

**Saint Leo University**

**SOC 349**

**The Sociology of Aging**

**Course Description:**

A critical examination of aging and the life course from a sociological perspective. The course examines how aging and the life course are socially defined; how social stratification of age affects health, illness, caregiving, and choices/chances in the life course; how power influences aging as well as the social and economic outlooks of an aging society; and explores current issues of entitlement, retirement, end of life, and stratified life course experiences. Issues are considered from a US and global perspective. 3 credits.

**Prerequisite:**

ENG 122

**Textbook Information from the Saint Leo Bookstore ordering site:**

Moody, Harry R. and Jennifer Sasser. 2015. *Aging: Concepts and controversies*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-1-4522-7588-8

*Required IF student chooses Option 2 of the Paper assignment:*

Jessica Mitford. 2000. *The American Way of Death Revisited*. Vintage Books. Random House. New York. ISBN-13: 978-0679771869

**Learning Outcomes:** Upon completion of this **course**, students will be able to:

1. Critically examine issues of aging and the life course from a sociological perspective
2. Describe the age related demographic trends of the US and globally
3. Explain how social dimensions of race, class, gender, and ethnicity affect age related issues throughout the life course
4. Interpret age as a social construct

Upon completion of this **sociology program** students should be able to:

1. Develop their sociological imagination through exposure to the major concepts and theories in the discipline.
2. Acquire the research skills needed for success in the 21st century workplace.
3. Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing according to the standards of the discipline.
4. Assess the consequences of diversity and inequality globally and locally

**Core Value:**

The value of **Community** will be emphasized in this course, as students learn how age and the life course affects and connects all of us.

**Community:** Saint Leo University develops hospitable Christian learning communities everywhere we serve. We foster a spirit of belonging, unity, and interdependence based on mutual trust and respect to create socially responsible environments that challenge all of us to listen, to learn, to change, and to serve.

**Evaluation:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points</b>
Exams	30 to 50%
Paper and assignments	25 to 40%
Quizzes	5 to 10%
Sociological Journal or Discussions	5-15%
Participation	5-10%
<hr/> Total Points	100%

**Grading Scale:**

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
A     Exceptional	94% to 100%
A-    Superior	90% to 93%
B+    Excellent	87% to 89%
B     Very Good	84% to 86%
B-    Good	80% to 83%
C+    Above Average	77% to 79%
C     Average	74% to 76%
C-    Below Average	70% to 73%
D+    Marginal	67% to 69%
D     Poor	60% to 66%
F     Failure	Below 60%

**Examinations (30-50%):**

There will be a mid-term and final exam or a final exam only. The exam(s) will be comprehensive, and include all readings, lectures, exercises, and activities.

**Paper and assignment (25-40%):**

Paper: Students will write an 6-8-page paper, using one of the following two options. The paper will include a title page and reference page (no abstract) and be formatted using the ASA formatting style. It will be submitted to Turnitin.com. Students are encouraged to check their paper with [www.Grammarly.com/edu/](http://www.Grammarly.com/edu/) before submitting the final version.

**Paper Option 1:** Read and analyze the *New York Times* daily. Choose one section to analyze every day for at least four weeks. Focus on aging. Apply related concepts about your topic from the text. You must provide specific examples from at least five articles published during the semester to support your conclusions. You should begin work on this assignment immediately by choosing the section of your interest (the front or business sections, or contact instructor if you want to analyze a different section). Save this section of the newspaper every day.

**Please note:** The online version of the New York Times that you can access through general browsers is not complete (some sections are restricted to online subscribers). You may access the complete New York Times using the Cannon Memorial Library online databases.

**Paper Option 2:** Read book: about how What are some of the assumptions this book make about American society? Apply key ideas from class to critically analyze the idea that the funeral industry is big business in American society.

**Assignment 1:** Students will use the CIA World Fact book to abstract data, complete the table and writing assignment in the appendix. They should accurately complete the table and then write two pages on aging and global stratification using the modernization theory of aging.

**Participation (5-10%):**

Due to the nature of the course, the emphasis on integrating knowledge with practice, skill development focus, and experiential learning exercises, attendance and participation are required. Excessive absence will result in a lower final grade that may include failure. Excessive absence is defined as missing two or more classes during the term or semester for any reason. Students will be held responsible for all information provided during class sessions.

