

SJSU Writing Center

Writing tutors are available to help you anytime! All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-

on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the **Writing Center** website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>.

Library Liaison

Christa Bailey is the Reference Librarian assigned to assist Psychology students in using databases, helping with key word searches, etc. She will be available throughout the semester to meet with individual students. Her phone number is (408) 808-2422 and her email is christa.bailey@sjsu.edu

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' Syllabus Information web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

SJSU Peer Connections

Peer Connections, a campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring, strives to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. You are encouraged to take advantage of their services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

Visit **Peer Connections** website at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

Extra Credit

Up to 3 points of (optional) extra credit may be offered in this course. More information about these opportunities will be provided in class and on Canvas. Extra credit will NOT be offered to individual students or upon request.

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Psyc/Gero114: Psychology of Aging Fall 2022, Course Schedule

Note: Schedule is subject to change with fair notice – if changed, I will announce it via Canvas messaging.

All assignments are due by Sundays at 11:59pm unless otherwise noted on Canvas.

Week	Dates Covered	What We Examine	For You to Read	Assignments & Activities Due
1 and 2	8/19-9/4	Introduction, Syllabus Review, Course Orientation	Syllabus Canvas Course Site	*Introductory Post *Online Assessment *Class Activity 1
3	9/5-9/11	Introduction to the Psychology of Aging	Ch. 1	*Reading Quiz 1 *Class Activity 2 with Discussion Post and Reply
4	9/12-9/18	Biological Theories of Aging	Ch. 2	*Reading Quiz 2 *Class Activity 3 with Discussion Post and Reply
5	9/19-9/25	The Aging Body and Age-Related Health Conditions; Prevention	Ch. 3	*Reading Quiz 3 *Class Activity 4 with Discussion Post and Reply
6	9/26-10/2	Neurocognitive Disorders in Late Life	Ch. 9	*Reading Quiz 4 *Class Activity 5 with Discussion Post and Reply
7	10/3-10/9	Exam 1 - Available Oct 3 at 9am until Oct 9 at 11:59pm	Chapters 1-3, 9	
8	10/10-10/16	Cognition and Aging	Ch. 7	*Reading Quiz 5 *Class Activity 6 with Discussion Post and Reply *Interview Questions Due
9	10/17-10/23	Personality and Emotional Development	Ch. 5	*Reading Quiz 6 *Class Activity 7 with Discussion Post and Reply
10	10/24-10/30	Mental Health and Aging	Ch. 6	*Reading Quiz 7 *Class Activity 8 with Discussion Post and Reply
11	10/31-11/6	Relationships, Families, and Aging: Changes in Roles with Aging	Ch. 10	*Reading Quiz 8 *Class Activity 9 with Discussion Post and Reply

Course Schedule, cont.

Week	Dates Covered	What We Examine	For You to Read	Assignments & Activities Due
12	11/7-11/13	Exam 2 - Available Nov 7 at 9am until Nov 13 at 11:59pm	Ch. 5-7, 10	
13	11/14-11/20	Aging and the Legal System	Ch. 14	*Reading Quiz 9 *Class Activity 10 with Discussion Post and Reply Older Adult Interview Paper due Nov 20
14	11/21-11/27	Aging, Work, and Retirement	Ch. 11	*Class Activity 11 with Discussion Post and Reply (no reading quiz due this week)
15	11/28-12/4	Death and the Dying Process, Bereavement, and Widowhood	Ch. 12	*Reading Quiz 10 *Class Activity 12 with Discussion Post and Reply
16	12/5 and 12/6	Cultural Differences in Aging Experiences of Ethnic and Sexual Minority Older Adults	Ch. 13	
Exam #3 (Final Exam) (Chapters 11-14): Available Thur Dec 8 at 9:00am until Thur Dec 15 at 11:59pm (75 minutes; <u>not</u> cumulative)				

“The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another.”

– William James

Elements of Your Success

*** Work Well**

Keep a calendar, plan out weekly assignments, write things down, study in small segments, take breaks when needed.

*** Connect for Support**

Ask for help when stuck, drop by office hours to chat, talk with those who care about you, utilize SJSU resources.

*** Be Kind to Yourself**

Celebrate small (and big) achievements, practice self-care, be your biggest fan, remember to breathe!

You can do it...and let me know how I can help!! 😊 ~ Dr. Branca