

SYLLABUS
PSYCHOLOGY 2S03E
PSYCHOLOGY of AGING
Department of Psychology, Neuroscience, and Behaviour
McMaster University
Winter Term 2008

Course time: T 7-10pm
Course location: TSH 120

Professor:

Dr. Jennifer M Ostovich
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Teaching Assistants:

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Course Description: Is aging synonymous with decline? Are all age-related changes negative? What does or does not change with age? In this course, we will consider theory and research about adult development and aging from a biopsychosocial perspective. Topics will include, but are not limited to, physical development, cognitive function, personality, and mental health.

Textbook (required): Papalia, D. E., Sterns, H. L., Feldman, R. D., & Camp, C. J. (2007). *Adult Development and Aging*, 3rd Edition. I strongly recommend against substituting a previous edition of this text for the edition listed here. If you do make a substitution, please keep in mind that there is some chance that previous editions will differ in various small (and sometimes larger) ways from the current edition. Substitute at your own risk.

Website: This course has a WebCT website (www.ltrc.mcmaster.ca/webct/). You are responsible for all information posted on this website. You are expected to check this website regularly for changes to our schedule, announcements, discussion board postings, and other valuable information.

Participation: In-class and discussion board participation is strongly encouraged. Remember, if you have a question, your colleagues probably have one, too, and will appreciate it if you speak up. Don't be shy about asking questions!

See the link on WebCT for information on how to use the discussion board appropriately.

Assessment: Your final mark will be based on the following.

- (1) Midterm 1 = 30%
- (2) Midterm 2 = 30%
- (3) Final Exam = 40%

The midterms will be non-cumulative (*exception*: research methods), and will cover lecture material *and* assigned readings, even readings not discussed in class. The final exam will be cumulative, and will be held during the examination period. All tests will be comprised of some combination of multiple choice and short essay questions. See “Schedule”, below (also posted as a stand-alone document on WebCT under “Important Information”), for assessment due-dates.

Missed Assessments: You are strongly encouraged *never to miss a test*. If something comes up that will interfere with your ability to meet class deadlines, *immediately* contact me or one of your TA’s – *before* the deadline, not after the fact. If you do not contact me in a timely manner, your grade in the course will suffer as a consequence.

If you miss an assessment, then you must provide a doctor’s certificate (or equivalent for non-medical situations) to your Dean’s office, or you will receive a zero (0) on that assessment.

See the link on WebCT for more information on missed assessments.

Final Grade Calculations: Your final grade will be converted to a letter grade, according to the following scheme:

<u>Percentage (Grade)</u>	<u>Percentage (Grade)</u>	<u>Percentage (Grade)</u>	<u>Percentage (Grade)</u>
90-100 (A+)	77-79 (B+)	67-69 (C+)	57-59 (D+)
85-89 (A)	73-76 (B)	63-66 (C)	53-56 (D)
80-84 (A-)	70-72 (B-)	60-62 (C-)	50-52 (D-)
			0-49 (F)

Academic Integrity: You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g., a grade of zero (0) on an assignment, loss of course credit with a notation on the transcript (“grade F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty, please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>.

SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Also available as a stand-alone link on WebCT

This course is divided into three (3) sections. Below is a list of topics (with associated readings listed in [blue](#)) that I expect to cover in each of these sections. Please note that the dates listed for individual topics are tentative. The instructor reserves the right to add, cancel, and move topics as necessary. Adjustments will be noted on WebCT.

At the end of each section of the course, you will write an exam. Here are the pertinent dates:

Midterm 1: February 5

Midterm 2: March 7

Final Exam: To be scheduled by the Registrar

A note on the readings: It is unlikely that I will delete any of the readings listed below. In the unlikely event that a reading is cancelled, this cancellation will be noted on WebCT. Plan carefully so that you do not find yourself “cramming” the readings at the last minute. Emails asking whether I plan to delete any readings will be ignored, and discussion board posts asking same will be deleted from the board.

Please note as well that extra readings *might* be assigned as we go. These will be announced in class and on WebCT; links to extra readings will be posted on WebCT; it is your responsibility to keep track of extra materials.

SECTION 1: JAN 7 TO FEB 5

JAN 8

Introduction and Research Methods.

[Read Ch's 1 and 2](#)

JAN 15/22

Physical Changes.

Health and Health Disorders.

[Read Ch's 3 and 4](#)

JAN 22/29

Cognitive Function.

[Read Ch's 5 and 6 and pages 230-245](#)

FEB 5: Midterm 1

SECTION 2: FEB 12 TO MAR 11

FEB 12

Personality.

Mental Health.

Stress, Coping, and Resistance.

[Read Ch's 11 and 12](#)

FEB 26

Social Relationships and Social Roles.

[Read Ch's 9 and pages 355-373](#)

MAR 4

Work, Retirement, and Leisure.

[Read Ch 8](#)

MAR 11: Midterm 2

SECTION 3: MAR 18 TO APR 8

MAR 18

Caregiving.

[Read pages 373-390](#)

MAR 25

Death, Dying, and Bereavement.

[Read Ch 13](#)

APR 1/8

Successful Aging and the Meaning of Life.

APR 8
Wrap-Up.