**Gerontology Department**

**Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies**

GERO 121 | 221, Strategies for Optimal Aging  
Fall 2024 Syllabus

COURSE MEETS: *MOST* MONDAYS IN AIRC Room 1007 from 5:30 pm-8:20 pm HYBRID STYLE

# Gerontology Diversity & Inclusion Statement

“As part of our commitment to social justice and the Anti-Racist and Inclusive Campus Plan, the Gerontology Department works to support and uplift all historically underrepresented communities, on an off campus, and condemn any forms of bias based on age, race, ethnicity, caste, nationality, immigration status, gender/transgender, sexual orientation, disability/ability, religion, cultural attire/hair, body size/shape, class, and more. We strive to be an exemplary leader in inclusive learning.”

# Part 1: Course Information—This class is a hybrid course. WE WILL HAVE SEVERAL MODAYS WE DO NOT MEET IN PERSON. Please check syllabus schedule and Canvas for exact meet up dates. Class time: Mondays 5:30-8:20pm when we do meet in person.

## Instructor Information

**Instructor:** Jennifer Stevenson MS  
**Office:** Amador 552D  
**Office Hours:** Non-campus Tuesdays 2:15-3pm drop in Zoom meeting room <https://csus.zoom.us/j/6689334985>; other times available with appointment.   
**Office Telephone:** (916) 292-8633(Cell). Texting is encouraged! Please provide your name in the text so I know who you are. **Communication is key in this course**!!!  
**E-mail:** Please email me through the email tool in our Canvas course or at [j.stevenson@csus.edu](mailto:j.stevenson@csus.edu). Either email is fine.

## Course Description

This course is an in-depth, interdisciplinary, and holistic exploration of health promotion and adaptation paradigms that facilitate optimal and productive longevity. Hardiness and self-efficacy theories along with expectations and experiences enhancing quality of life are explored. Interactions among such variables as activity, diet, exercise, work/leisure, attitudes/beliefs, humor, living environments, spirituality, and social networks are investigated within the contexts of gender, economic, and cultural perspectives. This class requires outside work, where students have older adult mentor meetings to help complete papers/reflection assignments. Approximately 3-4 meetings of 45 minutes to 1 hour outside of the classroom, with an older adult mentor from the Renaissance Society meetings. The student will be randomly paired with a mentor at the beginning of the semester. These meetings will be in the form of an interview in person, for the student to explore questions and answers pertaining to life events as we age. This course also uses the Netflix series called Live to 100:Secrets of the Blue Zone Series for a group assignment due at the end of the course.

### Prerequisite

* Upper Division Status

## Textbook & Course Materials

### Required Text (only if available). You are welcome to use the apa website as well <https://apastyle.apa.org> instead of purchasing the manual. We only use APA 7 when asked in this course.

* *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). (2019). Washington, DC: Author. (You will be utilizing this text for all your GERO classes)
* Other required readings posted in Canvas (See Specific Modules). These readings may be used for resources within course assignments and are required for you to read weekly to orient yourself on the content we discuss in class. Lectures will be based on these readings as well.

### Recommended Texts & Other Readings

* Bengtson, V.L. & Settersten Jr., R.A. (Eds). (2016). *Handbook of theories of aging.* New York, NY: Springer Publishing. (You will also be utilizing this text for GERO 122, 130 & 131).

## Course Requirements

* Internet connection (DSL, LAN, or cable connection desirable)
* Access to Canvas-I recommend you have easy access to your Canvas and Sac State Emails!!!
* Ability to connect with mentors outside of class time.

## Course Structure

This course will be delivered in-person and through the course management system Canvas online (**hybrid**). For no “in-person” classes, please complete that week’s module on your own. You will use your Sac State account to login to the course from your [My Sac State](https://my.csus.edu/) account and click on the Canvas button or login directly through the [Canvas Login Page](https://csus.instructure.com/).

In Canvas, you will access course materials, assignments, discussion questions and resources.

