



PSY 598: Psychology of Gerontology
Spring 2024

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Lacy Krueger, Associate Professor

Office Location: Henderson 233

Office Hours: I have virtual office hours Wednesdays 9-11 and 12-3. I provide a Zoom link in our course shell, and you can join that meeting during office hours. I am also available to meet by appointment.

Office Phone: 903-886-5940

Office Fax: 903-886-5510

University Email Address: Lacy.Krueger@tamuc.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Communication Response Time: Within 48 hours

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Required Textbook: Erber, J. T. (2020). Aging & Older Adulthood (4th ed.). Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell. ISBN: 9781119438502

Other supplemental readings are posted on D2L.

Course Description: Description from the Graduate Course Catalog: “This course will cover topics in gerontology including physical and mental changes in older adults, transitions such as retirement, mental health issues for the older adult, and health issues. The course will provide needed information to help the older adult adjust to

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changes in life. The course will focus on positive sides of aging which are often neglected.”

Krueger’s Course Philosophy: This course should be educational and interesting to you. After all, this is a course that will directly apply to your life. Simply put, regardless if you work with older adults in your selected career or not, aging affects us all. As we age and we see our family members aging we are aware that changes are occurring. Many times it seems that the changes are cast in a negative light, but there is both growth and decline in development throughout our lifespan, including older adulthood. Each of us is directly touched by the issues that we will cover in this course. I encourage you to really engage yourself in this course. Read the materials, ponder the different issues, and be involved in discussions. I also challenge you to take on the glass-half-full perspective and identify positive aspects of aging. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am here to facilitate your learning needs.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Identify the importance of aging research along with understanding how this research is conducted, including research methodology, need for more research given the population shift, and ethical issues
2. Demonstrate knowledge of physical, cognitive, and socioemotional changes that occur across later adulthood including individual differences in aging
3. Further develop communication skills and reasoning skills to discuss and critique psychological research and issues
4. Relate knowledge learned in this course to the real world.

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

The weights per assignment and description of assignments are listed below.

Assessments

1. **Reading Applications** – Throughout the course students will complete three application assignments in which they will reflect on readings, relate them to research-based evidence, and explain how the content will be applied. Details about these application assignments are posted on D2L. These are worth 30% of your grade.
2. **Quizzes** -- Quizzes will be administered to provide an assessment of your knowledge of the assigned chapter reading for the week. These quizzes will be taken without aid – closed notes, closed book, and no Internet aid. You will have to

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retrieve from your memory your responses. I find that these quizzes help students to keep up with the reading, and they also aid in the long-term retention of information (See Roediger & Karpicke, 2006, for information about the “testing effect.”) Nine quizzes will be administered, but only eight will count toward the final grade. Therefore, each student can drop one quiz grade. For each quiz that you earn 70% or better you will receive 1 point. If you earn a score less than 70% you will receive zero points for that quiz. Quizzes are worth 10% of your course grade.

3. **Exams** – You will be administered three exams. The questions will be based on material covered in assigned readings, lecture, and videos. **The exams will be closed notes and closed books.** You will have to retrieve from your memory your responses. This is a graduate course, and it is expected that students will follow these rules when taking the exam. Each student will be asked to pledge their exams. Violations will result in a ZERO on the exam. Each exam will be worth 100 points total. Only two out of three exams will count toward the exam grade; therefore, each student gets to drop their lowest exam score. Each exam is worth 15%.
4. **Final Application Paper** – Students will be required to write a report linking peer-reviewed research to applications related aging and older adulthood. Guidelines for this assignment are posted, including the grading rubric. Please email the instructor if you have questions about this assignment. The written report is worth 30%.

** The gradebook shows the total point and assigned weights per assignment. When assignments have been graded, the instructor will update the gradebook so that students can access their grades.*

Assignments	Percent Worth	SLO Connection
Exams (3 exams; lowest dropped)	30% (15% each)	SLOs 1- 3
Quizzes (8 count)	10%	SLOs 1- 3
Reading Applications	30%	SLOs 1-4
Final Written Report	30%	SLOs 1- 4

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Skills needed include being able to use the learning management system to access the course shell and complete the assignments. Additionally, proficiency in Microsoft Word is needed to complete the final paper.

Instructional Methods

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This is an online course. **Each week** you will be assigned a chapter to read, and the instructor will provide an overview of some of the major issues related to the chapter. *Please note that the overviews provided are not exhaustive – you are responsible for reading the entire chapter and understanding the chapter content.*

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

In order to succeed in this course you need to keep up with the weekly readings and assignments. Assignments are due EVERY week. I suggest you log on and complete the assignments at the beginning of the week. ***Do not wait until the last minute to complete assignments to 1) avoid technological issues, and 2) leave time to email me if you have questions on the assignments.***

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

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COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

I do my best to respond within 48 hours of receiving an email. If you do not hear back from me within 48 hours, please email me again in case I did not receive your message. My office hours are also stated at the beginning of this syllabus. Your assignments will be graded and returned to you within two weeks.

