AGE2000H
PRINCIPLES OF AGING
FALL 2022

Section 1: Tuesdays, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Section 2: Tuesdays, 1:30-4:30
Location: In-person (Room TBA)

Instructor: Professor Amanda Grenier
Email: amanda.grenier@utoronto.ca
Teaching intern: TBD
Office hours: By appointment (conducted via zoom)

Course Description
AGE2000 is a graduate-level review of the theories and theoretical foundations of gerontology. Gerontology deals broadly with aging in relation to older individuals, aging populations, and with age as a category of social structure. This course will address a broad range of theories and concepts related to gerontology. The application of theories and concepts to practice, policy and research by the student is a major focus of this course. A critical thinking approach to learning will be encouraged.

While this course is planned as in-person, a return to online learning may require modifications to the assignments.

Goals
The goals of the course are to assist the student in critically examining the following:
1. The different ways of understanding gerontology and the life course
2. The strengths and weaknesses of theoretical approaches to gerontology
3. The current debates about gerontological frameworks/theories
4. The student's own position about gerontological theories
5. How gerontological theories inform the student’s research, policy preferences or practice

Outcomes
At the end of this course you should be able to identify and analyze major theories of gerontology and critically employ these in your writing, research and practice. Our course objective is to attain a broad understanding of how theories in social gerontology have developed over time and to attain a deeper understanding of a particular area of theory that is relevant to your research and/or practice.

The study of aging from a critical perspective
This course explores the foundations and developments of gerontological social work, social gerontology, and critical gerontology to understand current approaches to the study of aging the
life course, and the foundations for social work practice with older people. It engages in a critical review in order to reconsider taken-for-granted assumptions and expand the boundaries of our current research and practice. The approach taken in this course draws on understandings of language, power, diverse social locations, and change over time. Using a critical perspective to explore the study of aging, one can begin to understand the connections and/or contradictions in our research and practice—and in particular, between formal and informal knowledge.

The course offers students the opportunity to think critically about the interdisciplinary study of aging and the life course, and develop a more complex understanding of the intersections between theory, research, practice and lived experience. It is a course that allows students to exercise their curiosity and question taken-for-granted language and practices in social and critical gerontology.

Learning takes place inside and outside the classroom and is facilitated by the instructor and students themselves. In-class/online learning takes place through active student involvement, participating in online lectures and group discussions, and peer feedback. Learning outside the classroom takes place through assigned readings, critical thinking about class material, and applying learning to a particular area of interest in oral discussions and written assignments.

**Course Resources**

Readings and Additional Resources will be posted on Quercus. Login at [http://q.utoronto.ca/](http://q.utoronto.ca/) using your UTORid and password. Courses you are enrolled in will display in Quercus in alphabetical order by course name. Most course materials, organized week by week, will be accessed within each course.

If a course card for a course you are enrolled in does not appear on your Quercus Dashboard, select Courses from the left menu and All Courses. Click on the star beside a course title to add to the courses menu. An online Student Quercus Guide is available at [uoft.me/qstudents](http://uoft.me/qstudents).

**Educational Philosophy**

Grounded in an adult learning perspective and collaborative model of practice, this course attempts to link theory and research to real-life experience. Assignments are specifically designed to allow students to work collaboratively (with guidance of the instructor) to link course theory to real-life scenarios or policy. We believe in an educational approach that fosters a positive working partnership between the instructor and students. Based on collaborative principles, the class will be taught using a wide variety of instructional methods including lectures, large and small group discussions, videos and exercises, and (where possible) expert guest speakers. Students are encouraged to share their knowledge and experience in various aspects of community and organization practice and will be asked to participate in the weekly presentation of materials and evaluation of the course.

The weekly encounters of our class are designed as inter-disciplinary, experiential, and collaborative. Each class will be comprised of student led components, clarification and lecture components by the professor, and in-class (and out of class)/online group work. The material of each week will focus on particular content as outlined in the schedule, and in formats that strive for co-creation of knowledge and critical practice. This is not a ‘banking-style’ class where the professor provides material (usually via powerpoint) to be deposited into the minds of the students, and/or asks students to memorize content. Weekly activities are intended to stimulate curiosity.
Within and outside classroom exercises are designed to help students understand the field, stimulate thinking, and consider knowledge in relation to practice. Student involvement is central, and self-reflection, open exchange of ideas, and critical analysis are expected.

