

SOCIOLOGY 3X03: Sociology of Aging

Fall 2018

Instructor: Dr. Sarath Chandrasekere

Day and Time of Classes: Tuesdays 7.00-10.00 pm

Class Location: TSH-B 106

Office: KTH-643- EXT: 27346. **Office Hours:** Tues. 3.30-6.30 pm (by appointment)

Email Address: chandsa@mcmaster.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course explores key theoretical frameworks and substantive areas of research in the sociology of aging. Individual experiences of aging will be examined in relation to political and historical contexts; cultural values and beliefs; and social locations of difference (i.e., gender, class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, able-bodiedness). Topics to be explored include work and retirement, family ties, health in later life, care work, and end-of-life issues.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Possess knowledge of the main theoretical perspectives and empirical areas of investigation in the sociology of aging.
2. Critically apply theoretical perspectives to substantive issues relevant to the sociology of aging, and to the 'lived experiences' of older people.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the links between (a) experiences of aging at the individual level, (b) social institutions (e.g., healthcare, retirement, family) and (c) social relations of difference (i.e., gender, class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, able-bodiedness).
4. Demonstrate enhanced critical thinking and writing skills.

This course addresses the [University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations](#) in the following ways:

- First, aging is multi-faceted social phenomena that can be explored and understood using diverse theoretical perspectives. Students will gain knowledge of diverse theories and perspectives in the sociology of aging, thus expanding their depth and breadth of knowledge, as well as the limitations of divergent theoretical perspectives.
- Second, students will be required to critically reflect on various perspectives in the sociology of aging as well as their practical applications. In doing so, students will gain experience developing lines of argument and making sound judgments.

- Third, to succeed in this course students will be required to submit written assignments as well as complete exams that involve multiple choice and long-answer questions. In each case, students' capacity to analyze and evaluate information and to communicate accurately and reliably in the written form will be challenged and developed.

TEXTS:

- Required textbook: Funk, Laura. 2016. *Sociological Perspectives on Aging*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford. (available at McMaster University bookstore).
- Supplementary readings on Avenue to Learn.

COURSE FORMAT

There will be one lecture (7:00 – 10:00) on Tuesday, each week.

Each class will involve lectures, group discussions, and individual and small group activities. A variety of assessment methods will be used, including in-class tests and written assignments. To be successful in this course, students must attend all classes and complete all assignments. Although lecture slides will be posted on Avenue to Learn, sample test questions will *not* be included in the slides on Avenue to Learn.

I will *not* simply summarize the required readings in the lectures. The lectures will utilize material from the required readings, but they will also go beyond the readings in a variety of ways. They will often address theories, concepts, issues, etc. that are not discussed in the readings. The lectures and the readings are intended to complement each other, not copy each other. You should also be aware that the lectures may *not* be the same as the lectures in a previous version of the course.

I will post PowerPoint slides on Avenue *after* the *entire* lecture on a topic has been given, but it is important for you to understand that these slides will *not* be lecture notes. Rather, the slides will be “structural outlines” of lectures (which set out the headings and sub-headings used to organize the material) along with “supplementary slides” that provide *some* details from the lectures (e.g., selected key words, certain sketchy points, and graphs or tables). You need to realize that much of the lecture material will be presented verbally. Therefore, unless you regularly attend the lectures, you will *not* have the material you need to be successful on a test or examination. You will only internalize the course material effectively if you regularly attend the lectures, listen to the explanations I give, take your own notes on these explanations, and take the opportunity to ask questions if I have said something you do not understand. The PowerPoint slides are best used when writing lecture notes and when later organizing or re-writing these notes.

You are ***not*** allowed to make audio recordings or video recordings during the lectures, or to take photos during the lectures, without written permission from the instructor. Usually, only

certain special needs students are allowed to make audio recordings. If students have an accommodation letter from SAS indicating that audio recordings of lectures are a necessary accommodation for a disability, and if these students meet with me to discuss their accommodation letters, then they will be allowed to make audio recordings of lectures.