Participation should count for between 5 and 10% of the final grade. It may take the form of quizzes, contribution to class discussion, short reaction papers, or other in-class activities.

**Papers/ presentations will be graded according to the following evaluative criteria:**

- Overall content
- Logical development of ideas
- Level of depth and detail
- Fact-finding
- Creativity and innovation

The writing assignment(s) and presentation should incorporate the core value of community emphasized in the course. Sociology majors should use the ASA (American Sociological Association) style or other majors may use the APA style to format their papers.

**Grading Rubric for Assignments**

	Outstanding	Very Good	Satisfactory	Insufficient	Un Acceptable
Organization of the paper / presentation (introduction, includes Soc theory/perspective, conclusion,); sections are of appropriate length					
Summary (thorough but not too long)					
Sources are relevant to course content					
Sources are correctly cited*					
Grammar, spelling, punctuation					
Overall content					
Logical development of ideas					
Level of depth and detail					
Fact-finding					
Creativity and innovation					
Included Core Value "Community"					

\*Plagiarism will result in a 0 for the assignment.

## Assessment of the Learning Outcomes:

### Course Schedule:

#### Module 1            **Life Course Perspective on Aging**

**Objectives**            When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Describe the age related demographic trends of the US and globally.
- Compare and Contrast aging demographics around the world.
- Explain global aging demographics using modernization theory.
- Explain whether or not old age has meaning.

**Readings**            Moody, Harry R; Sasser, Jennifer R. ***Aging: Concepts and Controversies, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition***  
Basic concept I and controversy 1

### Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Post an introduction to the class	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post an initial response to discussion question 1	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete quiz 1	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

#### Module 2            **Why Do Our Bodies Grow Old?**

**Objectives**            When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate how age is a social construct.
- Explain how social dimensions of race, class, gender, and ethnicity affect age related issues throughout the life course.
- Explain whether or not creativity declines with age?

**Readings**            Moody, Harry R; Sasser, Jennifer R. ***Aging: Concepts and Controversies, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition***  
Controversies 2 & 3

### Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Post an initial response to discussion question 2	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete quiz 2	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

### Module 3      **Aging, Healthcare, and Society**

**Objectives**      When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Describe the age related demographic trends of the US and globally.
- Explain how social dimensions of race, class, and ethnicity affect age related issues throughout the life course.
- Explain how ageing affects health and health care systems, and society
- Compare/Contrast aging in two different societies.
- Should we ration healthcare for older people?

**Readings**      Moody, Harry R; Sasser, Jennifer R. *Aging: Concepts and Controversies, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition*

Basic concept II and controversy 4

#### **Assignments**

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Post an initial response to discussion question 3	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Assignment 1	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete quiz 3	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

### Module 4      **Should Families Provide for Their Own?**

**Objectives**      When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Compare and contrast how the elderly are cared for in different cultures.
- Describe the social cost of elder care, and options for caring for the elderly.
- Discuss the extent that families should provide care for their own elderly relatives and the role of social policy and services.

- Explain whether or not older people should be protected from bad choices.

**Readings** Moody, Harry R; Sasser, Jennifer R. *Aging: Concepts and Controversies, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition*  
Controversies 5 & 6

**Assignments**

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Post an initial response to discussion question 4	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete mid-term practice game	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete mid-term exam	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

**Module 5**                    **Should People Have the Choice to End Their Lives?**

**Objectives**                When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Describe the issues surrounding a person’s choice to end their life.
- Describe the social and economic outlook for an aging society.

**Readings**                Moody, Harry R; Sasser, Jennifer R. *Aging: Concepts and Controversies, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition*  
Basic concept III and controversy 7

**Assignments**

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Post an initial response to discussion question 5	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete practice quiz 4	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

**Module 6**                    **Should Age or Need be the Basis for Entitlement?**

**Objectives**                When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Describe the issues surrounding social security and the elderly.

**Readings**                Moody, Harry R; Sasser, Jennifer R. *Aging: Concepts and Controversies, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition*  
Controversies 8 & 9

**Assignments**



Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete final review practice game	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete final exam	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT