KIN 489F (aka KIN 425): AGING, HEALTH, AND THE BODY
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COURSE DESCRIPTION
The purpose of this course is to examine the socio-cultural context of aging and health, with a particular focus on older adults’ perceptions and experiences of their changing bodies. As such, we will consider societal norms pertaining to aging, autonomy, disability, gender, identity, health, physical activity, and mobility, and how they collectively influence individuals’ experiences of growing older and having an aged body. The course will be of particular interest to kinesiology students interested in working with older adults and/or those wanting to pursue future graduate level education in the socio-cultural area of kinesiology.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
1. To examine how older adults’ perceptions and experiences of their changing bodies are shaped and constrained by their socio-cultural contexts.

2. To foster proficiency in presenting, leading discussions, and writing about the socio-cultural context of aging, health, and the body.

REQUIRED READING AND OTHER COURSE RESOURCES
There is a Custom Course Package available for purchase from the UBC bookstore that is required reading.

Additional information about the course, including handouts about the specific assignments, will be made available on the Connect website for the course.

CLASS FORMAT
The course will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 to 12:30pm. The Tuesday class will entail a short presentation from the instructor of key theoretical concepts, debates, and background knowledge. Beginning in week#3, students will facilitate discussions of the weekly readings in the second part of the Tuesday class. Beginning in week#4, the Thursday class will be devoted to student presentations related to that week’s theme. As the course is intended to be a collaborative effort, students’ attendance and active participation in class are crucial components.

EVALUATION
Participation 10%
Discussion Facilitation 20%
Presentation 30%
Research Paper 40%
PARTICIPATION
Students’ participation marks (10% of the total grade) will be based on their attendance, active engagement during class discussions, submission of weekly questions about the readings, and provision of formal feedback to their peers regarding their presentations. You will be expected to come to class having read the readings and prepared to actively participate in class discussions. You will be expected to hand in two questions at the beginning of class on Tuesdays based on that week’s readings (one question per reading). These questions could be something that was left unanswered for you by each of the articles, a thought-provoking query regarding the arguments made by the authors, or a short (one or two sentence) excerpt from the reading followed by the posing of a question. Additionally, you will be required to provide feedback to the instructor on their peers’ group presentations. Finally, at the end of the term, you will be asked to evaluate your own participation and justify a proposed grade. Further details to be provided.

DISCUSSION FACILITATION
This assignment is worth 20% of the total grade. Students will take turns facilitating class discussions of the weekly readings, typically during Tuesday’s class. Your role as a facilitator will have two components. First, you will be required to briefly summarize the main issues or findings of the required readings for your facilitation week. Secondly, you will lead the class in a discussion of the readings based on a series of questions that you will prepare in advance of the class. Ultimately, your job as a reading facilitator is to help move the class towards better understanding of the material covered in the readings and to foster active participation. Further details to be provided.

PRESENTATION
This assignment is worth 30% of the total grade. Students will take turns conducting presentations during the Thursday class on a topic related to that week’s theme. Presentations can include short video clips but the bulk of the presentation should entail students speaking directly to their peers, using interactive examples, or engaging the class in creative and thoughtful ways. Further details to be provided.

RESEARCH PAPER
This assignment is worth 40% of the total grade. Each student will write a review of the current socio-cultural research on a topic that fits within the scope of the course. Students are strongly encouraged to write a research paper on the same topic as their presentation (although this is not a requirement). The paper is to be 8 to 10 pages in length, excluding references and a title page and is to be handed in on the last day of class. Further details to be provided.

CLASS EXPECTATIONS
ATTENDANCE/MISSED CLASSES
Regular class attendance is mandatory. Students who miss class due to medical/serious family emergencies or as a result of varsity athletic commitments AND who have appropriate documentation will have the option to complete a brief (one to two pages) reflective writing assignment per missed class based on the weekly readings in order to receive their attendance marks. These reflective writing assignments must be handed in upon return to class along with appropriate documentation. Appropriate documentation is not considered to be a note from a
family member or other similar person but rather constitutes a note from varsity athletics, medical certificate, death certificate, funeral leaflet, etc...

Additionally, if the missed class occurs on the day that a student was scheduled to facilitate a discussion of a reading or deliver his/her presentation, s/he will need to contact the instructor as soon as possible so as to reschedule for an alternative time. Once again, appropriate documentation will be required in order to justify the rescheduling of the assignments or the student will receive zero.

CLASS NOTES
Class notes, including those from the instructor’s opening remarks and the students’ presentations, will be posted on Connect.

OFFICE HOURS
Although there are no scheduled office hours, I am very happy to meet with students and appointments can be arranged via email or in person before or after class.