Learning Environment

This course strives to create an environment that is inclusive and conducive to a positive learning experience. This means that both instructors and students must take responsibility for the learning environment. Positive learning involves gaining and sharing knowledge in a respectful manner just as will be necessary in the context of professional practice. Accordingly, disrespectful behaviour, intimidation and discriminatory and exclusionary comments are unacceptable in the learning environment, just as they are unacceptable in a professional environment. This would include comments that are hurtful, inappropriate and contrary to our social work values, mission, Faculty and University policies and the Ontario Human Rights Code. If there are any concerns about the learning environment, students are encouraged to express them to the instructor.

Professional Conduct and Civility in the Classroom

Students should approach this course with the same level of professionalism expected in practice settings and in accordance to our professional code of conduct (as per the CASW Code of Ethics). This means students should arrive on time for (online) class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another’s opinions. Academic settings provide freedom to explore new ideas. In the classroom, this allows for opportunities to share perspectives, experiences and ideas and to provide respectful space for those of others. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by factors such as ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class/socio-economic background, (dis)abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, gender identities as well as personal and work experiences, and systemic issues of racism, colonization, and discrimination. Social work education also deals with complex and controversial issues which may impact your comfort and safety. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues. In this environment we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. It is the responsibility of everyone in the classroom to strive toward an environment that values civility, respect and professionalism even if we do not agree. Students are expected to accord their colleagues the respect, sensitivity and confidentiality similar to the environment they would offer in professional practice. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect.

Unanticipated distress, mental health and stress management: Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the professor and seek self-care. The professor can be responsive and supportive regarding students’ participation in course activities, but students are responsible for communicating their needs. Students may also experience mental health concerns or stressful events that may lead to diminished academic performance. University of Toronto services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Health & Wellness Partnership
**Name and Pronoun Use in the Classroom**

Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name. The instructor will gladly honor your request to address you by your preferred name or pronoun. Please advise your instructor of your request early in the term if possible.

**Use of Electronic Devices in the Online Classroom**

In consideration of your classmates and your own learning please turn off all cell phones and pagers during class. Engagement in online classes works best with video, which permits relationships and engagement between students and the professor. Please mute yourself when not speaking, and use the raise hand function or comment box to indicate your question. Instructors prefer that you receive no calls or messages during class time. If you must be on call for an emergency, please let your home or office know that you are only available for emergencies that no one else can handle. If you must carry a pager/phone, please set it to vibrate only. Please do not use laptops for anything other than participation, note taking and classroom learning.

**Course Evaluation: Student Feedback Matters**

Course evaluations for this course will be completed conveniently through an online system. You will receive an email invitation at your mail.utoronto.ca email address that will direct you to where you can complete the evaluations for all courses that are in the online system. You can also access ‘Course Evals’ through Quercus by login at http://q.utoronto.ca/ using your UTORid and password.

Course evaluations are very important to ensuring the quality of education at this Faculty and informing the development of its curriculum.

The survey used to evaluate this course have been developed in collaboration between faculty and students and the university’s teaching and learning experts to ensure that it will provide information about teaching and learning that can be used to enhance and assure the quality of education here at the University of Toronto.

**Grading Criteria**

Grading is based on actual performance, not on anticipated or potential capacity to perform.

“**A**” signifies truly outstanding work, with ample evidence of creative and original thinking. The work is well organized, well written and well presented. The capacities are evident both to appropriately critique extensive and recent literature and to analyze and synthesize material. The relevance to social work practice and social welfare is well established.

“**B**” signifies good work, which shows clear evidence of having a sound grasp of the subject matter along with evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability at a demanding graduate level. The
understanding of relevant issues under examination is adequate. There is evidence of a proper search of the literature and expected familiarity with its content and perspectives.

“FZ” denotes inadequate performance considering the expectations of a graduate program. There may be a combination of superficial and/or confused understanding of the subject matter, weakly focused content, failure to direct attention to the assigned topic, and limited use of critical and analytic skills. The literature selected may be out of date for the purpose, too limited in scope, or not clearly relevant.

**Credit (CR)** is given if you meet expectations. This designation is used for SWK 4701 Social Work Practicum I and SWK4702 Social Work Practicum II and for the Elements of Social Work Practice Laboratory SWK4105H.

**No Credit (NCR)** is given if you fail to meet expectations. A NCR is the equivalent of an FZ grade and is subject to the same regulations concerning “supplemental” and “repeat”.

