California State University, Sacramento GERO 123 – Research on Aging & the Life Course

Gerontology Department, College of Social Sciences & Interdisciplinary Studies Fall 2021

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| Class Time: Tuesday/Thursday 1:30-2:45pm Final Exam: Due Friday, December 17, 2021 Course Format: On-lineUnits: 3 Prerequisites: None | Professor: Catheryn Koss, JD, PhD Office: Amador Hall 553DVirtual Office Hours: Tuesday noon-1pm, Thursdays 11am-1pm, or by appointmentPhone: 916-278-4341E-mail: koss@csus.edu |

Welcome to *Research on Aging & the Life Course.* Over the semester, we will become better consumers and producers of research on aging. We will practice finding, analyzing, evaluating, and applying existing gerontological research published in peer- reviewed journals. We will also gain hands-on experience conducting research. Skills we will develop include defining a research question, selecting and adapting data collection

tools, collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data, and presenting results in narrative and visual formats. Along the way, we will learn about how gerontological theories frame and guide research and tackle some special logistical and ethical challenges gerontological researchers face.

**CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Analysis, evaluation, and application of existent gerontological research. Hands-on practice carrying out aging-related research projects, including defining the research question, selecting data collection tools, collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data, and presenting results in narrative and visual formats. Special emphasis on connecting gerontological theory, research, and interdisciplinary practice, accommodating participants with sensory, physical, or cognitive limitations, and ethical issues.

**EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES & ASSESSMENT**

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

1. Successfully search for relevant and current research published in peer-reviewed journals
2. Analyze, evaluate, and apply published research findings
3. Understand how gerontological theories frame and guide research
4. Be sensitive to barriers that may limit participation in research studies by certain groups, including racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTQ elders, older adults with disabilities, and elders living in long-term care facilities
5. Adapt quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques to accommodate participants with sensory, physical, or cognitive limitations
6. Carry out a basic research project, including defining the research question, selecting data collection tools, collecting data through interviews, surveys, and/or observational methods, and analyzing data using descriptive statistical and qualitative methods
7. Clearly report research findings in narrative, tabular, and graphic formats
8. Navigate ethical issues, including participant consent, confidentiality, mandatory reporting of abuse, and conducting research in institutional settings and/or with vulnerable populations

All Expected Learning Outcomes will be measured by the following:

* Weekly ungraded on-line learning activities
* Five graded on-line assignments
* Final exam

This course has been designed to meet several of the learning objectives outlined in the *Gerontology Competencies for Undergraduate and Graduate Education*. These Competencies can be accessed at <https://www.aghe.org/resources/gerontology-competencies-for-undergraduate-and-graduate-education>.

**COURSE MATERIALS**

There is no required text. All required course materials will be available on-line through Canvas. Not all course materials will be posted at the beginning of the semester. Some information will be posted after specific material is covered. Please check Canvas regularly.

To access course materials and complete your assignments, you will need a computer with an internet connection, Microsoft Word, and Microsoft Excel. You can download a [free student version of Microsoft Office.](https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/microsoft365/#email-office-365) You may also [borrow a laptop computer](https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/teaching-learning/laptop-checkout.html) and get [help accessing the internet](https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/networking-infrastructure/covid19-internet-resources.html). To get the technology and support you need to succeed in this course, contact [Information Resources and Technology](https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/) at (916) 278-7337, or email servicedesk@csus.edu.

Here are some recommended books that you may find helpful as you work through the course material (optional, all print books available from the CSUS library)

* *Scientific Inquiry in Social Work* by Matthew DiCarlo (ebook available: <https://scientificinquiryinsocialwork.pressbooks.com/>)
* *Understanding and Evaluating Research: A Critical Guide* by Sue McGregor
* *Research Design in Aging and Social Gerontology* by Joyce Weil
* *Investigating the Social World: The Process and Practice of Research* by Russell Schutt

**APA FORMATTING & CITATION GUIDELINES**

We will be using formatting and citation rules published by the American Psychological Association (APA) in the 7th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. You may choose to purchase a copy of this book. The manual is also available from the CSUS library. Be sure to use the 7th edition published in 2020.

