

**San José State University
Department of Psychology
PSYC/GERO 114, Psychology of Aging
Summer 2022**

Instructor:	Erin Woodhead, Ph.D.
Office Location:	DMH 316
Telephone:	408-924-5654
Email:	Erin.Woodhead@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Via Zoom link: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1-2pm and by appointment
Class Days/Time:	N/A – Online Course
Classroom:	N/A – Online Course
Prerequisites:	PSYC 001

Course Description

From Catalog: Psychological development of middle-aged and older adults emphasizing normative (typical) development in the context of cognitive, socioemotional, biological, and cultural processes. Course content also includes age-related health problems and their prevention.

Course Format

This is an online course that is asynchronous, meaning that we have no live online meetings and you can work through the material at your own pace. Students need to have a reliable internet connection and a computer to access the course material.

Canvas

This course will occur entirely online through the Canvas website for this course (<https://sjsu.instructure.com>). All of the assignments required to complete the class will be available through Canvas and turned in through Canvas. Please take time to familiarize yourself with the various features of Canvas, and ask early if you have questions.

Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

CLO1: Explain and identify changes in the structure of our population with regards to the changing demographic of older adults in the U.S. and internationally.

CLO2: Explain and identify the biological/physical processes that occur during the aging process.

CLO3: Be able to identify and discuss typical research designs used in the study of aging.

CLO4: Identify lifespan changes in cognitive functioning, physical and mental health, personality, and social relationships, including which components of these domains do not change substantially with age.

CLO5: Identify components of and explain theoretical models (psychological and biological) relevant to aging (socioemotional selectivity theory, continuity theory, random error theories, etc.).

CLO6: Report on the aging process through the perspective of an older adult through completion of interviews and experiential exercises; integrate these experiences with theoretical models presented in class.

CLO7: Discuss different viewpoints on the aging process gleaned from online interactions with your peers.

CLO8: Identify relevant legislation that pertains to older adults, including issues of nursing home care, Medicare, employment of older adults, and end-of-life care.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

Upon successful completion of the psychology major requirements...

PLO1 – Knowledge Base of Psychology – Students will be able to identify, describe, and communicate the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.

PLO2 – Research Methods in Psychology – Students will be able to design, implement, and communicate basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretations.

PLO3 – Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology – Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes.

PLO4 – Application of Psychology – Students will be able to apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues.

PLO5 – Values in Psychology – Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

Yochim, B. P., & Woodhead, E. L. (Eds.) (2018). *Psychology of Aging: A Biopsychosocial Perspective*. New York, NY: Springer. ISBN: 9780826137289

This book is available at the bookstore and through other outlets. **The SJSU library has a free e-book of our textbook.**

Class Structure & “Classroom” Protocol

All course activities will occur online. There are no required in-person meetings for this class. Each week will correspond to a module in Canvas. The modules will include everything that you need to complete each week in the class. Each module will include the weekly assignments, links to outside materials (videos, articles) that are relevant to the class, as well as a short lecture that I’ve pre-recorded for you to view that week. **Note that this is not a lecture-based course.** “Class time” will be used for completing the reading questions and completing the class activity plus discussion post. Therefore, students are responsible for reading the textbook as the primary way of obtaining the content for the course.

This course is self-paced and will require you to time manage and self-motivate appropriately. I strongly recommend that you schedule time each week to complete the above activities. The worst thing you could do is to wait to complete the entire set of activities right before something is due.

Honor Code

(Reference: Academic Integrity Policy at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/Policies/>)

In order to ensure fairness and have a single standard of representing knowledge acquired, all students participating in online SJSU courses must agree to abide by the following code of conduct.

1. My work will be my own in this online course, except where the assignment is to work in groups or teams.
2. I will not give any answers for individually graded assignments to anyone else, or share assignments on the internet via course tutoring websites.
3. I will not engage in any other activities that will misrepresent my own work or improve my results falsely. I will not engage in any activities that will misrepresent others’ work.