## Canvas Access

To access this course on Canvas you will need access to the Internet and a supported Web browser (Chrome, Firefox, Safari). To ensure that you are using a supported browser and have required plug-ins, please visit the “[Which browsers does Canvas support](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10720-which-browsers-does-canvas-support)” website.

## Technical Assistance

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem with Canvas you can:

* If you need a laptop or WI-FI hotspot, please let me know and I can request the needed items for you to borrow
* [Submit a Ticket](https://csus.service-now.com/service/?id=help) to Report a Problem to the Information Resources and Technology Support Team
* Call the Canvas Support line at Sac State: M-F 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM (916) 278-2450.
* [Schedule a Consultation](https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/get-support-consultation/consultation.html) to get assistance with Canvas and other Academic technologies
* Visit the [Canvas Student Video Guides](https://community.canvaslms.com/community/answers/guides/video-guide#jive_content_id_Students)
* Visit the Canvas [Student Web Tutorials](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701)

**Important Note:** This syllabus, along with course assignments and due dates, are subject to change. It is the student’s responsibility to check Canvas for corrections or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be clearly noted in course announcement or through Canvas email.

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# Part 2: Course Objectives

After completion of readings, course experiences, and assignments, the learner will be able to:

* Investigate own, older adults’ and society’s beliefs and experiences about parameters and requirements for optimal aging.
* Analyze interactions among hardiness and self-efficacy theories and optimal aging.
* Analyze how selected keys to optimal aging are mediated by health promotion and adaptation paradigms.
* Create a case study reflecting a success model based on an oral history with an oldest-old adult.
* Explore community resources providing activities and services for older adults and their families.
* Create a personal evidenced-based optimal aging action plan.
* Analyze other places in the world when it comes to optimal aging globally.

You will meet the objectives listed above through a combination of the following activities in this course:

* Complete Learning Modules in Canvas
* Attend synchronous sessions to deepen learning and connect with professor and your classmates.
* Complete all assignments, including Discussion Question participation
* Participate in regular meetings with your mentor. Don’t wait until the last minute to reach out or schedule your appointments. They are busy just like you
* Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zones group work

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# Part 3: Topic Outline/Schedule