**NOTE:** Secondary distinctions are made within the grades of “A” and “B” by using “+” and “-” signify that the work is high or low within that letter grade.

The University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy is available at: [http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/Documents/universitygpp.pdf](http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/Documents/universitygpp.pdf)

It defines the grade scale as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Letter Grade Scale</th>
<th>Scale of Marks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90 - 100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85 - 89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80 - 84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>77 - 79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>73 - 76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70 - 72%</td>
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<tr>
<td>FZ*</td>
<td>0-69%</td>
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*FZ = Fail*

Written assignments will be graded on their clarity, comprehensiveness, originality, appropriate use of reference materials and technical adequacy. Papers are expected to be of sufficient quality as to represent your growing professionalism and competence. All written work must be typewritten and in APA reference format.

*Academic Dishonesty & Plagiarism*
Students in graduate studies are expected to commit to the highest standards of integrity, and to understand the importance of protecting and acknowledging intellectual property. It is assumed that they bring to their graduate studies a clear understanding of how to cite references appropriately, thereby avoiding plagiarism. Common examples of problematic academic practices that lead to consequences for plagiarism include:

- Copying and pasting from a source and providing a citation but forgetting to put quotation marks around the content;
- Using material from a source and making changes in specific words or sentence structure but not citing the original source;
- Using ideas from a source without citing the original source.

Graduate students are understood to be capable of expressing ideas that are original and distinct from those of the sources to which they refer. The consequences for academic dishonesty are very high at the graduate level; suspected plagiarism is immediately reported to the Associate Dean’s Office and referred to the School of Graduate Studies. Please take the time to review your work carefully to avoid these consequences.

Two excellent documents: How Not to Plagiarize http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize and the Code on Behavior and Academic Matters is available for you to review on the FIFSW web site or at http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/calendar/Pages/Policies-and-Guidelines.aspx

Turnitin

Students will be required to submit their final assignment to Turnitin for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. Students can upload their papers as many times as they like to review their work before submitting a final version to the instructor. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism.

Turnitin is integrated in Quercus.

Students can upload their papers through Quercus as many times as they like to review their work before submitting a final version to the instructor. For each paper submitted, an initial Similarity Report is generated by Turnitin within 5-10 minutes. Similarity Reports for the second or subsequent submissions will take up to 24 hours to generate. It has, on occasion, taken over 72 hours for a Turnitin Similarity Report to generate and be sent to students. Please keep this in mind should you wish to review a report before submitting for grading.

Late Assignments

An assignment handed in 1-7 days late (up to 5:00pm on 7th day) will receive a one grade point deduction (e.g., A to A-). A paper submitted late beyond 7 days will not be accepted without legitimate, documented reasons beyond a student’s control. In this case, a Coursework Extension Form and documentation (as detailed below) is required for late assignments. Please refer to the Faculty website for regulations regarding extensions, late papers, etc. available at http://socialwork.utoronto.ca/current-students/academic-policies/.
The University’s Assessment and Grading Practices Policy sets out that instructors are not obliged to accept late work, except where there are legitimate, documented reasons beyond a student’s control.

Students should make every effort to discuss anticipated late assignments with instructors in advance of due dates. If you are registered with the Accessibility Office, please ask your advisor to contact the instructor and note the accommodation that is required.

Make a copy of everything you submit for course assignments. A Coursework Extension Form and documentation (as detailed below) is required for late assignments. Please refer to the Faculty website for regulations regarding extensions, late papers, etc. available at http://socialwork.utoronto.ca/current-students/academic-policies/.

**Coursework Extensions**

Students may require extensions for classwork assignments on a case by case basis. Extensions should be requested in advance of the due date with usual extension maximum of one week. Download the Course Extension Form from the SGS website. Your instructor must complete and sign Section 2 of the form. Section 3 of the form must be completed by the Associate Dean/Graduate Coordinator.

Students registered with Accessibility Services will provide a copy of the Accessibility Services Letter of Academic Accommodations with the Course Extension Form.

Students who are not registered with Accessibility Services must provide a Verification of Student Illness or Injury form to the instructor if the extension requested is because of illness or injury.

**Absence Due to Illness**

Please notify your instructor if illness will interfere with your class attendance.