Another good source of help with APA citations is the Purdue University On-line Writing

Lab website: <https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html>

CSU, Dominguez Hills has created a nice website and video about APA citations in papers: <https://libguides.csudh.edu/citation/apa-7>

Be very cautious about copying and pasting citations from on-line sources. They are often incorrect. If you do copy and paste a citation, check to see that it conforms to APA citation formatting rules.

**CLASS CORRESPONDENCE**

The best way to communicate with other students or with me is through Canvas email. You may also email me at koss@csus.edu. If you email me directly, **please include “GERO 123” in the subject line and sign your full name (not just your first name).** I will strive to respond to messages within two business days.

**VIRTUAL CLASS MEETINGS**

During class, I will review the previous week’s materials, highlighting and revisiting content that students struggled with in the Learn & Practice. I will not cover any new material during class. These reviews will be recorded and posted in Canvas. After I have finished the review, I welcome students to work on assignments, ask questions, or

discuss the course materials informally with me and other students during our scheduled class time. Attendance is strongly encouraged, but not required.

Class will be conducted virtually through Zoom. You may log into virtual class meetings by clicking on the following link:

<https://csus.zoom.us/j/85381511110>

Or, you may join with audio only via telephone by calling the following number and then entering the meeting ID:

(669) 900-6833

Meeting ID: 853 8151 1110

**VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS**

If you would like to visit one-on-one with me, my office hours are listed at the top of this syllabus. If these office hours do not work with your schedule, I am also happy to make an appointment to visit with you. Please just email me at koss@csus.edu or through Canvas to set up an appointment.

You may log into virtual office hours by clicking on the following link: <https://csus.zoom.us/j/2507778940>

Or, you may join with audio only by telephone by calling the following number and then entering in the meeting ID:

(669) 900-6833

Meeting ID: 250 777 8940

**Please note that this login information is different from the virtual class login information.** Unlike virtual class, I will meet with students individually during office hours. You may need to wait in the “waiting room” if I am meeting with another student.

**HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE**

To succeed in this course, you will need to:

* Try your best when completing practice on-line activities
* Review, reflect on, and apply feedback
* Complete all assignments carefully and timely
* Carefully read and follow directions
* Ask questions and seek help

Part of becoming a better researcher is to engage in self-reflection. To be an effective team member, it is also important that we learn how to give and receive constructive feedback. I will strive to do the following and I ask that you also try to:

* Be kind enough to recognize what we did well and brave enough to acknowledge areas where we could do better
* Frame feedback in affirming and non-personal terms
* Appreciate the opportunity we have to learn from one another
* Value one another’s opinions and communicate in a respectful manner
* Keep confidential discussions that are of a personal nature
* During and after discussing distressing topics, take care of yourself and one another

Your success is important to me. We will all need accommodation because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we will develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course.

There are many services offered by CSUS to help you succeed in this course and throughout your academic career. I encourage you to take advantage. Links to the following resources are also available in Canvas.

[Crisis Assistance & Resource Education Support (CARES)](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/crisis-assistance-resource-education-support/)

If you are experiencing challenges with food, housing, financial or other unique circumstances that are impacting your education, help is just a phone call or email away. The CARES office provides case management support for any enrolled student. The CARES office is located in the University Union, 1st Floor, Room 1260. You can contact the office by calling (916) 278-5138 or emailing cares@csus.edu.

[Academic Advising](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/academic-advising/)

The Academic Advising Center offers new student orientation, mandatory freshman advising, and advising on General Education and graduation requirements for all students.

[IRT Service Desk (Service Desk)](https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/get-support-consultation/)

The Information, Resources, and Technology (IRT) helpdesk provides assistance to students, faculty and staff in their use of campus technologies.

