



Course Syllabus

SOC 3342.001: The Life Cycle

The University of Texas at Dallas

Spring 2013

T/TR: 10:00 – 11:15 AM

Classroom – JSOM 2.804

Instructor:

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520-850-0520

Office Hours:

T/TR 12:00 - 2:00 PM → GR 3.610

* If necessary, additional appointments may be made in coordination with the instructor in order to accommodate your academic and employment schedules.

Course Description

The primary objective of this course is to critically examine the life course and all of the stages therein through a sociological, and to a lesser extent, psychological lens. A host of concepts, themes, and theoretical positions will be explored within the context of the numerous life stages from infancy through old age. Particular attention will be paid to the ways in which technology has shaped the economy and altered humans' ability to navigate their social world. Although numerous international references and examples will be utilized, the focus of this class will be on the American experience. The majority of the course will be lecture based. However, classroom participation is strongly encouraged and greatly appreciated. Sociology is a discipline that we all experience on a daily basis. Accordingly, everyone is familiar with the life course in some capacity as we are all embedded within it in some way.

Prior courses in sociology will surely benefit students but are not a prerequisite for success in this class. At times, students may be asked to analyze, interpret, and extrapolate sociological concepts and explain them in both verbal and written form. The life cycle encompasses a broad range of topics. An exhaustive examination cannot be fully paid to each topic given the timeframe of this class. Yet, when the course comes to a close, students should possess the ability to understand the life course by applying a sociological framework.

Text:

Green, Lorraine. (2010). *Understanding the Life Course: Sociological and Psychological Perspectives*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

* Additional articles, readings, web links, and video clips will be available through eLearning as needed. Please be sure that you are checking the course site regularly in order to keep up with content. Any material posted on eLearning is considered “fair game” for exams and quizzes.

Students With Disabilities:

Students who require special accommodations should register with the Office of Student AccessAbility and bring me the required paperwork as early in the semester as possible. I will gladly work with you and the OSA office to make sure these accommodations are made. You can contact OSA by phone at 972-883-2098 or by online at www.utdallas.edu/studentaccess/resources/.

Grading Structure:

3 Exams – 20% each

Writing Assignments - 20%

Quizzes – 20%

- All exams will consist of 25-30 multiple choice, true/false and fill in the blank questions. There will also be approximately 7 short answer questions on each exam.
- Quizzes will be comprised of 3-4 multiple choice, true/false and fill in the blank questions. One question will be of the short answer variety. Quizzes will be given at the beginning of class and typically will NOT be formally announced.
- Attendance is not mandatory but will benefit you greatly throughout the semester. Those who regularly attend class and participate tend to earn the best scores.

* Make-ups for exams and quizzes will only be administered if proper documentation pertaining to the nature of the absence is provided. Ex. doctor’s note, traffic ticket, university sanctioned activity.

* I am aware that UT-Dallas is largely a commuter school. As such, please make the appropriate travel preparations in order to arrive on time or a few minutes early. This will minimize disruptions and give you the best opportunity to obtain all relevant material. Also, please turn off cell phones or other mobile devices while class is in session. Laptops and voice recorders are allowed but should be used exclusively for taking notes.

* All graded material will be posted to eLearning and then handed back in class. Make sure to pick up your graded work and keep it in an accessible location. Thousands of papers pass through my office each semester. Inevitably, a few get lost in the shuffle. DO NOT wait until the end of the semester after grades have been posted to inform me of a missing grade. I WILL NOT change your grade. Be proactive about staying on top of your grades and I will gladly make the appropriate changes before the end of the semester.

Plagiarism:

Although this course does not require a great deal of written work, there may be some instances where you are required to turn in assignments based on concepts from class. As such, it is imperative that you do not copy the work of others. Moreover, be certain that you cite any potential sources used in your work. If you are unfamiliar with plagiarism or how to properly cite books, articles, or other publications, please contact one of the many friendly and helpful librarians at McDermott Library for assistance.

Class Schedule

Date

Chapter and Topic

Week of January 15	Introduction/ Chapter 1: Understanding the Life Course
Week of January 22	Chapter 2: Traditional Psychological Approaches
Week of January 29	Chapter 3: New Studies of Childhood
Week of February 5	Chapter 4: Adolescence and Youth
Week of February 12	<u>Exam 1</u>
Week of February 19	Chapter 5: Young Adulthood
Week of February 26	Chapter 6: Middle Adulthood: Occupations
Week of March 5	Chapter 7: Educational Trajectories
Week of March 12	Spring Break!
Week of March 19	Chapter 8: Marriage and the Family Cycle
Week of March 26	<u>Exam 2</u>
Week of April 2	Chapter 9: Death, Dying, Grief and Loss
Week of April 9	Chapter 10: Old Age
Week of April 16	Chapter 11: International Approaches
Week of April 23	Chapter 12: Student Selected Topics
Week of May 7	<u>Final Exam</u>

* All material and dates of exams listed on this syllabus are preliminary and subject to change throughout the semester. Some of the listed chapters do not directly correspond to those in the textbook.