KIN 500(F): AGING, HEALTH, AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: SOCIO-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

Class Location: Room 20, War Memorial Gym
Class Times: Fridays, 10am to 1pm

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Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
The purpose of this course is to examine the socio-cultural research and theorizing pertaining to aging, health, and physical activity. In particular, this course considers how older adults’ embodied experiences of health and physical activity are influenced by their social position as well as existing cultural norms and ideals. Thus, we discuss the role of age, ability, culture, gender, racialization, sexuality, and social class on older adults’ everyday experiences of health and physical activity. We additionally explore how health and physical activity in later life are shaped and constrained by ableism, ageism, healthism, heterosexism, and successful aging narratives. Specific topics related to health and physical activity in later life that we investigate include body image, chronic illness, consumer culture, disability, elite sport, exercise, leisure activities, media representations, technology, and the built environment.

Course Objectives
The goals of this course are: (1) to critically examine and acquire knowledge of the socio-cultural research and theorizing related to aging, health, and physical activity; (2) to foster the development of advanced skills in reading, writing, facilitating discussions, and giving presentations; (3) to give students opportunities to read and reflect in depth on topics of individual interest related to aging, health, and physical activity.

CLASS FORMAT
The course will be held on Fridays from 10am to 1pm. This graduate seminar course is intended to be a collaborative effort in which active participation is essential. The class will begin with brief opening remarks from the instructor about the week’s topic and underlying theoretical concepts and related debates. During the second part of the class, a member of the class will facilitate a discussion of that week’s required readings. The last two weeks of class will be structured around student presentations of their (in-progress) research papers.

COURSE READINGS
The weekly readings will be a combination of research articles and book chapters which can be accessed through the UBC library reserve system – follow the links on the Connect webpage for the course. The reading materials can also be obtained directly through the UBC library.
EVALUATION

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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar Facilitation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Presentation</td>
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<td>Research Paper</td>
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**Participation**
Your participation mark will be based on the contributions you make in class each week. Specifically, you will be expected to come to class having read the readings and prepared to engage in meaningful dialogue. As such, you will be expected to bring to class one question per article (in typed format which will be submitted to the instructor at the end of class). These questions could be something that was left unanswered for you by each of the articles, a thought-provoking query regarding the arguments made by the authors, or a short (one or two sentence) excerpt from the reading followed by the posing of a question. Additionally, students will be required to provide feedback to the instructor on their peers’ research presentations during the last two weeks of class. Finally, at the end of the term, you will be asked to evaluate your own participation and justify a proposed grade.

**Seminar Facilitation**
Each student will individually facilitate one seminar. First, you will be expected to briefly summarize the main issues or findings of the required readings for your facilitation week. Secondly, you will lead the class in a discussion of the readings based on a series of questions that you will prepare in advance of the class. Ultimately, your job as a facilitator is to help move the class towards better understanding of the material covered in the readings and to foster active participation. Further details about this assignment will follow.

**Research Presentation**
During the last two weeks of the course, each student will present their in-progress research papers (described below). More details to follow.

**Research Paper**
You will be required to write a critical review of the existing literature related to a particular aspect of the sociology of the body in later life of your own choosing. Further details about this assignment will follow.

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Attendance/Missed Classes**
Regular class attendance is required and students are expected to come to class having read the weekly readings and prepared to discuss them in-depth. Students who miss class due to medical or serious family emergency on the day they were scheduled to facilitate a seminar or deliver a presentation must contact the instructor as soon as possible to reschedule for an alternative time.

**Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**
The University's goal is to ensure fair and consistent treatment of all students, including students with a disability, in accordance with their distinct needs and in a manner consistent with academic principles. Students with a disability who wish to have an academic accommodation
should contact Access and Diversity without delay.

**Academic Integrity**
All UBC students are expected to behave as honest and responsible members of an academic community. Breach of those expectations or failure to follow the appropriate policies, principles, rules, and guidelines of the University with respect to academic honesty may result in disciplinary action. It is your responsibility to become familiar with the University of British Columbia’s Academic Honesty and Plagiarism Policies, as well as the Student Declaration and the consequences of violating these policies.

**Extensions**
Extensions for the research paper will only be granted in cases of medical or serious family emergencies. Students must contact the instructor prior to the due date of the paper in order to obtain an extension.

