



Psychology 501	Aging Successfully and Dying Well	Fall 2015
Instructor:	Candace Konnert	Lecture Location: SA 123
Phone:	403-220-4976	Lecture Days/Time: TR 9:30 – 11:45
Email:	konnert@ucalgary.ca	
Office:	Admin 235C	
Office Hours:	By appointment	

Course Description and Goals

This course will focus on what it means to age successfully and die well. The first part of the course will examine definitions and theories of successful aging from a biopsychosocial perspective, correlates of aging well, and aging well across life transitions. It will also provide students with the opportunity to explore a variety of perspectives on aging well. These perspectives may include but are not limited to the following:

- Correlates of aging well that have received less attention in the literature (e.g., spirituality, early childhood contributions)
- Aging well in the context of families and diverse groups (e.g., sexual orientation, culture, the oldest-old, older adults with early-onset disability)
- “Scientific” versus laypersons views of aging well, aging well versus anti-aging

The second part of the course will examine intellectual, institutional, and practice developments in the area of death, dying, and bereavement. An overarching question will be, “what does it mean to die well?” We will examine controversial topics such as assisted suicide and compare and contrast care for the dying across countries.

Throughout the course, the analysis of these issues will incorporate individual, familial, community and societal perspectives. How can each of these perspectives support aging successfully and dying well?

Prerequisites

PSYC 200 & 201 – Principles of Psychology I & II

PSYC 312 – Experimental Design and Quantitative Methods for Psychology

Consent of the Department

Competencies Assessed in this Course

- 1. Demonstrate Knowledge of Psychological Sciences.** Students will acquire knowledge about theory, research, practice, and policies in the fields of aging and death and dying. Students will have exposure to “aging well” through first-person accounts and videos, and will have the opportunity to integrate the empirical literature with older adults’ perspectives on their own aging processes.
- 2. Think Critically and Solve Problems.** Students will acquire a critical and evidence-based method of thinking about the topics in this course. The research proposal will require students to identify gaps in the literature and will develop their research skills. They will also have the opportunity to think critically about practices and policies that support aging and dying well.
- 3. Communicate Effectively in Writing and in Person.** Students will learn how to write accurately, clearly and concisely in their preparation of a research proposal. They will also develop their presentation skills and learn how to lead a class discussion. Note that communication skills will focus on communicating to both academic and non-academic audiences within a knowledge translation framework.
- 4. Demonstrate Information Literacy.** Students will know where the most likely sources are for obtaining additional evidence-based knowledge in the area. Students will have an understanding of the primary methodologies used in the field, including their strengths and weaknesses.
- 5. Operate Ethically and with Integrity.** Students will be exposed to different ethical dilemmas that arise in the field and practice guidelines for care (e.g., hospice). The content of this course lends itself to discussions about how to provide the best care for vulnerable people (e.g., older adults with dementia, the dying). In addition, students will discuss practices, policies, and laws that balance the rights of individuals (e.g., the right to die) while protecting the vulnerable in society.
- 6. Apply Psychological Knowledge and Skills.** Students will be exposed to individuals who have aged well and will be asked to consider what they are doing now to age well. They will also be engaged in discussions about the problems and obstacles that face older adults who are attempting to age and die well, and the family members that support them. What can we do at individual, family, community, and societal levels to promote successful aging and dying well?

Required Text

Readings will be posted on D2L

Stillion, J. M., & Attig, T. (2015). *Death, Dying, and Bereavement: Contemporary Perspectives, Institutions, and Practices*. N.Y.: Springer. *Text is available in the University Bookstore.*

Evaluation:

Evaluation Component	Worth	Due Date
Participation	15%	Throughout
Discussion questions	20%	As per the class schedule
Presentation/discussion lead	25%	Dates to be assigned
Research proposal presentation	10%	Dates to be assigned
Research proposal	30%	December 8, 2015

Evaluation Expectations:

(1) Participation (15%)

It is expected that all students will prepare for and participate in class discussion. Effective participation involves both quality and quantity of responses. Quantity does not make up for lack of quality. You will

be evaluated on the quality of your contributions to class as demonstrated, in part, by knowledge of the readings for that week and your thoughtful analysis of the readings. You are required to come to class having completed and thought about the readings for that week. You will receive feedback on your participation mid-way through the semester. If you will not be in class, please email the instructor prior to class.

(2) Discussion questions (20%)

Students will be required to submit one question on the dates indicated in the class schedule. These questions can be derived from the readings but may also go beyond the readings and should reflect interesting issues that are raised, including controversies, debates, and dilemmas associated with the topic for that week. If you use additional readings (i.e. beyond those assigned), please reference them in APA style. You are encouraged to prepare questions that are interesting and provocative. Most importantly, it should be a question that will stimulate an interesting discussion. Although all questions will not be covered in each class, be prepared to discuss your questions and views. Questions must be typed and e-mailed to me (konnert@ucalgary.ca) by noon on the date they are due (see class schedule for due dates) and must pertain directly to the readings for that week (i.e., not readings from previous weeks). Questions that do not meet this criterion or are late will receive a 0. They will be graded as follows: very good (3), satisfactory (2), or needs improvement (1). Questions should not exceed one-half page, double-spaced.

