

**University of Toronto: Department of Sociology**  
**SOC.246 H1S -Winter 2023**  
**Sociology of Aging**

**Instructor:** Sarath Chandrasekere Ph.D.

**Day and Time of Classes:** Wednesdays 12.10-2.00 pm

**Class Location:** Sidney Smith 1073

**Office Hours:** Wed. 2.30-4.00 pm (by appointment)

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**TA :** Jina Lee. [Jinasarah.lee@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:Jinasarah.lee@mail.utoronto.ca)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course explores how people grow older in a social context and nature of the age structure of populations. The age structure has implications for social institutions and individuals. Key theoretical frameworks and substantive areas of research in the sociology of aging, individual experiences of aging will be examined in relation to political and historical contexts; cultural values and beliefs; and social locations of difference (i.e., gender, class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, able-bodiedness). Topics to be explored include work and retirement, family ties, health in later life, care work, and end-of-life issues.

**PREREQUISITES**

Students are expected to have passed SOC100H1. University policy mandates that students without this requirement will be removed upon discovery.

**COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the main theoretical perspectives and empirical areas of investigation in the sociology of aging.
2. Critically apply theoretical perspectives to substantive issues relevant to the sociology of aging, and to the 'lived experiences' of older people.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the links between (a) experiences of aging at the individual level, (b) social institutions (e.g., healthcare, retirement, family) and (c) social relations of difference (i.e., gender, class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, able-bodiedness).
4. Demonstrate enhanced critical thinking and writing skills.

**TEXTS:**

- Required textbook: Funk, Laura. 2016. *Sociological Perspectives on Aging*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford. (

- Supplementary readings are drawn from journal articles. The textbook is available in the U of T bookstore. All supplementary readings are available on Quercus.

### COURSE FORMAT

There will be one lecture (12.10-2.00 pm) on Wednesday, each week.

Each class will involve lectures, group discussions, and individual and small group activities. A variety of assessment methods will be used, including in-class tests and written assignments. To be successful in this course, students must attend all classes and complete all assignments. Although lecture slides will be posted on Quercus, sample test questions will *not* be included in the slides.

I will *not* simply summarize the required readings in the lectures. The lectures will utilize material from the required readings, but they will also go beyond the readings in a variety of ways. They will often address theories, concepts, issues, etc. that are not discussed in the readings. The lectures and the readings are intended to complement each other, not copy each other. You should also be aware that the lectures may *not* be the same as the lectures in a previous version of the course.

I will post PowerPoint slides before *scheduled* lectures. but it is important for you to understand that these slides will *not* be lecture notes. Rather, the slides will be “structural outlines” of lectures (which set out the headings and sub-headings used to organize the material) along with “supplementary slides” that provide *some* details from the lectures (e.g., selected key words, certain sketchy points, and graphs or tables). You need to realize that much of the lecture material will be presented verbally. Therefore, unless you regularly attend the lectures, you will *not* have the material you need to be successful on a test or examination. You will only internalize the course material effectively if you regularly attend the lectures, listen to the explanations I give, take your own notes on these explanations, and take the opportunity to ask questions if I have said something you do not understand. The PowerPoint slides are best used when writing lecture notes and when later organizing or re-writing these notes.

You are ***not*** allowed to make audio recordings or video recordings during the lectures, or to take photos during the lectures, without written permission from the instructor. Usually, only certain special needs students are allowed to make audio recordings. If students have an accommodation letter from the Registrar indicating that audio recordings of lectures are a necessary accommodation for a disability, and if these students meet with me to discuss their accommodation letters, then they will be allowed to make audio recordings of lectures.

Please be aware that my lectures are protected by copyright. Like any piece of academic writing, lectures draw upon academic material produced by others. However, in lectures – as in journal articles or books – the selection and organization of material, as well as the arguments and analyses based on the material, are unique to the person who did the academic writing. Your lecture notes will reflect and reproduce the unique work that I have done, and distribution of that work is protected by copyright. You are certainly permitted (and encouraged) to take notes

on my lectures so that you can privately read and study these notes for tests. You are also permitted to share lecture notes with other students in the course on an *individual* basis (e.g., giving notes to a friend who missed a lecture). However, any mass electronic distribution of lecture notes (e.g., through Avenue to Learn or a lecture-sharing website) is *not* permitted. Furthermore, any attempt to secure individual gain from the distribution of lecture notes (e.g., by selling lecture notes for profit or receiving any form of compensation from a lecture-sharing website) is strictly prohibited.

**Academic Integrity** is fundamental to learning at U of T. Familiarize yourself with the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* at (<https://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>). It is the university rule book for academic behaviour, and you are expected to know the rules.

### **Plagiarism Policy: Ouriginal**

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subjected to submission for textual similarity review to Ouriginal for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Ouriginal reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Ouriginal service are described on the Ouriginal web site.