[Services to Students with Disabilities](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/services-students-disabilities/)

Sacramento State is committed to ensuring an accessible learning environment where course or instructional content are usable by all students and faculty. If you believe that you require disability- related academic adjustments for this class (including pregnancy-related disabilities), please immediately contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) to discuss eligibility. A current accommodation letter from SSWD is required before any modifications, above and beyond what is otherwise available for all other students in this class, will be provided. Please be advised that disability- related academic adjustments are not retroactive. SSWD is located on the first floor of Lassen Hall 1008 and can be contacted by phone at (916) 278-6955 (Voice) (916) 278-7239 (TDD only) or via email at sswd@csus.edu. For a complete listing of services and current business hours visit [https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/services-students-disabilities/](https://t.e2ma.net/click/pv7naf/dqr69s/hd8pjab)

Please feel free to set up an appointment with me to discuss your approved accommodation. This syllabus and course materials are available in alternate formats upon request. In addition, as your professor, I feel I have a responsibility to actively support culturally diverse learners with a wide range of learning styles and abilities and to be responsive in my teaching practices. Feel free to discuss your progress in this course with me at any time.

[Student Affairs](https://www.csus.edu/student/)

If you need help discerning who to see to get a question answered, advice on which classes to take, or information about how to obtain financial aid, Student Affairs may be able to assist you.

[Student Health and Counseling Services](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/health-counseling/)

Your physical and mental health are important to your success as a college student. Student Health and Counseling Services (SHCS) in The WELL offers medical, counseling, and wellness services to help you get and stay healthy during your time at Sac State. SHCS offers: Primary Care medical services, including sexual and reproductive healthcare, transgender care, and immunizations; urgent care for acute illness, injuries, and urgent counseling needs; pharmacy for prescriptions and over-the-counter products; mental health counseling, including individual sessions, group counseling, support groups, mindfulness training, and peer counseling; athletic training for sports injury rehabilitation; wellness services, including nutrition counseling, peer-led health education and wellness workshops, and free safer sex supplies; violence and sexual assault support services. Most services are covered by the Health Services fee and available at no additional cost.

[University Library](http://library.csus.edu/)

The Sac State University Library provides access to a wide array of workshops, research guides, subject specialists, databases, electronic journals, and other electronic resources.

[Reading & Writing Center](https://www.csus.edu/undergraduate-studies/writing-program/reading-writing-center.html)

The University Writing Center can help you at any stage in your reading and writing processes: coming up with a topic, developing and organizing a draft, understanding difficult texts, or developing strategies to become a better editor.

**ASSIGNMENTS OVERVIEW**

Weekly topics and due dates are listed in the Week-At-A-Glance. Please use it!

Unless instructed otherwise, please submit all completed assignments electronically through Canvas. If you do not know how to submit assignments in Canvas, you can get help from [IRT.](https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/)

Do not wait until the last minute to submit your assignments. If you have technical difficulties submitting an assignment, please email your friendly professor immediately so we can resolve the situation.

Learn & Practices (10 points each)

Throughout the semester, you will be exposed to and practice applying course content through weekly on-line practice assignments called Learn & Practice (accessible via Canvas). These assignments are designed to give you the freedom to practice and make mistakes without worrying about your grade.

You will be able to see correct answers and feedback immediately after you submit each assignment. **You will receive 10 points for making a good faith effort and completing each week’s practice assignments on time, regardless of whether you answered any questions incorrectly.** Most weeks there will be more than one practice assignment to complete, so be sure you do them all.

Graded On-Line Assignments (50 points each)

There will be five graded on-line assignments worth 50 points each. These assignments are designed to demonstrate your knowledge and ability to apply what you are learning in this course.

Final Exam (100 points)

Information about the final exam will be posted in Canvas later in the semester.

**GRADES & GRADE CORRECTIONS**

Below is a chart explaining how many points each required assignment or activity is worth.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment** | **Number and Point Value** | **Total Points** |
| Learn & Practice | 15 weeks, 10 points per week | 150 |
| Graded Assignment | 5 assignments, 50 points each | 250 |
| Final Exam | 1 exam, 100 points | 100 |
| **Total** |  | **500** |

The following grading scale will be used to calculate course grades:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Letter Grade** | **Total Points** |
| A | 468 and above |
| A- | 449-467 |
| B+ | 428-448 |
| B | 418-427 |

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| --- | --- |
| B- | 398-417 |
| C+ | 383-397 |
| C | 368-382 |
| C- | 348-367 |
| D+ | 333-347 |
| D | 318-332 |
| D- | 298-317 |
| F | 297 or below |

If you feel a grade or points posted are not correct or if you have a question about the grade or points you received, **you have one week after the grade or points are posted** to contact me in writing. After one week the points or grade will be final.