**Important Note:** Dates in bold are the in-person class dates. The alternate week will be on your own with possible mentor activities or meetings if you plan to meet with your mentor. We will review assignments in class and they are also in Canvas for your reference. You can access our weekly agenda through the modules link in canvas. If you have any questions, please contact me. The course is designed by weeks under the module tab in canvas. Assignments are **generally** due on Mondays at 11:59 pm, which allow us to work on some of the assignment portions in class together if needed; **e*xcept*** the Live to 100 Assignment, which is due before class at the end of the semester. **Please see exact meet up class dates and assignment due dates below and in Canvas!!! Meeting almost every other week will allow you to schedule time to meet with your mentor or catch up on assignments when we do not have to meet in person. We will also be working on a group assignment throughout the semester. I will try and have most of the course modules open from the start of class. Class power points may be slightly modified and re-uploaded before class.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Week | Topic | Assignments/Date/ Mode |
| Week 1  First Class 8/26  in person | **Week 1 Overview Of Course and Introductions**  **Welcome to GERO 121 Course Overview**  **Welcome & Introductions**  **Ageism, The Generations**  **REMINDER: DISCUSS POST #1 DUE NEXT WEEK**  **Optional Reading:Samuel (2021)** | **IN PERSON CLASS 8/26 FIRST NIGHT** |
| Week 2  9/2  NO IN PERSON CLASS  Labor Day!! | Follow Prompts in Canvas Modules for this Week  Complete Discussion Post #1  Review Biosketch/Health Promotion + Three Month Calendar Assignment | NO  IN-PERSON CLASS  Discussion Post #1 Due Tonight 9/2  REMINDER:Personal Biosketch and Health Promotion Assignment  Due Next MONDAY 9/9 |
| Week 3  9/9  IN PERSON CLASS      Week 4  9/16  Location TBA  IN PERSON CLASS | **Guest Speaker Ken Cross**  **Oral Histories Eco-Map PPT**  **Reading: A holistic model for wellness and prevention**  **Biosketch due tonight**  **Live to 100 and Group Work (Tentative)** | **9/9**  **IN PERSON CLASS**  **Personal Biosketch & Health Promotion Due Tonight 9/9 By 11:59 pm** |
| **Tentative MENTOR NIGHT**  **Mentor Reflection #1 (Their Biosketch & Eco Map Due on 10/14)**  **MANDATORY CLASS** | **9/16**  **IN PERSON CLASS**      **REMINDER:** Initial Discussion board post #2 due next Monday 9/23 at 11:59 pm |
| Week 5  9/23  NO IN PERSON CLASS  Week 6  9/30  IN PERSON CLASS | Holistic Parameters Cont. Follow Topics in Canvas Modules For This Week  *Reading: A Holistic Model For Wellness and Prevention*  *Work on Mentor Reflection #1 or meet with your mentor* | 9/23  NO IN PERSON CLASS  Discussion Board Post #2 due tonight 9/23 by 11:59 pm (Initial post) Two classmates’ responses due by Wednesday 9/25 |
| **Health Promotion**  **Review Health Promotion, Skin Care/Check-in**  **PPTS**    **Live to 100 Episode 2 and Group Assignment Work (Tentative)** | **9/30**  **IN PERSON CLASS**  **REMINDER: Mentor Reflections #1 Biosketch/Ecomap Due Next Monday 10/7 by 11:59 pm** |
| Week 7  10/7 NO IN PERSON CLASS | Follow Topics in Canvas Modules For This Week  Work on Mentor Reflection #1 or meet with your mentor | 10/7  NO IN PERSON CLASS  Mentor Reflection #1 Due Tonight 10/7 by 11:59 pm tonight |
|  |
| Week 8  10/14  IN PERSON CLASS | **Theories of Aging, Dental Care and Sleep**  **PPTS The Essentials**  **Readings:  *Theories PDF***  ***Ch 2 and Ch 30 Bengston***  **Live to 100 Episode 3 and Group Assignment Work (Tentative)** | **10/14**  **IN PERSON CLASS** |
|  |
| Week 9  10/21  NO IN PERSON CLASS | Thriving in the 2nd Half of Life:  Late Life Development, *Cohen Podcast*  Follow Prompts in Canvas Modules | 10/21 NO IN PERSONCLASS  REMINDER:Discussion Board Post #3 due next Monday 10/28 at 11:59 pm Two Peer responses by 10/30 |
| Week 10  10/28  NO IN PERSON CLASS | Core Gifts & Role Transitions  *Readings: Does Everyone Have a Gift?*  *Core Gifts*  Work on Mentor Reflection #2 Due 11/12 or meet with mentor | 10/28  NO IN PERSON CLASS  Discussion Board Post #3 due tonight 10/28  HOPE YOU ENJOYED A LITTLE BREAK FROM IN PERSON CLASS |
|
| Week 11  11/4 IN PERSON CLASS | **Locus of Control Hardiness & Resilience, Dementias & Neuroscience**  **Locus of Control & Resiliency Quotient Questionnaires and Neuroscience Video**  **Readings: *Kim et.al (2021)***  **Healthy People 2023**  **Live to 100 Episode 4 and Group Assignment Work (Tentative)** | **11/4**  **IN PERSON CLASS**  **REMINDER: Mentor Reflection #2 Gifts and Talents Due 11/12 Next TUESDAY DUE TO HOLIDAY at 11:59 pm** |
| Week 12  11/11  NO IN PERSON CLASS  Holiday | Future of Aging  Follow Topics in Canvas Modules For Week 12 | 11/11  NO IN PERSON CLASS  Mentor Reflection #2 Due TOMORROW due to Holiday  11/12 by 11:59pm tonight |
| Week 13  11/18 | **Optimal Aging: End of Life Preparedness**  **Hospice**  **Five Wishes Living Will, Advance Directives**  **Six Word Memoir Worksheet**  **Six Word Memoir Video**  **PPTs**    ***Reading: Hospice***  ***Group Work on Live to 100*** | **11/18 IN PERSON CLASS**  **REMINDER: Mentor Reflection #3 Transitions & Reflections Due 11/25 Next Monday** |
| Week 14  NO IN PERSON CLASS 11/25  Enjoy! | Optimal Aging: End of Life Preparedness  Please Follow Topics In Canvas For This Week PPTS six word memoir and death and dying | 11/25  NO IN PERSON CLASS  Mentor Reflection #3  Due at 11:59 pm tonight 11/25  REMINDER:Six Word Memoir Due Monday 12/2 at 11:59 pm  & Live to 100 Assignment due at 5:30 pm on 12/2 |
| Week 15  12/2  IN PERSON CLASS | **Misc. Wrap Up**  **And**  **Present Live to 100 Assignment in your Groups** | **12/2 IN PERSON CLASS**  **Six Word Memoir Assignment DUE TONIGHT 12/2 BY 11:59 pm**  **Live to 100 Written Assignment Due by 5:30 pm start of class tonight 12/2** |
| Week 16  12/9-12/13 Finals Week! | **Final Exam WEEK TBA**  **Mentor Celebration Tentative 12/9 at 5:15 pm**  **Location TBA** | **MANDATORY IN PERSON** |