If illness is likely to interfere with your meeting a due date for an assignment or other requirements, you should have your physician or health care provider complete a Verification of Student Illness or Injury Form http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/getattachment/index/Verification-of-Illness-or-Injury-form-Jan-22-2013.pdf.aspx at the time of your illness and submit it to the instructor. You must inform the instructor of the illness on or before the deadline date.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities or Medical Conditions**

If you need or desire an accommodation for a disability or medical condition, please inform the instructor/s so we are able to modify the way the course is taught to facilitate participation and/or use resources available to us, such as Services for Students with Disabilities and Adaptive Technology to facilitate learning. If assistance is required, we will treat that information as private and confidential. We strongly encourage you to register immediately with Accessibility Services http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca.

This information will be held in confidence and communicated to instructors with your consent, as needed.

**Note-taking in Class**
If you have trouble taking class notes due to difficulty concentrating, writing, accessing verbal information, chronic pain or other issues, there are two options: 1) talk to your instructor who can help recruit a volunteer note-taker from the class; 2) you can request volunteer note-taking services through Accessibility Services, University of Toronto.

Through Accessibility Services you will need to register for note-taking as an academic accommodation using your UTORid and password [http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as/note-taking](http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as/note-taking).

If you would like to volunteer as a note-taker please visit [https://clockwork.studentlife.utoronto.ca/custom/misc/home.aspx](https://clockwork.studentlife.utoronto.ca/custom/misc/home.aspx) to login with UTORid and password, update your profile, agree to terms and conditions, select the course(s) you are available to become a notetaker for and upload your sample notes.

Volunteer responsibilities include: 1) Attend classes regularly and take lecture notes; 2) Consistently upload your notes to the secure Student Life web site; and 3) Inform Accessibility Services if you drop a course. Upon request, volunteer note-takers will receive a Certificate of Appreciation upon the completion of the term.

Religious Observances

Please notify the instructor if religious observances conflict with class attendance or due dates for assignments so we can make appropriate arrangements for alternate scheduling of evaluations or make up of missed work.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

Writing Style Requirements

Please follow the guidelines in the 6th edition of the APA publication manual for format and citations in your written assignments. This manual is available at the campus bookstore, the library, and the Health Sciences Writing Centre (HSWC) located in Room 344 at the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work. Please avoid colloquial expressions, proofread all your documents carefully, and employ good grammar. The instructors encourage students to access the Health Sciences Writing Centre if they feel challenged by writing assignments. All assignments must be typed. Papers will be returned to students after the final grades have been made available (January 18, 2023).

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>% of Final Mark</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Weekly Summaries (10)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Weekly (Sept 20-Nov 22)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Group lead of Readings</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>One week- date TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Synthesis- (Group)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>October 21st, 2021 (5pm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Critical Analysis of Clinical Practice or Policy Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>December 6th, 2021 (5pm)</td>
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Assignment 1: Weekly Summaries (up to 2 per summary for 20%) in class (Sept 20-Nov 22)

All students are expected to complete readings, attend classes, and take part in the discussion. Each week students will be required to print and bring a one-paragraph summary of the readings and a question for discussion to class for in-class exchange and peer feedback. Students are required to submit a total of 10 one paragraph summaries. The summaries (including the question) will be collected at the end of each class, including the hand-written notes from your peer reviewer. Students absent from the class that week (or who have not completed and received feedback in class) cannot submit their weekly summary after the fact. Summaries are worth up to 2 points each, but will be graded based on a progressive scale- feedback given at midterm (meaning improvement will be assessed over time). Questions will be used to facilitate class discussion and to clarify material. The idea of this assignment is for students to familiarize themselves with the content, practice summarizing material, and learn to provide constructive peer review and feedback to others.

Assignment 2: Lead Summary Discussions of Readings (by Group) (15%) (date TBD)

Each week, one assigned group of students (size TBD, based on class size) will be responsible for presenting the key points of the readings to the class. Groups will produce one powerpoint slide per reading and a summary of the connections and discrepancies for that week. The presentation should be between 10-15 minutes. The presentation will be followed by clarification of points by the professor and by a broad level discussion, with examples and activities. This component helps students take leadership of the content, provides practice summarizing and presenting, and identifies the salient points for analysis and the next assignment.

Assignment 3: Group Synthesis Paper- Theoretical Foundations - October 21st, 2021 (25%)

Based on the readings and class material to date, please write a short paper that synthesizes the theoretical foundations and key principles relevant to a critical perspective in social gerontology/gerontological social work. This paper is to be completed by assigned groups and can be no longer than 5 pages double-spaced. You may wish to consult additional sources, although this is not necessary. This assignment serves as a check-in to ensure that groups understand the material discussed thus far and to clarify any misunderstandings that would be important as we move forward with class material. It will also help to establish a foundation from which you can apply your ideas in the final assignment.