Assignments not submitted through Ouriginal will receive a grade of zero (0 %) unless a student instead provides, along with their assignment, sufficient secondary material (e.g., reading notes, outlines of the paper, rough drafts of the final draft, etc.) to establish that the paper they submit is truly their own.

The alternative (not submitting via Ouriginal) is in place because, strictly speaking, using Ouriginal is voluntary for students at the University of Toronto. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>). We use this text matching technology as a method to uphold the University's high academic integrity standards to detect any potential plagiarism. *Ouriginal* is integrated into Quercus. To learn more about *Ouriginal's* privacy policy please review [Privacy Policy](#).

**Email policy:** My e-mail address is [sara.chandrasekere@utoronto.ca](mailto:sara.chandrasekere@utoronto.ca). My private phone number is 647-972-6578. I prefer that you contact me in class for all course-related matters. Our TA should be contacted first regarding all routine course matters.

### **Missed Deadlines, and Tests**

–Students who miss the test or are late in submitting an assignment for medical reasons, need to email the instructor (not the TA), and also declare their absence on the system (ACORN).

(NOTE: Because of Covid-19, students do NOT need to submit the usual documentation, i.e., medical notes or the Verification of Illness forms).

Students who miss the test or are late in submitting an assignment for other reasons, such as family or other personal reasons, should request their College Registrar to email the instructor.

**Missed test/deadlines:** You must take the test as scheduled. The only exception is when a student meets conditions that will be accepted by the University. Students who have followed the above procedure may be allowed to take a make-up on a date scheduled by the instructor. Please notify me promptly if you miss the test/assignment deadlines and provide documentation as soon as possible. Under university regulations I am not required to give make-up tests or provide extensions if the student informs me of her/his circumstance more than 7 days after the missed test or assignment due date or gives me a medical excuse more than 7 days after the missed test or assignment due date. If you miss a test without proper documentation, you will receive a mark of zero. This zero will be included in your total mark.

**Policy on Extension Requests:** Extensions for completing course assignments can only be given in accordance with university rules, which are limited to medical situations or family emergencies. Documentation will be required to establish compliance. NOTE: Late papers without such documentation will not be accepted and scored as '0' pts. Students who miss the test or are late in submitting an assignment for medical reasons, need to email the instructor (not the TA), and declare their absence on the system (ACORN). (NOTE: Because of Covid-19, students do NOT need to submit the usual documentation, i.e., medical notes or the Verification of Illness forms). Students who miss a test or are late in submitting an assignment for other reasons, such as family or other personal reasons, should request their College Registrar to email the instructor.

**Accessibility Services:** If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible.

**WRITING ASSISTANCE** Students can find information about college writing centres at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science> It is recommended that you book appointments well in advance, as the Writing Centres are commonly very busy. See also the website Writing at the University of Toronto at [www.writing.utoronto.ca](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca). For numerous practical advice files, see [www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice). Information about the English Language Learning program (ELL) is available at: <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell>. There is also Reading eWriting, an online program that helps students engage course readings more effectively.

**METHODS OF COURSE EVALUATION:**

Assessment	Date	Weight
In-class Test 1 (MC and TF questions)	Jan. 25, 2023	20%
In-Class Test 2 (MC and TF questions)	Feb. 15, 2023	20%
Assignment 1: Critical Review	Mar. 22, 2023	25%
Assignment 2: Reflection Paper	Mar. 1, 2023, due	10%

In-Class Final Test	Apr. 5 2023	25%
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**In-Class Tests:** One hour induration.

**Reflection Paper:** The student must identify an elderly person (65 or over) and do a case study on this person covering his/her early childhood, accomplishments, challenges faced and attitudes towards life.

**Critical Review:** based on your theoretical learning and life examples, select a suitable theme to focus on. Identify four articles on your theme and compare arguments in these articles. Discuss with your instructor about possible themes.

**In-Class Final Test:** This will be 1hour and 30 mts. Three essay questions will be given. Questions will come from readings discussed in class after the 2<sup>nd</sup> in-class test

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

Date	Topic	Readings	Tests and due dates
Wed. Jan. 11 Classes Begin	Introduction: Instructor and TA. Course outline, students' current understanding of aging process, Successful preparation for the course. Issues of aging	No readings	
Wed. Jan. 18	Sociological /Theoretical perspectives on aging	Funk Ch. 1	
Wed. Jan 25	Demographic trends and ageism In-Class test 1	Funk Ch. 2	In-class test 20%
Wed. Feb. 1	Bodies and Biomedicalization	Funk Ch. 3	
Wed. Feb 8	Health and care	Funk Ch. 4	
Wed. Feb 15	Health and care cont.	Funk. Ch. 4	In-Class Test 2 20%