Please be aware that my lectures are protected by copyright. Like any piece of academic writing, lectures draw upon academic material produced by others. However, in lectures – as in journal articles or books – the selection and organization of material, as well as the arguments and analyses based on the material, are unique to the person who did the academic writing. Your lecture notes will reflect and reproduce the unique work that I have done, and distribution of that work is protected by copyright. You are certainly permitted (and encouraged) to take notes on my lectures so that you can privately read and study these notes for tests. You are also permitted to share lecture notes with other students in the course on an *individual* basis (e.g., giving notes to a friend who missed a lecture). However, any mass electronic distribution of lecture notes (e.g., through Avenue to Learn or a lecture-sharing website) is *not* permitted. Furthermore, any attempt to secure individual gain from the distribution of lecture notes (e.g., by selling lecture notes for profit or receiving any form of compensation from a lecture-sharing website) is strictly prohibited.

METHODS OF EVALUATION:

Assessment	Date	Weight
In-class Test (MC and TF questions)	September 18	25%
In-Class Group Exercise	October 02	10%
Assignment 1: Film Review	Due: October 16	10%
Assignment 2: Reflection Paper	Due: October 30	20%
Take-Home Exam	Due: November 27	35%

Instructions and rubrics for all assignments are posted on Avenue to Learn and will be reviewed in class. A review session will be held prior to the Take-Home Exam due on Nov 27.

AVENUE TO LEARN:

In this course, we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for McMaster email accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

The Avenue will be used to post major announcements (and it is your responsibility to check for new announcements regularly) and weekly lecture notes. Avenue will also be used to distribute grades for scanned results of in-class tests and other assignments (but *not* grades for the take-Home exam, or final course grades).

Please do *not* contact me through Avenue to Learn. If you expect your message to be read and answered, please send the message from your McMaster email account to my McMaster email account (chandsa@mcmaster.ca).

Please be aware that material posted on Avenue to Learn is protected by copyright. You are permitted to print or download one copy of material that I have written (e.g., course handouts, lecture slides, or tip sheets) so that you can privately read or study this material. However, any further copying or any distribution of these materials (e.g., to websites or to students not enrolled in the course) is strictly prohibited. If some academic writing has been posted on Avenue (e.g., an excerpt from a book), please note that this has been done under provisions in Canada's Copyright Act. Please pay close attention to the copyright statement provided by the McMaster University Library in the cover sheet for each document.

COURSE POLICIES:

Format for assessments: You are expected to use ASA style for citations, references, and formatting all assignments. For further information on ASA please consult a style guide, such as [ASA Citation Format Guide](#).

All assignments should be typed in 12-point Times New Roman font and double-spaced, with one-inch margins on all sides. For all written assignments you should include a title page that states your name, the course code and date, and the name of the assignment (e.g., Film Review).

Submission of course work: All written assignments must be submitted in Dropbox on Avenue to Learn. Assignments are due by 11.00 am (30 minutes before class) on the day they are due. Assignments that are submitted later than 11.00 am on the day they are due will be considered one day late. When submitting your assignment in Dropbox on Avenue to Learn, the filename should include your last name and the name of the assignment (e.g., TomTom-film review).

The Sociology staff do NOT date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers. Do NOT fax assignments.

Late Penalties: Late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 5% per day, including weekends.

Assignments that are submitted more than one week after the day they are due will automatically receive a grade of zero. If you need an extension on an assignment due to illness, bereavement, etc. please submit the appropriate paperwork with the Associate Dean of Social Sciences. If approved, you will be granted an extension as necessary.

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work.” Please note these regulations have changed beginning Fall 2015.

The McMaster Student Absence Form (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>) is a self reporting tool for Undergraduate Students to report absences that last up to 3 days and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Please note, this tool cannot be used during any final examination period.

You may submit a maximum of 1 Academic Work Missed request per term. It is YOUR responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation. If you are absent more than 3 days, exceed 1 request per term, or are absent for a reason other than medical, you MUST visit your Associate Dean’s Office (Faculty Office). You may be required to provide supporting documentation.

This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence.

Review of grades: I will be diligent in marking all assignments fairly and accurately. Occasionally, students may disagree with the marks they receive. If this occurs I will be happy to review the mark of any assignment, if the procedure outlined below is followed:

To request a review of a mark, write a 1-page typed memo that describes in detail the nature of the perceived marking error. Submit this memo (in person only) to me in class or during office hours. You may submit requests for review no sooner than 48 hours and no later than 2 weeks after the assignments are returned to the class. Please note that when a mark is reviewed the new mark may be lower than the original.