\*\*\*Please check assignments for up to date due dates in Canvas. For the weeks we *do not meet in class,* I will have a week overview tab or an alert available in canvas to give you more guidance for that week. This schedule is subject to change WITH notice.

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# Part 4: Grading Policy

## Graded Course Activities

Visit the **Assignments** link in Canvas for details about each assignment listed below. All assignments to be submitted through canvas submission online unless discussed with instructor. Access assignments through assignments tab in canvas.

| **Points** | **Description** | **Due** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 24 | Personal Bio-sketch & Health Promotion Plan | Monday of Week 3 |
| 28 | Mentor Reflection #1 (Bio-sketch/Eco-map) | Monday Week 7 |
| 35 | Mentor Reflection #2 (Gifts & Talents) | Week 12 |
| 35 | Mentor Reflection #3 (Legacy & Purpose) | Monday Week 14 |
| 15 | Six Word Memoir | Monday Week 15 |
| 40 | In-class participation, 8 in class assignments at 5 points each and random roll | All semester |
| 15 | Online class Participation 3@5 Points Each Discussion Questions **(Discussion Board Posts)** | See Dates in Canvas |
| 50 | LIVE TO 100 SECRETS OF THE BLUE ZONES GROUP ASSIGNMENT (All Semester Group Work) | Monday Week 15 |
| **242** | **Total Points For Class** |  |

### 221 Master Degree Students ONLY, in addition to all the assignments above, 221 students must complete the following assignments:

| **Points** | **Description** | **Due Date** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 10 | Research Paper Thesis Statement | Monday Week 6 |
| 34 | Research Paper | Monday Week 13 |
|  | **Total Points Possible** | 44 |

### Late Work Policy

Be sure to pay close attention to deadlines—remember many of your assignments depend on you connecting with your mentor. Get these appointments scheduled and your papers turned in so you do not fall behind in class. **I will accept late work, but my approval for full points is needed. This means you must communicate with me ASAP and let me know of any issues you may have with an assignment. If an assignment is more than a week late without a valid reason or email/communication from you, I will deduct 5 points each week until the assignment is turned in.**

### Viewing Grades in Canvas

Points you receive for graded activities will be posted to the Canvas Grade Book. From a computer or mobile device, select the Grades option from course navigation to view your grades.

Your instructor will update the online grades each time a grading session has been complete—typically within two weeks following the completion of an activity. You will see a visual indication of new grades posted on your Canvas home page under Recent Feedback and/or next to the Grades link on course menu. It is your duty to make sure your grades are accurate on a weekly basis. If not, you must notify your instructor within one week of the posted grade.