The University’s Grading Policy can be found at: <https://www.csus.edu/umanual/acad/umg05150.htm>.

**COURSE POLICIES**

Academic Disruption

Unforeseen events may prevent the course from proceeding as planned. If the faculty member is not available during the semester or campus is closed, students will be contacted and advised how the course will proceed. This may include a change in instructor or modality.

Attendance

Virtual class attendance is optional.

Mandatory Reporting of Sexual Misconduct

The University requires faculty and staff to report any personal disclosures of sexual misconduct including rape, dating/domestic violence and stalking to the Title IX Coordinator. Students who do not wish to report their experience to me or the Title IX Coordinator may speak to someone confidentially by contacting [Student Health and Counseling Services.](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/health-counseling/)

Student Rights and Responsibilities

For more information about your rights and responsibilities as a CSUS student please refer to the [Student Rights and Responsibilities policy](https://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/stu-0119.htm).

Understand When You May Drop This Course or Take an Incomplete

It is your responsibility to understand when you need to consider disenrolling from a course. Dates and deadlines for registration and dropping a course are posted online: [https://catalog.csus.edu/financial-](https://catalog.csus.edu/financial-registration-information/registration/) [registration-information/registration/](https://catalog.csus.edu/financial-registration-information/registration/). For more information about the process and consequences of dropping a course, please read the [University’s Drop and Withdrawal policy.](https://www.csus.edu/academic-affairs/internal/_internal/_documents/drop-and-withdrawal-policy.pdf)

Under emergency/special circumstances, students may petition for an incomplete grade. For more information about when you may receive an incomplete, see: <https://catalog.csus.edu/academic-policies/>

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Academic integrity is central to the mission of educational excellence. Each student is expected to turn in work completed independently. It is not acceptable to use the words or ideas of another person without proper acknowledgement of that source. This means that you must use citations and quotation marks to indicate the source of any phrases,

sentences, paragraphs, or ideas found in published volumes, on the Internet, or from an interview. Violation of university policies on academic integrity may result in failure of the course or the assignment, and could end in suspension from the university. If you are in doubt about the instructions for any assignment in this course, you must ask for clarification.

CSUS Policy on Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use of distinctive ideas or works belonging to another person without providing adequate acknowledgement of that person's contribution. Regardless of the means of appropriation, incorporating another's work into one's own requires adequate identification and acknowledgement. Plagiarism is doubly unethical because it deprives the author of rightful credit and gives credit to someone who has not earned it. Acknowledgement is not necessary when the material used is common knowledge. The following would constitute plagiarism:

* Word-for-word copying.
* The mosaic (to intersperse a few words of one's own here and there while, in essence, copying another's work)
* The paraphrase (the rewriting of another's work, yet still using the fundamental idea or theory) – unless you cite the paraphrase.
* Fabrication (inventing or counterfeiting sources).
* Ghost-written material (submitting another's effort as one's own).

It is also plagiarism to neglect quotation marks on material that is otherwise acknowledged. Plagiarism and acts associated with it are cause for disciplinary and/or legal action. At Sac State, “**cheating** is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work through the use of any dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means.” **Plagiarism** is a form of cheating. At Sac State, “plagiarism is the use of distinctive ideas or works belonging to another person without providing adequate acknowledgement of that person’s contribution.” Source: Sacramento State University Library

Any form of academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, may be reported to the Office of Student Affairs. Refer to the University’s Academic Honesty Policy for additional information and guidance: <https://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/stu-100.htm>.

**COMMITMENT TO INTEGRITY**

As a student in this course (and at this university) you are expected to maintain high degrees of professionalism, commitment to active learning and participation in this class and also integrity in your behavior in and out of the classroom. Both the [Student Code](https://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/ums16150.htm) and [Hornet Honor Code](https://www.csus.edu/diversity-inclusion/_internal/_documents/honor-code1.pdf) will be strictly enforced in this course and it will be expected that each student is both aware of and familiar with the requirements and penalties. All aspects of your course work are covered by the University’s student code and Hornet Honor Code, and any violation(s) will be reported to the University.