**Late Papers**
Late research papers will be accepted with a penalty of two marks per day (including weekends) out of the total 40 marks for the assignment, with each day ending at 4pm. Students should hand in late assignments to the School of Kinesiology main office in War Memorial Gym (Room 210), which is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm.

**WEEKLY TOPICS**

**Week#1 – Introduction**
**Summary:** This week will be a general overview of the course. We will discuss the structure of the course, begin to organize the seminar facilitation schedule, and go over evaluation procedures. The instructor will introduce the topic of aging, health, and physical activity through a discussion of historical influences, demographic shifts, and changing cultural norms.

**Week#2 – The Aging Body in Socio-Cultural Context**
**Summary:** This week we will begin to examine the ways that the aging body has been theorized in the socio-cultural literature, drawing upon age relations theory, the concepts of Third and Fourth Age, and physical cultural studies.

**Required Readings:**


**Additional Suggested (Not Required) Reading:**


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**Week#3 – The Ideal Aging Body: Cultural Representations**

**Summary:** This week we will explore how aging as well as later life health and physical activity are constructed and portrayed in the media. In doing so, we will begin to explore the age, gender, and health norms and ideals that underpin older adults’ experiences of growing older.

**Required Readings:**


**Additional Suggested (Not Required) Reading:**

**Week#4 – Aging, Health, Physical Activity: The Influence of Consumer Culture**  
**Summary:** This week we will discuss the role of consumer culture in the social construction and experience of health and physical activity in later life.

**Required Readings:**


**Additional Suggested (Not Required) Readings:**


Slevin, K. F. (2010). ‘If I had lots of money…I’d have a body makeover’: Managing the aging body. *Social Forces, 88*(3), 1003-1020.

**Week#5 – Aging and Body Image in Later life**  
**Summary:** This week we will begin to explore the complex relationships between body image, gender, health, and physical activity in later life.

**Required Readings:**


**Additional Suggested (Not Required) Readings:**


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**Week#6 – Chronic Illness, Pain, and Physical Activity in Later Life**

**Summary:** This week we will consider the concepts of biographical disruption and biographical flow as we explore the experience of poor health, pain, and loss of mobility in later life.

**Required Readings:**


Hurd Clarke, L., & Bennett, E. (2013). ‘You learn to live with all the things that are wrong with you’: Gender and the experience of multiple chronic conditions in later life. *Ageing and Society, 33*(2), 342-360.


**Additional Suggested (Not Required) Readings:**


Week#7 – Sport and Successful Aging
Summary: This week we will consider the research and theorizing around older adults’ engagement in competitive sports, paying particular attention to the influence of successful aging narratives.

Required Readings:


Additional Suggested (Not Required) Readings:


Week#8 – Exercise and Physical Activity in Later Life
Summary: This week we will discuss how older adults experience and perceive exercise and physical activity.

Required Readings:

Grant, B. (2012). ‘Against the grain’: Over 75 years and joining a community exercise programme. Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health, 4(1), 1-14.


Additional Suggested (Not Required) Readings:


**Week#9 – Social Activity/Inactivity and Health in Later Life**

**Summary:** This week we will consider the cultural meanings attributed to activity more generally, as we focus on the socio-cultural theorizing and research concerning ageism, social engagement, health and well-being.

**Required Readings:**


**Additional Suggested (Not Required) Readings:**

Yarnal, C., Son, J., & Liechty, T. (2010). “She was buried in her purple dress and her red hat and all of our members wore full ‘Red Hat Regalia’ to celebrate her life”: Dress, embodiment and older women's leisure: Reconfiguring the ageing process. *Journal of Aging Studies, 25*(1), 52-61.

**Week#10 – Social Exclusion, Health, and Physical Activity**

**Summary:** This week we will discuss how social marginalization delimits some older adults’ health and physical activity participation, paying particular attention to socio-economic status, sexual orientation, and racialization.

**Required Readings:**


**Additional Suggested (Not Required) Reading:**

**Week#11 – Disability, Technology and the Moving/Immobile Older Body**

**Summary:** This week we will examine the relationships between technology, health, mobility, and the built environment in later life.

**Required Readings:**


**Additional Suggested (Not Required) Readings:**


**Week#12 ➔ Student Presentations**

**Week#13 ➔ Student Presentations**