(3) Presentation and Discussion Lead (25%)

Students will be responsible for presenting and leading class discussion on 2 or 3 papers that are related to either: 1) perspectives on aging well, or 2) death, dying, and bereavement. It should be a topic that is of interest to you, relevant to the course material, and is perhaps timely and/or controversial. Topics/presentation dates will be assigned during the first week of class. I will be available to help you choose articles. The presentation and discussion should take about 30 minutes. Note that engaging other students and guiding the discussion are important for success. Students will be given guidance on how to lead a discussion and generate interest in the topic (dos and don'ts)! Please e-mail your PowerPoint slides to me no later than 3 pm on the day before your presentation. Failure to meet this deadline will result in a 10% deduction on your grade for this assignment.

Student presentations will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- 1) Summary of the issue: accuracy, relevance, emphasis of important points.
- 2) Organization and clarity of the presentation, use of PowerPoint slides.
- 3) Your ability to think critically about the issue. If it is a controversial issue, don't be afraid to take and defend a position!
- 4) Your ideas for future directions (which could take many forms, e.g., research, practice, policy development, knowledge translation, etc.).
- 5) Your ability to lead a discussion and engage other students. (Note to all students: Please assist your fellow students by actively participating in the discussion.)

(4) Research proposal (30%)

Students are required to write a research proposal on any topic covered in the course. The study should be feasible and make a significant contribution to the literature. When thinking about your proposal, ask yourself three questions: 1) what is the next logical step in this line of research, 2) does the study I am proposing fill a gap in the literature, and 3) why is it important to do this study? The topic of your proposal must be approved by the instructor by October 15, 2015. The proposal should include the following sections: introduction (literature review, significance of your study, hypotheses/research

questions), methods (sample, measures, and procedure), analyses (statistical procedures), and conclusions (predictions, potential contributions of the research, practical implications both for individuals and more broadly). The proposal should be 10-15 pages typed and double-spaced (Times New Roman, 12-point font, 1-inch margins on all sides), not including references, appendices, etc. Research proposals must be in APA format and are due in class on December 8 (paper copies please) or can be dropped off at the Psychology Department by 4:30 PM on December 8. Marks will be docked 10% for every 24-hour period that proposals are late including weekends, unless extensions have been granted by the instructor for extenuating circumstances.

(5) Research proposal presentation (10%)

Students will be required to give a brief presentation that summarizes their research proposals. The goal is to foster discussion and solicit feedback from other students that can then be used to refine your research proposal. The structure of the presentation should be similar to that of the research proposal but will necessarily be less detailed, given the time constraints. You will be assessed on your ability to describe your research proposal in a succinct manner and your ability to address questions raised by your colleagues.

Grading Scale

A+	96-100%	B+	83-85%	C+	72-75%	D+	59-62%
A	90-95%	B	79%-82%	C	67-71%	D	55-58%
A-	85-89%	B-	76-78%	C-	63-66%	F	0-54%

As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor’s discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. To determine final letter grades, final percentage grades will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage (e.g., 89.5% will be rounded up to 90% = A but 89.4% will be rounded down to 89% = A-).

Tentative Class Schedule

Date	Topic (Note that all topics may not be covered in class. However, students <u>are</u> responsible for completing the assigned readings.)	Reading/ Discussion question (DQ) due
Sept 8, 10	Definitions of successful aging	Martin et al. (2015) Cosco, Stephen, & Brayne (2013)
Sept 15, 17	Aging well from a life course perspective	Stowe & Cooney (2015) Hsu & Langer (2013) DQ due Sept 14
Sept 18	Last day to drop full courses (Multi-term) and Fall Term half courses. No refunds for full courses (Multi-term) or Fall Term half courses after this date.	
Sept 21	Last day to add or swap full courses (Multi-term) and Fall Term half courses. Last day for change of registration from audit to credit or credit to audit.	
Sept 22, 24	Perspectives on aging well: 10 top websites for aging	www.goodtherapy.org/blog/best-