4. I will not download, save, or otherwise retain materials from the course for anything but personal use.

Class Environment

In an effort to create an environment conducive to sharing one's thoughts, I require the following etiquette when engaging in online discussions:

- Be polite and respectful to the other people in the class
- Do not use profanity in posts

Respect for the rights and opinions of others is required. The free and open exchange of ideas is the cornerstone of higher education, but we must always remain respectful of others, even if we disagree strongly with them. Disagreement is acceptable, but discourteousness is not. Behavior that creates a threatening or harassing environment will not be tolerated. Severe and pervasive disruptions of course activities are a violation of the Student Code of Conduct will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development.

<http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/Student%20Conduct%20Code%202013.pdf>

Recording of Class Lectures

Common courtesy and professional behavior dictates that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You may not make audio or video recordings of this class. The materials in this class can be used for your private, study purposes only. Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor. You may not publicly share or upload instructor-generated material for this course such as lectures, exam questions, classroom activities, or discussion material. You can also not share other students' discussion material outside of the Canvas environment.

Grading Information

Instead of a traditional grading rubric, this class uses a grading contract. Please review the below information about grading contracts and how our specific course grading will work.

How is a grading contract different from a traditional grading scheme? With a grading contract, students complete a set of core activities and achievements to earn a "baseline" grade in the class, and can raise their grade further by completing other achievements. Grades can also be lowered beyond the baseline grade if students fail to complete the core achievements. In a grading contract, a single low score will not irreversibly lower your course grade. Also, because grading contracts do not rely on mathematical averaging, students who earn low-but-passing scores on assignments and exams in the beginning of the course will find it easier to raise their course grade with strong performance in the middle and end portions of the course.

Why use grading contracts? Grading contracts are intended to be more equitable to students by: a) giving students more control over what assignments they choose to put the

strongest effort into; b) reducing pressure around assignment deadlines; c) allowing performance in the middle and end of semester to “redeem” low-but-passing scores from earlier in the semester; and, (d) providing pathways for students to earn high course grades (including As) when they excel on other kinds of assignments besides exams.

Grading Contract Details

Core Class Achievements

You will earn a course grade of B- if you pass* ALL of the following core class achievements.

- Complete all 3 course orientation activities
- 8 out of 10 reading questions
- 8 out of 10 class activities
- 8 out of 10 discussion posts and replies
- Exams 1 and 2 (70% or higher is passing)

Grade Boosters

You will earn a grade boost (e.g., B- vs. B) for completing EACH of the achievements below. There are five boosters available, though please note that receiving an A+ grade will be left to the discretion of the instructor based on exceptional work. Therefore, you can complete up to four grade boosters.

- Score 90% or higher on an exam (2 boosts available total, 1 for each exam)
- Complete an additional paper with a passing score (3 boosts available total, see Canvas for paper details)

Grade Sinkers

You will lose part of a letter grade (i.e., B- to C+) for each instance where your course performance does not meet expected minimum standards. These are:

- Score < 70% on an exam (including a 0 for failing to take an exam; each exam < 70% lowers course grade by part of a letter grade)
- Completing fewer than 8 out of 10 reading questions (grade decrease, regardless of how many fewer than 8 completed, e.g., 2 vs. 7)
- Completing fewer than 8 out of 10 class activities (grade decrease, regardless of how many fewer than 8 completed, e.g., 2 vs. 7)
- Completing fewer than 8 out of 10 discussion posts and replies (grade decrease, regardless of how many fewer than 10 completed, e.g., 2 vs. 7)

*A note on what’s considered “passing” in this class

- For exams, a passing score is 70% or higher.
- For ungraded (complete/incomplete) assignments, you must follow instructions specified in the assignment to pass. Each assignment’s description lays out what is required to pass.
- Assignments must be completed on time to be considered passing, unless a student arranges an extension previously approved by the instructor.
- For all assignments and papers, a passing paper has very few words copied directly from the original material. This means that you use your own words to describe concepts and that you don’t plagiarize entire sentences from the original

work. One full sentence copied and pasted from the original work is enough to qualify for plagiarism. See Canvas for more grading information on the papers (linked in each assignment’s description)

Course Assignments

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

As an example, the expectation of work for a 3-credit course is 150-minutes of direct faculty instruction and six hours of out-of-class student work each week.