## Letter Grade Assignment

Final grades assigned for this course will be based on the percentage

| **Letter Grade** | **Percentage** | **Performance** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A | 93-100% | Excellent Work |
| A- | 90-92% | Nearly Excellent Work |
| B+ | 87-89% | Very Good Work |
| B | 83-86% | Good Work |
| B- | 80-82% | Mostly Good Work |
| C+ | 77-79% | Above Average Work |
| C | 73-76% | Average Work |
| C- | 70-72% | Mostly Average Work |
| D+ | 67-69% | Below Average Work |
| D | 60-66% | Poor Work |
| F | 0-59% | Failing Work |

of total points earned and are assigned as follows:

**Important note:** For more information about grading at Sac State, visit the [academic policies and grading section](http://aaweb.csus.edu/catalog/current/First%20100%20Pages/academicpolicies.html#Grading) of the university catalog.

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# Part 5: Course Policies

## Participation

Students are expected to participate in class activities and these are given during class at in person meeting times. As many of you have likely seen, experiences & participation can significantly decrease in an online environment. I’m looking forward to hearing from all of you in class as we explore the various topics. I do plan on taking roll and hope to hear from all of you during class discussions. If you need to miss class, please let me know so you do not miss any necessary information.

## Build Rapport

If you find that you have any trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, let your instructor know as early as possible. As you will find, building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming an effective professional. Make sure that you are proactive in informing your instructor when difficulties arise during the semester so that we can help you find a solution. The instructor is available during office hours by appointment. Outside of office hours, I am happy to meet at a mutually agreed upon date/time.

## Complete Assignments

All assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through Canvas unless otherwise instructed. **Assignments should be submitted by the given deadline or special permission must be requested from instructor *before the due date***. See guidelines above for late assignments.

## Understand When You May Drop This Course

It is the student’s responsibility to understand when they need to consider disenrolling from a course. Refer to the Sac State Course Schedule for dates and deadlines for registration. After this period, a serious and compelling reason is required to drop from the course. Serious and compelling reasons includes: (1) documented and significant change in work hours, leaving student unable to attend class, or (2) documented and severe physical/mental illness/injury to the student or student’s family.

### Incomplete Policy

Under emergency/special circumstances, students may petition for an incomplete grade. An incomplete will only be assigned if the student is current on assignments and there is a compelling reason to allow the student to finish coursework after the semester has ended. All incomplete course assignments must be completed within one year from the end of the semester the course is taken.

## Student Resources

There are many services offered by CSUS to help you succeed in this course and throughout your academic career. I encourage you to take advantage. Links to the following resources are also available in Canvas.

**[Basic Needs Support: Crisis Assistance & Resource Education Support (CARES)](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/crisis-assistance-resource-education-support/)**

If you are experiencing challenges with food, housing, financial or other unique circumstances that are impacting your education, help is just a phone call or email away! The CARES office provides case management support for any enrolled student. Email the CARES office at [cares@csus.edu](mailto:cares@csus.edu) to speak with a case manager about the resources available to you.

## [Academic Advising](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/academic-advising/)

The Academic Advising Center offers new student orientation, mandatory freshman advising, and advising on General Education and graduation requirements for all students. While your major and GE advising will be conducted by the Gerontology Department, the Academic Advising office is available if you have questions about transfer credit, transcripts, etc.

## [IRT Service Desk (Service Desk)](https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/get-support-consultation/)

The Information, Resources, and Technology (IRT) helpdesk provides assistance to students, faculty and staff in their use of campus technologies.

## [Services to Students with Disabilities](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/services-students-disabilities/)

Students with disabilities who require accommodations need to provide disability documentation to Services to Students with Disabilities (SSWD). SSWD is located in Lassen Hall 1008 and can be contacted by phone at (916) 278-6955 (Voice)(916) 278-7239 (TDD only) or via email at [sswd@csus.edu](mailto:sswd@csus.edu).