When emailing, be sure to include your course number in the email. The instructor responds within 48 hours. Correspondence with your instructor should be professional.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Late Work: There are no make-up assignments for the exams or quizzes unless under severe circumstances, and documentation must be provided. As a reminder, each student gets to drop one quiz and one exam, so if you miss one, this will be your dropped one. If the final written report and reading applications are submitted late within 24 hours after the due date, you will incur a 10-point penalty, and a 20-point penalty if it is turned in between 24-48 hours after the due date. A written assignments submitted after 48 hours will receive a zero on the assignment.

Please note that technology issues are not an excuse for submitting assignments late. Keep that in mind while budgeting your time. Do not wait until the last minute to complete assignments.**

Etiquette: Offensive language and aggressive correspondence online will not be tolerated. Students are expected to be respectful of others' opinions when communicating.

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Plagiarism: Texas A & M University-Commerce views plagiarism as a serious offense. Plagiarism occurs when individuals take ideas and/or words from another source and claim these ideas as their own without giving credit to the original author(s). This can include copying words from an Internet website, reading an article and taking the authors ideas without giving them credit, or writing work that is remarkably similar to other written work (e.g., Changing words to synonyms is still plagiarism). If any written work contains ideas that are not your own, you need to give credit to the author(s) by including citations. Instructors are obligated to report instances of plagiarism to university officials. Please refer to the American Psychology Association (APA) manual for instructions on citing materials. When in doubt, ask me. Ignorance will not be tolerated as an excuse for plagiarism. The first offense of plagiarism will result in a zero on the assignment. Additional accounts of plagiarism will result in an automatic zero in the course.

All works submitted for credit must be original works created by the scholar uniquely for the class. It is considered inappropriate and unethical, particularly at the graduate level, to make duplicate submissions of a single work for credit in multiple classes, unless specifically requested by the instructor. Work submitted at the graduate level is expected to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills and be of significantly higher quality than work produced at the undergraduate level.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Student Guidebook.

http://www.tamuc.edu/student_guidebook/Student_Guidebook.pdf

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

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Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, Chatbots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism). Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed. In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Velma K. Waters Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

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<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

The Community Psychology Clinic is also available to students free of charge, and is open Tuesday-Thursday. They also offer reduced prices for family members of students. They offer individual appointments to assess for learning disabilities, anxiety disorders, stress and coping, and other services. See the following website for a list: <https://www.tamuc.edu/dept-of-psychology-and-special-education/community-psychology-clinic/> Call 903.886.5660 for scheduling.

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

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Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance, and the updated syllabus will be posted to D2L.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Part I. Introduction

Unit 1 January 29 – February 4

Required Chapter Reading: Chapter 1 — Introduction to Aging and Older Adulthood
Assignment: Quiz

Unit 2 February 5 – February 11

Required Chapter Reading: Chapter 2 — Theory and Method in Study Aging and Older Adulthood
Assignment: Quiz

Part II. Physical Aspects of Aging in Older Adulthood

Unit 3 February 12 – February 18

Required Chapter Reading: Chapter 3 – Biological Aging and Health
Assignment: Quiz

Unit 4 February 19 – February 25

Required Chapter Reading: Chapter 4 – Sensation, Perception, and Attention
Assignment: ***Exam over Chapters 1-4***

Part III. Cognitive Aspects of Aging in Older Adulthood

Unit 5 February 26 – March 3

Required Chapter Reading: Chapter 5 – Memory
Assignment: Quiz and Reading Application

Unit 6 March 4 – March 10

Required Chapter Reading: Chapter 6 – Intellectual Functioning
Assignment: Quiz

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[Spring break March 11 – March 17]

Unit 7 March 18 – 24

Required Chapter Reading: Chapter 7 – Cognition and Problem Solving in the Everyday World

Assignment: Quiz

Part IV. Socioemotional Aspects of Aging in Older Adulthood

Unit 8 March 25 – March 31

Required Chapter Reading: Chapter 8 – Personality and Coping

Assignment: ***Exam over Chapters 5-8***

Unit 9 April 1 – April 7

Required Chapter Reading: Chapter 9 – Social Interactions and Social Ties

Assignment: Quiz and Reading Application

Unit 10 April 8 – April 14

Required Chapter Reading: Chapter 10 – Employment, Retirement, and Living Arrangements

Assignment: Quiz

Unit 11 April 15 – April 21

Required Chapter Reading: Chapter 11 – Mental Health, Psychopathology, and Therapy

Assignment: Quiz and Reading Application

Unit 12 April 22 – April 28

Required Chapter Reading: Chapter 12 – Coping with Death, Dying, and Bereavement

Assignment: ***Exam over Chapters 9-12***

Part V. Final Thoughts and Applications

Unit 14 Part 1 April 29 – May 3

Study Days

Unit 14 Part 2 May 4 – May 5

Assignment: ***Final Paper due by 11:59 pm on May 5***