EXTENSIONS
Extensions for the research paper will only be granted in cases of medical or serious family emergencies, and only when appropriate supporting documentation is provided. Students must contact the instructor prior to the due date of the paper in order to obtain an extension.

LATE PAPERS
Late research papers will be accepted with a penalty of two marks per day (including weekends) out of the total 40 marks for the assignment, with each day ending at 4pm. Because we have limited reception hours at the Annex Auditorium A, students should hand in late assignments to the School of Kinesiology main office in War Memorial Gym (Room 210), which is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES
It is your responsibility to become familiar with the University of British Columbia’s Academic Honesty and Plagiarism Policies, as well as the Student Declaration and the consequences of violating these policies.

http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959
http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/?tree=3,285,0,0
http://vpacademic.ubc.ca/academic-integrity/ubc-regulation-on-plagiarism/
**WEEKLY TOPICS**

**Week#1 – Introduction**

**Summary:** During our first class on Thursday, September 10, we will discuss the scope and evaluation procedures of the course. There are no required readings this week.

**Week#2 – Aging, Health, and the Body in Social Context**

**Summary:** This week we will begin to discuss the social context of aging, health, and the body by exploring historical influences, demographic shifts, and changing cultural norms pertaining to later life. We will also begin to explore the concept of embodiment as it pertains to aging. Students will sign up for one reading facilitation week as well as one presentation week.

**Readings:**


**Additional Suggested (Not Required) Reading:**

**Week#3 – The Aging Body and the Media**

**Summary:** This week we will explore how the aging body is constructed and portrayed in the media and how media images both reflect and differ from the social and physical realities of growing older. In doing so, we will additionally examine the moving/static older body and representations of health and physical activity.

**Readings:**


**Additional Suggested (Not Required) Reading:**
**Week#4 – Gender, Aging and the Body**

**Summary:** This week we will review the research and theorizing pertaining to gender and the aging body. We will discuss if and how older men’s and women’s perceptions of their bodies’ appearances are influenced by ageist norms.

**Readings:**


**Additional Suggested (Not Required) Readings:**


**Week#5 – Experiencing Illness and Disability in Later Life**

**Summary:** This week we will discuss the chronically ill and/or disabled aging body and theoretical debates surrounding the impact of illness on identity – specifically the competing concepts of biographical disruption versus biographical flow.

**Readings:**
Hurd Clarke, L., & Bennett, E. (2013). ‘You learn to live with all the things that are wrong with you’: Gender and the experience of multiple chronic conditions in later life. *Ageing and Society, 33*(2), 342-360.


**Additional Suggested (Not Required) Readings:**

Week#6 – Independence/Dependence and the Aging Body

Summary: This week we will discuss the complex and often conflicting societal meanings attributed to dependence and independence.

Readings:


Additional Suggested (Not Required) Readings:


Week#7 – The Aging Body and Consumer Culture

Summary: Discussing the proliferation of anti-aging products and services, this week we will examine older adults’ engagement in consumer culture (from the use of Viagra and Botox, to various self-care and health promotion strategies) as a response to physical aging and societal ageism.

Readings:


Additional Suggested (Not Required) Readings:

Week#8 – The Physically Active/Inactive Older Body

Summary: Examining the debates surrounding the concept of ‘successful aging’, this week we will discuss the aging body and embodiment in relation to physical activity.

Readings:

Grant, B. (2012). ‘Against the grain’: Over 75 years and joining a community exercise programme. Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health, 4(1), 1-14.

Additional Suggested (Not Required) Readings:


Week#9 – The Socially Active/Inactive Older Body

Summary: This week we will discuss social activity and inactivity in later life with a particular focus on leisure, social isolation, well-being, and the resistance of ageism.

Readings:


Additional Suggested (Not Required) Readings:

Yarnal, C., Son, J., & Liechty, T. (2010). “She was buried in her purple dress and her red hat and all of our members wore full ‘Red Hat Regalia’ to celebrate her life”: Dress, embodiment and older women's leisure: Reconfiguring the ageing process. Journal of Aging Studies, 25(1), 52-61.
Week#10 – Sexuality and the Aging Body

Summary: This week we will discuss sexuality in later life, with particular attention on social taboos surrounding the sexual, older body.

Readings:


Additional Suggested (Not Required) Readings:


Week#11 – Dementia and Embodiment in Later Life

Summary: This week we will discuss the embodied experience of dementia, with particular attention on the relationships between identity and the body.

Readings:


Additional Suggested (Not Required) Readings:

**Week#12– Technology and the Aging Body**

**Summary:** This week we will explore the relationship between embodiment and technology in later life, with a particular focus on assistive technology, mobility, and social inclusion/exclusion.

**Readings:**


**Additional Suggested (Not Required) Readings:**


**Week#13: Wrap Up**