Monday Feb. 20- Friday Feb.24	READING WEEK	NO CLASSS	
Wed. Mar. 1	Economic security and retirement	Funk Ch. 5	Reflection Paper 10%
Wed. Mar. 8	Social participation and inclusion	Funk. Ch. 6	
Wed. March 15	Families and Aging	Funk. Ch. 7	
Wed. March 22	Emerging Topics in the Sociology of Aging	Funk. Ch. 8	Critical Review Due 25%
Wed. Mar. 29	Pandemics and Older Populations	<a href="https://health-infobase.canada.ca/src/data/covidLive/Epidemiological-summary-of-COVID-19-cases-in-Canada-Canada.ca.pdf">https://health- infobase.canada.ca/src /data/covidLive/Epide miological-summary- of-COVID-19-cases-in- Canada-Canada.ca.pdf</a>	
Wed. April 5	A Review.		In-Class Final Test 25%

### Recommended Readings

Bennett T and Gains J. 2010. Believing what you hear: The impact of aging stereotypes upon the old. In *Educational Gerontology*. 36. 435-445.

[[https://librarysearch.library.utoronto.ca/permalink/01UTORONTO\\_INST/fedca1/cdi\\_eric\\_primary\\_EJ883594](https://librarysearch.library.utoronto.ca/permalink/01UTORONTO_INST/fedca1/cdi_eric_primary_EJ883594)

1 Calasanti T. 2008. A feminist confronts ageism. In *Journal of Aging Studies*. 22. 152-157.

[[https://librarysearch.library.utoronto.ca/permalink/01UTORONTO\\_INST/fedca1/cdi\\_proquest\\_miscellaneous\\_61709316](https://librarysearch.library.utoronto.ca/permalink/01UTORONTO_INST/fedca1/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_61709316)]

Duncan S and M Phillips. 2010. People who live apart together (LATs). -How different are they? In the *Sociological Review*. 58 (1). 112-

134. [[https://librarysearch.library.utoronto.ca/permalink/01UTORONTO\\_INST/fedca1/cdi\\_proquest\\_miscellaneous\\_60325737](https://librarysearch.library.utoronto.ca/permalink/01UTORONTO_INST/fedca1/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_60325737)]

Gazso A. 2005. The poverty of unattached senior women and the Canadian retirement income system: A matter of blame or contradiction? In *Journal of Sociology and Social welfare*. 32(2) 41-

62. [[https://librarysearch.library.utoronto.ca/permalink/01UTORONTO\\_INST/fedca1/cdi\\_proquest\\_miscellaneous\\_60325737](https://librarysearch.library.utoronto.ca/permalink/01UTORONTO_INST/fedca1/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_60325737)]

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[Levin Institute. 2011. News Analysis: Global Aging Crisis. https://www.globalization101.Org/news1/Global-Aging-Crisis](https://www.globalization101.Org/news1/Global-Aging-Crisis)

[Lynott R.J and Lynott P P. 1996. Tracing the course of theoretical development in the sociology of aging. In \*Gerontologist\*, 36 \(6\), 749-760. \[https://librarysearch.library.utoronto.ca/permalink/01UTORONTO\\_INST/fedca1/cdi\\_proquest\\_miscellaneus\\_78650317\]](https://librarysearch.library.utoronto.ca/permalink/01UTORONTO_INST/fedca1/cdi_proquest_miscellaneus_78650317)

[Megret F. 2011. Human Rights of Older Persons: A growing Challenge. In \*Human Rights Law Review\*. 11 \(1\) 37-66. \[https://librarysearch.library.utoronto.ca/permalink/01UTORONTO\\_INST/fedca1/cdi\\_proquest\\_miscellaneous\\_923194040\]](https://librarysearch.library.utoronto.ca/permalink/01UTORONTO_INST/fedca1/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_923194040)

[Vincent J A. 2006. Ageing Contested: Anti-ageing science and the cultural constitution of old age. In \*Sociology\* 40 \(4\). 681-698. \[https://librarysearch.library.utoronto.ca/permalink/01UTORONTO\\_INST/fedca1/cdi\\_proquest\\_miscellaneus\\_61624307\]](https://librarysearch.library.utoronto.ca/permalink/01UTORONTO_INST/fedca1/cdi_proquest_miscellaneus_61624307)

[Walsh F. 2012. Successful aging and family resilience. In \*Annual Review of Gerontology and Geriatrics\*. 32. 153-172. \[http://myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fsuccessful-aging-family-resilience%2Fdocview%2F922382232%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D14771\]](http://myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fsuccessful-aging-family-resilience%2Fdocview%2F922382232%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D14771)

**Useful web sites:**

Canadian Association of Gerontology. <http://cagacg.ca>

Canadian Sociological Association. <http://www.csa-scs-ca>

Public Health Agency of Canada. [www.phac.ca](http://www.phac.ca)

Canadian Journal on Aging. [Canadian Journal on Aging - CAG/ACG \(cagacg.ca\)](http://www.cagacg.ca)