E-mail policy: Please contact me via McMaster e-mail (chandsa@mcmaster.ca) with questions or concerns. You can expect to receive a reply to your email within 48 hours, excluding weekends. Please note that it is best to raise questions about course content (e.g., “I don’t understand this concept”) in class or during office hours. There will be ample time to do this.

It is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Appropriate Behaviour

It is your responsibility to attend all classes in this course, to be on time for the classes, and to stay for the duration of the classes. The instructor bears no responsibility for difficulties experienced by students who do not attend, who are late, or who leave early. If you miss a lecture, or a portion of a lecture (for *any* reason), you are advised to borrow notes from a student who was present. You are also advised to consult this student about any announcements that may have been made. If you do not know anyone in the course, you are advised to get to know someone early on and exchange contact information so that you can share notes as well as information about announcements. It is *not* the responsibility of the instructor to provide students with lecture notes or to brief students on any announcements they have missed.

It is your responsibility to conduct yourself in an appropriate manner during classes in this course. While we (either me or a TA) are trying to teach you, and while other students are trying to learn, please do *not* engage in any behaviour which is rude or distracting. Such behaviour includes (but is not limited to): having a private conversation with another student; eating food; reading a book or magazine; putting your head down or sleeping; doing work for another course; using a laptop computer for anything other than taking notes; and using a smartphone or other personal electronic device for any reason while the class or tutorial is underway. Please understand that such rude or distracting behaviour can make it difficult for the professor or TA to teach, and this behaviour can also make it difficult for other students to learn. You are welcome to engage in such activities while waiting for the class to begin or while enjoying a scheduled break in an evening course or seminar. However, while the class or tutorial is underway, please show consideration for me, your TA, and your classmates. If you are bothered by the behaviour of other students, you are welcome to discuss your concerns with me privately.

It is your responsibility to interact with the professor, TAs, and other students in a respectful manner. Disruptive or unacceptable behaviour is strictly prohibited. Disruptive or unacceptable behaviour that occurs in or out of class may constitute a violation of McMaster University's "Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities" (formerly known as the "Student Code of Conduct") and be punishable by various sanctions (penalties) that can be imposed by the university. According to the university, all McMaster students have an obligation to familiarize

themselves with the “Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities.” Again, if you are bothered by the behaviour of other students, you are welcome to discuss your concerns with me privately.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities: Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University’s Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly to further discuss any needs for accommodation.

OTHER DEPARTMENTAL/UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Students should check the web, the white board and the Undergraduate Bulletin board outside the Sociology office (KTH-627) for notices pertaining to Sociology classes or departmental business (e.g., class scheduling information, location of mailboxes and offices, tutorial information, class cancellations, TA job postings, etc.).

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)

The University recognizes that, on occasion, the timing of a student’s religious, Indigenous, or spiritual observances and that of their academic obligations may conflict. In such cases, the University will provide reasonable academic accommodation for students that is consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code. Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](#) about how to request accommodation.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Date	Topic	Readings	Tests and due dates
Tues. Sept. 4	Introduction. Course outline and a movie clip	No readings	
Tues. Sept. 11	Theoretical perspectives on aging	Funk Ch. 1	
Tues. Sept. 18	Demographic trends and ageism In-Class test	Funk Ch. 2	In-class test 25%

Tues. Sept. 25	Bodies and Biomedicalization	Funk Ch. 3	
Tues. Oct. 2	Health and care	Funk Ch. 4	In-class group exercise: 10%
Tues. Oct. 9	NO CLASS: Fall Break	No readings	
Tues. Oct. 16	Health and care cont. Film: Gen Silent Group Exercise: Film	Funk. Ch. 4	Film 2233 Mills Film Review 10%
Tues. Oct. 23	Care and care work	-Aronson 2002 -Stacey 2005 Posted on Avenue	
Tues. Oct. 30	Economic security and retirement	Funk Ch. 5	Reflection Paper 20%
Tues. Nov. 6	Social participation and inclusion	Funk. Ch. 6	
Tues. Nov. 13	Families and aging	Funk. Ch. 7	Take-Home exam to be given 35%
Tues. Nov. 20	Age-friendly cities	A selected chapter from Age-Friendly Cities by Buffel et al. 2018-	
Tues. Nov. 27	Emerging topics Aboriginal Elders	Funk. Ch. 8	Take-Home Exam due
Tues. Dec. 4		No readings	