Assignment 4: Critical Paper -Clinical Practice or Policy due December 6th, 2021 (40%)

Clinical Option

Each student will write a paper that carries out a detailed analysis of a particular case or issue using the theories and concepts from the class. If the student selects the clinical option they will also be required to outline the details of the case history in a single spaced description (up to ¾ page single spaced). The theories used in the paper should be gerontology theories covered in the course. However, the student may combine a new theoretical angle provided they link this with one key concept/theory from the class (e.g., new- post-colonial theory). It is expected that students will also integrate externally located research references to help strengthen the analysis.
Length: Maximum 10 pages of text + the short case description. The paper must be double-spaced, 12-point size, Times New Roman font, 1” margins. The case must be single spaced and take up no more than ¼ of a page. One grade-point will be deducted (e.g., A to A-) for each page that extends beyond the maximum limit.

**Policy Option**

In the case of the policy option, the student will write a paper that carries out a critical analysis of an existing policy or guiding framework at an organizational, municipal, provincial, or federal level. Students can select any policy or framework in their field of study. The only requirement is that the policy must be relevant to older people in community or institutional settings. This does not mean that it has to be aging policy or geared to older people (e.g., retirement or age friendly cities)- it could be a related policy that should include older people (e.g., housing /homelessness).

Using theory/concepts covered in class, students must:

1) Demonstrate that they understand the values and perspective underlying the selected case or policy (what theoretical, political, or conceptual perspective(s) motivate the practice/policy?)
2) Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the existing practice or policy
3) Propose policy amendments or new practice or policy dimensions to address weaknesses.

The analysis of the existing practice or policy and the proposed changes should be grounded in theory/concepts covered in class. The paper should take a particular theoretical grounding, and can include up to three theoretical perspectives/concepts covered in class. It is expected that students will also draw on externally located research references in the literature to help understand the substantive policy area and to support your policy analysis and proposed changes.

Length: Maximum 10 pages of text (not including references) (double-spaced, 12-point size, Times New Roman font, 1” margins). One grade-point will be deducted (e.g., A to A-) for each page that extends beyond the maximum limit.

References: Please note that a minimum of 10 academic references from course materials and/or external literature reviewing is required for either the clinical or policy paper.

**COURSE CONTENT**

Articles or links to websites will be posted on the Quercus website.

Week 1: Introduction and Syllabus – September 13, 2021
Week 2: Situating Critical Perspectives on Aging – September 20, 2021
Week 3: Early Approaches - Activity & Disengagement – September 27, 2021
Week 4: Political Economy- The Structures and Institutions of Age – October 4, 2021
Week 5: Cultural Turn: Embodiment, Representations and Response – October 11, 2021
Week 6: Humanistic and Storied Approaches - October 18, 2021
*October 21st, Assignment #3 due*
Week 7: Successful Aging and Critique – October 25, 2021
Week 8: Linking Micro and the Macro- Life Course Perspectives – November 1, 2021
Week 1 - Introduction and Syllabus – September 13, 2021

- Introductions, interests, and expectations
- Syllabus review
- Introduction to collaborative learning


If further interested in teaching models, see:


Week 2: Situating Critical Perspectives on Aging – September 20, 2021


Week 3: Early Approaches - Activity & Disengagement – September 27, 2021


Week 4: Political Economy - The Structures and Institutions of Age – October 4, 2021


Week 5: Cultural Turn: Embodiment, Representations and Response – October 11, 2021


Week 6: Humanistic and Storied Approaches - October 18, 2021


Assignment #3 Due- October 21, 2021

Week 7: Successful Aging and Critique – October 25, 2021


**Week 8: Linking Micro and the Macro- Life Course Perspectives – November 1, 2021**


**If interested in this perspective also see:**


**Week 9: Feminism, Diversity, and Intersectionality –November 8, 2021**


**Week 10: Systemic Issues, Gaps, and Exclusions – November 15, 2021**


**Week 11: Inequality and Disadvantage – November 22, 2021**


**Week 12: Course Review and Wrap-Up – November 29, 2021**

Class exercise to facilitate review of course content in preparation of final assignment

**December 6th - Assignment # 4 due**