

Adulthood and Aging

COURSE SYLLABUS

PSYC 322-921

Summer 2006

COURSE MEETINGS

Tuesdays and Thursdays Buchanan A106 from 5:00 – 7:30 pm

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Claudia Jacova
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 Office Hrs: Thursdays, 3:30 – 4:45 pm or by appointment

TEACHING ASSISTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

TA: Hiroe Li
 Office: Kenny
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TEXTBOOK (available at UBC Bookstore)

Adult Development and Aging, 5th edition, by William J. Hoyer & Paul A. Roodin, McGraw-Hill

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is designed to provide a comprehensive overview of theories and research on development during adulthood. The course aims to develop an understanding of human development as a life-long process where all periods are equally important, all periods entail change, and change consists of a pattern of gains and losses. The course examines adult development from a psychological, biological and socio-cultural perspective. It addresses the key issues of development: Which changes are normative and inevitable; which changes are plastic, that is, moderated by the individual; which changes are specific to particular generations (cohorts).

OBJECTIVES

To build conceptual knowledge

You will build a systematic body of knowledge on developmental processes as they pertain to the adult years. By the end of this course you will achieve an understanding of the directions and dimensions of development, and of the factors that moderate development. You will become familiar with contemporary research on adulthood and aging. You will be able to identify the gains and the losses that characterize adulthood and aging. Your achievement of this objective will be evaluated by means of the course examinations.

To relate knowledge to people

Psychology has often been criticized for not studying real people in their real environments. Many test instruments in psychology are theoretically valid but have little ecological validity. How can we improve them? How can we make sure they measure what matters to people? To explore these issues, you will develop a small instrument whose purpose is to assess everyday memory abilities in later life. We will start with the relevant theories. Then you will seek real-world knowledge by interviewing people you know about their own experiences with memory and forgetting. You will utilize both theoretical and real-world knowledge in the development of the memory questionnaire.

To develop a personal perspective

You will form questions and expectations regarding your own future development. What person will you be in twenty or thirty years? How can you control how you age? What will enable you to make the best of positive changes such as self-accomplishment and wisdom? What challenges do you see in your life as an older and very old person? We will address this objective in the lectures by means of class discussions and exercises.

POWERWEB

You will receive a card in your textbook that provides your own personal access code to Powerweb, an online resource on adult development. We will use Powerweb in class for selected readings that pertain to topics covered in the lectures. You can utilize Powerweb for additional readings, weekly updates, and quizzes. As well you can use Powerweb as a research and study tool.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Attendance is critical in order for you to do well in this course. I will not take attendance or evaluate class participation but if you choose not to attend class you will miss important information, discussions and announcements. The materials covered in lectures will overlap with, but not be identical to, the materials covered in the course readings. Any lecture materials may be included in the tests. If you cannot attend, it is your responsibility to ensure that you obtain notes about these materials from your classmates.

Your conduct and participation is important to the success of the course. Please arrive on time, turn off cell phones and pagers, be prepared to listen to lectures and to actively take part in discussions and exercises. You will get the most out of the lectures if you read the assigned readings ahead of time.

GRADING AND GRADE SCALING

Your grade in this course will be derived from your performance on two non-cumulative exams and one class assignment. The breakdown of your final grade will be as follows:

Midterm Exam	40%
Final Exam	45%
Assignment	15%
Total	100%

The exams will include both multiple choice and short essay questions. Each exam will cover only material that you have not been tested on previously. Questions will be developed from the readings and from the lectures. Each exam must be written on the scheduled date. However, if on that date you are ill, you need to contact me before the exam by leaving a phone or electronic message. Upon receiving a note from your doctor, I will arrange a re-write for you.

The Department of Psychology's policy regarding grade distributions requires that 300-level course grades have an average grade of 66 to 70% and a standard deviation of 13%. If necessary, grades achieved in this course will be scaled to meet these requirements.

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

Please do not attempt to cheat on the tests. Cheating is copying from someone else as well as letting someone else copy from you. Cheating puts you and me in a very bad position. I will have to ask you to leave the classroom and report your behavior to the Department Head. It is your responsibility to inform yourself about the University's definitions and policy regarding plagiarism.

LECTURE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNED READINGS

Date	Readings	Topic
June 20	Chapter 1	Course introduction Theories and issues in adult development
June 22	Chapter 2 Appendix	Aging in a socio-cultural context Developmental research methods
June 27	Chapter 3	Biological aging
June 29	Chapter 3	The aging brain
July 4	Chapter 7	Memory Review
July 6		MIDTERM EXAM
July 11	Chapter 8	Adult cognitive development
July 13	Chapter 9	Adult cognitive development (cont'd) ***Memory questionnaire assignment due
July 18	Chapter 10	Personality
July 20	Chapter 11	Relationships
July 26	Chapter 13	Death and dying Review
July 28		FINAL EXAM

GUIDELINES FOR THE CLASS ASSIGNMENT

The purpose is to develop a 20 to 30-item memory questionnaire that is suited to detect memory problems in people aged 50 or older. The questionnaire should have construct as well as ecological validity. It should relate to the theoretical models of human memory that you have learned about in the textbook and lectures, and it should cover a broad range of abilities relevant to everyday memory functioning.

1. Read chapter 7 in your textbook;
2. Interview relatives or acquaintances (possibly aged 50 or older) with regard to memory tasks they have begun to find challenging as well as tasks they continue to do well on;
3. Develop 20 to 30 questions or statements on which people can rate the efficiency of their memory, in terms of frequency (how often do you remember/forget?) or level (how good is your performance?).

Begin your assignment with a concise statement of your objective. Describe your interviewees, your method and procedures. Review ethical aspects of your assignment, foremost how you protect the confidentiality of your interviewees. Summarize the information you collected during your interviews. Discuss connections between what you have learned in your interviews and your development of questionnaire items. Then present your questionnaire items. Provide clear instructions on how to complete the questionnaire. The purpose of the assignment is to develop a questionnaire that is ready to be utilized in a research project or a memory clinic. The purpose is not to administer the questionnaire and collect data. Be sure to address the purpose; contents that fall outside it, for example collecting data with your questionnaire, will not be considered in the scoring of the assignment.

Your assignment must include a cover page with your name and student number. All pages must be numbered. Your assignment must not exceed 6 pages, including the cover page. You must hand it in on the due date (see Lecture Schedule) at the beginning of class. It will count for 15% of your course grade. You will be graded on style and grammar (3 points), communication and clarity (4 points), contents (6 points) and creativity (2 points).