	Lay perspectives on aging well	of-2014-top-10-websites-for-aging-1218147 Jopp et al. (2015) DQ due Sept 21
Sept 25	Fee payment deadline for Fall Term full and half courses.	
Sept 29, Oct 1	Perspectives on aging well	
Oct 6, 8	Perspectives on aging well	
Oct 12	Thanksgiving Day, University closed (except Taylor Family Digital Library, Law, Medical, Gallagher and Business Libraries). No lectures.	
Oct 13, 15	Death, dying, and bereavement: Intellectual developments across disciplines, legal and ethical issues	Stillion & Attig, Chapters 1-6 DQ due Oct 13
Oct 20, 22	Loss and grief: Theory, psychologization of grief and media depictions, developmental contexts	Stillion & Attig, Chapters 7-9 DQ due Oct 19
Oct 27, 29	Institutional developments: Hospice and hospital-based care, palliative care for children	Stillion & Attig, Chapters 10-13 DQ due Oct 26
Nov 3, 5	Institutional developments: Death and funeral service, death education	Stillion & Attig, Chapters 14-16 DQ due Nov 2
Nov 10	Practice developments: Complicated bereavement	Stillion & Attig, Chapter 22
Nov 11-15	Reading Days. No lectures	
Nov 11	Remembrance Day (Observed). University Closed (except Taylor Family Digital Library, Law, Medical, Gallagher and Business Libraries). No lectures.	
Nov 17, 19	Practice developments: Spirituality, the arts and humanities	Stillion & Attig, Chapter 17-18 DQ due Nov 16
Nov 24, 26	Practice developments: Helping family members and children, building communities of care	Stillion & Attig, Chapter 19-21 DQ due Nov 23
Dec 1, 3	Practice developments: Traumatic grief	Stillion & Attig, Chapters 23-26 DQ due Nov 30
Dec 8	Care of the caregiver	Stillion & Attig, Chapter 27
Dec 8	Fall Term Lectures End. Last day to withdraw with permission from Fall Term half courses.	

Reappraisal of Grades

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (e.g., term paper, essay, test) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within 15 days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class; no reappraisal of term work is permitted after the 15 days. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next 15 days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same. If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within 15 days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances that

warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

Academic Accommodation

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services ; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf .

Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of this course.

Absence From A Test/Exam

Makeup tests/exams are **NOT** an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). A completed Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm absence from a test/exam for health reasons; the student will be required to pay any cost associated with this Statement. Students who miss a test/exam have up to 48 hours to contact the instructor and to schedule a makeup test/exam. Students who do not schedule a makeup test/exam with the instructor within this 48-hour period forfeit the right to a makeup test/exam. At the instructor's discretion, a makeup test/exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled test/exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup test/exam must be written within 2 weeks of the missed test/exam during exam make-up hours provided by the department <http://psychology.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate/exam-and-course-information#mues>. If a student cannot write their final exam on the date assigned by the Registrar's Office, they need to apply for a deferred exam http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred_final. Under no circumstances will this be accommodated by the department.

Travel During Exams

Consistent with University regulations, students are expected to be available to write scheduled exams at any time during the official December and April examination periods. Requests to write a make-up exam because of conflicting travel plans (e.g., flight bookings) will NOT be considered by the department. Students are advised to wait until the final examination schedule is posted before making any travel arrangements. If a student cannot write their final exam on the date assigned by the Registrar's Office, they need to apply for a deferred exam http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred_final. Under no circumstances will this be accommodated by the department.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act

The FOIP legislation disallows the practice of having student's retrieve tests and assignments from a public place. Therefore, tests and assignments may be returned to students during class/lab, or during office hours, or via the Department Office (Admin 255), or will be made available only for viewing during exam review sessions scheduled by the Department. Tests and assignments will be shredded after one year. Instructors should take care to not link students' names with their grades, UCIDs, or other FOIP-sensitive information.

Course Credits for Research Participation (Max 2% of final grade)

Students in most psychology courses are eligible to participate in Departmentally approved research and earn credits toward their final grades. **A maximum of two credits (2%) per course, including this course, may be applied to the student's final grade. Students earn 0.5% (0.5 credits) for each full 30 minutes of participation.** The demand for timeslots may exceed the supply in a given term. Thus, students are not guaranteed that there will be enough studies available to them to meet their credit requirements. Students should seek studies early in the term and should frequently check for open timeslots. Students can create an account and participate in Departmentally approved research studies at <http://ucalgary.sona-systems.com>. The last day to participate in studies and to assign or reassign earned credits to courses is **Dec 8, 2015**

Evacuation Assembly Point

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>. Please check this website and note the nearest assembly point for this course.

Student Organizations

Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS). They are located in Administration 170 and may be contacted at 403-220-5567.

Student Union VP Academic: Phone: 403-220-3911 suvpaca@ucalgary.ca
Student Union Faculty Rep.: Phone: 403-220-3913 socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca

Student Ombudsman's Office

The Office of the Student Ombudsmen provides independent, impartial and confidential support for students who require assistance and advice in addressing issues and concerns related to their academic careers. The office can be reached at 403-220-6420 or ombuds@ucalgary.ca (<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>).

Safewalk

The safewalk program provides volunteers to walk students safely to their destination anywhere on campus. This service is free and available 24 hrs/day, 365 days a year.

Call 403-220-5333.

Important Dates

The last day to drop this course with no "W" notation and **still receive a tuition fee refund** is **September 18, 2015**. Last day for registration/change of registration is **September 21, 2015**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **December 8, 2015**.