Please feel free to set up an appointment with me to discuss your approved accommodation. This syllabus and course materials are available in alternate formats upon request. In addition, as your professor, I feel I have a responsibility to actively support culturally diverse learners with a wide range of learning styles and abilities and to be responsive in my teaching practices. Feel free to discuss your progress in this course with me at any time.

## [Student Affairs](https://www.csus.edu/student/)

If you need help discerning who to see to get a question answered, advice on which classes to take, or information about how to obtain financial aid, Student Affairs may be able to assist you.

## [Student Health and Counseling Services](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/health-counseling/)

Student Health Services promotes the health and wellness of Sac State students.

## [University Library](http://library.csus.edu/)

The Sac State University Library provides access to a wide array of workshops, research guides, subject specialists, databases, electronic journals, and other electronic resources. The Sacramento State Librarian for Gerontology is Rachael Stark. She can be reached at [stark@csus.edu](mailto:stark@csus.edu) or 916-278-7494. You can also schedule an appointment with her [here.](https://csus.libcal.com/appointment/32980) Don’t hesitate to reach out to Rachael, she can be of GREAT assistance with your research.

## [Reading & Writing Center](https://www.csus.edu/undergraduate-studies/writing-program/reading-writing-center.html)

The University Writing Center can help you at any stage in your reading and writing processes: coming up with a topic, developing and organizing a draft, understanding difficult texts, or developing strategies to become a better editor.

Further resources and information: [Martin Luther King Center](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/mlk-scholars/), [Multicultural Center](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/diversity-inclusion/multicultural-center.html), [Dreamer Resource Center](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/dreamer-resource-center/), [Student Success Center](https://www.csus.edu/college/health-human-services/student-success/), [Academic Advising](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/academic-advising/), [PARC](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/peer-academic-resource/), [Reading & Writing Center](https://www.csus.edu/undergraduate-studies/writing-program/reading-writing-center.html), [Grading Policy](https://www.csus.edu/umanual/acad/umg05150.htm), [Academic Calendar](https://catalog.csus.edu/academic-calendar/), [Hornet Honor Code](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/_internal/_documents/hornet-honor-code.pdf), [Student Rights and Responsibilities](https://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/stu-0119.htm)

## Commit to Integrity

As a student in this course (and at this university) you are expected to maintain high degrees of professionalism, commitment to active learning and participation in this class and also integrity in your behavior in and out of the classroom.

## Use of Artificial Intelligence or Chatbots

At Sacramento State, academic dishonesty is defined as any act of cheating or plagiarism. This includes the use of artificial intelligence (AI) such as ChatGPT, Grammarly’s Paraphrase function or other sources, to generate or complete any assignment. IMPORTANT NOTE: If you use Grammarly or similar programs to review your writing, you must save and provide an unedited draft to demonstrate your own work. You may not use AI to write sentences for any assignment, presentation scripts, discussion boards, essays or quiz questions.

Student work submissions may be screened for AI use. Appropriate uses of AI may be to proofread grammar and mechanics of your own original writing or provide resources to be evaluated. Students are responsible for verifying the accuracy of any utilized materials provided by AI. Please notify faculty if you have any questions regarding the use of AI. If you do use AI for any reason, you should [cite the source in APA format, such as this tutorial for citing ChatGPT](https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt).

### Sac State's Academic Honesty Policy & Procedures

“The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of scholars and teachers. California State University, Sacramento expects that both faculty and students will honor these principles, and in so doing, will protect the integrity of academic work and student grades.”

Read more about Sac State's [Academic Honesty Policy & Procedures](https://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/stu-0100.htm)

### Definitions

At Sac State, “**cheating** is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work through the use of any dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means.”

**“Plagiarism** is a form of cheating. At Sac State, “plagiarism is the use of distinctive ideas or works belonging to another person without providing adequate acknowledgement of that person’s contribution.”

**Source:** Sacramento State University Library

**Important Note:** Any form of academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, may be reported to the office of student affairs. **Course policies are subject to change.** It is the student’s responsibility to check Canvas for corrections or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be posted in Canvas.