For all the assignments below, please note that my policy is to not accept late work unless we have discussed it beforehand. All assignments are graded as COMPLETE or INCOMPLETE.

	How Many?	Relevant CLOs
Course Orientation Activities	3	Preparation for an online course
Exams	2	CLOs 1-5, and 8
Class Activities	10	CLO 6
Discussion Board Posts and Replies	10	CLO 7
Reading Questions	10	CLOs 1-5, and 8

1) **Course Orientation Activities** (syllabus discussion post, online course readiness quiz, orientation activity)

There will be three short activities during the first week to get you oriented to the course and make sure that you are prepared for the expectations of an online course. First you will make a discussion board post that will involve asking a question about the syllabus, or something about the course that you are unclear about. This will help you learn to use the discussion boards if you aren’t familiar with them, and will make sure you are clear about the requirements of the course. I will respond to your questions, and you should also feel free to respond to other students’ questions if you know the answer. Next you will complete an online course readiness quiz which will help you learn more about your readiness for an online course. Finally, you will complete a class activity that involves making a schedule of when you will do course assignments during a typical week.

2) Midterm and Final Exams (Passing = 70% or higher)

There will be two open book, open notes exams in this class. The exams will be 20 multiple choice questions (1 point each) and 15 short answer questions (2 points each). A study guide that lists relevant concepts will be available for each exam. Multiple choice and short answer questions will be randomized for each student from a pool of items. Short answer questions will come from the textbook, instructor lectures, and videos. You will have 2 hours to complete the exam. Please keep in mind that the clock will keep running if you log out of Canvas, so the exams will need to be completed in one sitting. There are no make-ups for the exams. **For the short answer on the midterm and final, you need to use your own words and provide your own examples (don't copy sentences or examples from our textbook).**

Final Examination or Evaluation

The final examination will be the second exam, which is not cumulative. The final exam will count the same as any other exam.

3) Class Activities AND Discussion Posts and Replies about the Class Activity

Each week there will be an activity that goes along with the material for the week. Any specific instructions about the activity will be included on the activity. You will complete the activity independently, and upload it by Sunday at 11:59pm. There are no make-up activity points. You must follow all the instructions to receive a complete grade.

You will also be required to make a discussion post each week, and reply to another student's post. **The activity and discussion post are two separate assignments though may reflect similar content.** Discussion prompts will vary each week and will be tied to the class activity or reading. Replies and posts are due by Sundays at 11:59pm. The post and reply will be graded as complete if they are at least 150 words each and if they add substantially to the discussion (need to display some depth of thought). If the discussion post is tied to the class activity, it is okay to use your same response in the class activity as in the discussion post.

4) Reading Questions

To facilitate critical thinking about the content of our textbook, most weeks (except as noted in the course calendar) you will complete and upload a set of reading questions. For the reading questions, **I will give you five questions and you are to respond to three of the questions of your choice.** Reading questions will be graded as complete if you accurately express your understanding of a theory or concept in your own words, and attempt to connect it to other concepts learned in class. Reading questions are to be completed independently. **Please write in complete sentences in paragraph form for your responses. No bullet point lists.**

5) Paper Boosters (NOT REQUIRED)

You can complete papers to qualify for the grade boosters described above. The additional paper topics are listed below. A google doc will be linked on Canvas with more details.

Healthy Aging Paper: Choose two behaviors that you can engage in now to improve your aging experience. The paper will be graded as complete if you incorporate two relevant peer-reviewed articles, appropriate reference to our textbook, if you choose two behaviors that are relevant to the aging process, if you use appropriate APA style, if your writing style is clear and grammar and other errors are minimal, and if you have written concepts in your own words without copying sentences from the original articles or our book.

Older Adult Interview Paper: Interview an older adult age 65 or older about a topic covered in our course. Check with Dr. Woodhead about appropriate topics. You should ask 7-8 questions, and you should write the paper in narrative form (don't type out or list the questions and answers as a Q&A. Instead, organize them and write in complete sentences). Incorporate one relevant peer-reviewed article and reference to our textbook about why this topic is important to aging. Summarize concepts from the articles in your own words without copying sentences from the original articles or our book.

Literature Review Paper: Choose a topic covered in our course and write a short review of the research in that area. For example, caregiving among older adults, retirement, etc. You can contact Dr. Woodhead to check if your idea fits for this paper. Incorporate three relevant peer-reviewed articles and reference to our textbook. Review the articles that you selected and make a connection to our textbook about why this is important. Summarize concepts from the articles in your own words without copying sentences from the original articles or our book.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>), which is hosted by the Office of Undergraduate Education. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Psyc/Gero 114 / Psychology of Aging, Summer 2022, Course Schedule

Notes: Schedule is subject to change with fair notice – if changed, I will announce it via Canvas messaging.

All materials are available for the entire 5 week summer session (except for the exams). I encourage you to work ahead if possible.

Weekly Due Dates:

1) **All assignments are due by Sundays at 11:59pm**, except as noted on the syllabus

Week	Dates	Lecture Topic	Readings	Assignments
1	6/1 to 6/5	1) Introduction; Syllabus Review; Course Orientation 2) Introduction to the Psychology of Aging (Ch. 1) 3) Biological Theories of Aging (Ch. 2)	Ch. 1 and 2	<u>Introduction:</u> 1) Syllabus discussion post 2) Orientation Activity 3) Online Course Readiness Quiz <u>CH. 1</u> 1) Class Activity 1 with discussion posts and replies 2) Reading Questions 1 <u>CH. 2</u> 1) Class Activity 2 with discussion posts and replies 2) Reading Questions 2
2	6/6 to 6/12	1) The Aging Body and Age-Related Health Conditions; Prevention (Ch. 3) 2) Cognition and Aging (Ch. 7) 2) Neurocognitive Disorders in Late Life (Ch. 9)	Ch. 3, 7, and 9	<u>CH. 3</u> 1) Class Activity 3 with discussion posts and replies 2) Reading Questions 3 <u>CH. 7</u> 1) Class Activity 4 with discussion posts and replies 2) Reading Questions 4 <u>CH. 9</u> 1) Class Activity 5 with

				discussion posts and replies 2) Reading Questions 5
3	6/13 to 6/19	1) Personality and Emotional Development (Ch. 5) 2) Exam 1 available on Canvas from 6/16 at 9am until 6/19 at 11:59pm	Ch. 5	<u>CH. 5</u> 1) Class Activity 6 with discussion posts and replies 2) Reading Questions 6 EXAM 1: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5, 7 and 9 (2 hour time limit)
4	6/20 to 6/26	1) Mental Health and Aging (Ch. 6) 2) Relationships, Families, and Aging: Changes in Roles with Aging (Ch. 10) 3) Death and the Dying Process, Bereavement, and Widowhood (Ch. 12)	Ch. 6, 10 and 12	<u>CH. 6</u> 1) Class Activity 7 with discussion posts and replies 2) Reading Questions 7 <u>CH. 10</u> 1) Class Activity 8 with discussion posts and replies 2) Reading Questions 8 <u>CH. 12</u> 1) Class Activity 9 with discussion posts and replies 2) Reading Questions 9
5	6/27 to FRIDAY 7/1 (Due Friday instead of our usual Sunday)	1) Cultural Differences in Aging Experiences of Ethnic and Sexual Minority Older Adults (Ch. 13) 2) Exam 2 available on Canvas from 6/27 at 9am until 7/1 at 11:59pm	Ch. 13	<u>CH. 13</u> 1) Class Activity 10 with discussion posts and replies 2) Reading questions 10 EXAM 2: Chapters 6, 10, 12, 13 (2 hour time limit) PAPER BOOSTERS DUE 7/1 by 11:59pm