San José State University  
Department of Psychology  
PSYC/GERO 114, Psychology of Aging  
Fall 2020  

Instructor: Dr. Sylvia Branca  
Office Location: N/A – Online Course  
Telephone: Psychology Office (messages only): (408) 924-5600  
Email (preferred): sylvia.branca@sjsu.edu  
Office Hours: Virtually – Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00-12:00pm, or by appointment  
Class Days/Time: N/A – Online Course  
Classroom: N/A – Online Course  
Prerequisite: PSYC 001  

Course Format  
This is an online course. Students need to have a reliable internet connection and a computer to access the course material. Students will need a webcam in order to take the proctored exams through the use of Respondus LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor (embedded in Canvas).

Course Description  
From Catalog: Psychological development of middle-aged and older adults emphasizing normative (typical) development in the context of cognitive, socioemotional, biological, and cultural processes. Course content also includes age-related health problems and their prevention.

Canvas  
This course will occur entirely online through the Canvas website for this course (https://sjsu.instructure.com). All of the assignments required to complete the class will be available through Canvas and turned in through Canvas. Please take time to familiarize yourself with the various features of Canvas, and ask early if you have questions.

Learning Outcomes  
Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)  
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:  

CLO1: Explain and identify changes in the structure of our population with regards to the changing demographic of older adults in the U.S. and internationally.

CLO2: Explain and identify the biological/physical processes that occur during the aging process.

CLO3: Be able to identify and discuss typical research designs used in the study of aging.

CLO4: Identify lifespan changes in cognitive functioning, physical and mental health, personality, and social relationships, including which components of these domains do not change substantially with age.
CLO5: Identify components of and explain theoretical models (psychological and biological) relevant to aging (socioemotional selectivity theory, continuity theory, random error theories, etc.).

CLO6: Report on the aging process through the perspective of an older adult through completion of interviews and experiential exercises; integrate these experiences with theoretical models presented in class.

CLO7: Discuss different viewpoints on the aging process gleaned from online interactions with your peers.

CLO8: Identify relevant legislation that pertains to older adults, including issues of nursing home care, Medicare, employment of older adults, and end-of-life care.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Upon successful completion of the psychology major requirements...

PLO1 – Knowledge Base of Psychology – Students will be able to identify, describe, and communicate the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.

PLO2 – Research Methods in Psychology – Students will be able to design, implement, and communicate basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretations.

PLO3 – Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology – Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes.

PLO4 – Application of Psychology – Students will be able to apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues.

PLO5 – Values in Psychology – Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society.

Required Reading

Textbook

Note: This book is available at the bookstore and through other online outlets.

Additional Course Content

Educational videos, readings, reading quizzes, etc. all available on Canvas course shell.

Class Structure and “Classroom” Protocol

All course activities will occur online. There are no required in-person meetings for this class. Each week will correspond to a module in Canvas. The module will include a reading quiz, and a class activity that you will complete and upload in Canvas. You will also be required to post to the discussion boards each week and respond to another student’s post. For each module, there may also be links to outside materials (videos, articles) that are relevant to the class for you to view that week. Note that this is not a lecture-based course. “Class time” will be used for reading quizzes, completing discussion posts, and completing class activities. Therefore, students are responsible for reading the textbook as the primary way of obtaining course content.
This course is self-paced and will require you to time manage and self-motivate appropriately. I strongly recommend that you schedule time each week to complete the above activities. The worst thing you could do is to wait to complete the entire set of activities right before something is due.

**Honor Code**  
(Reference: Academic Integrity Policy at: [http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/Policies/](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/Policies/))  
In order to ensure fairness and have a single standard of representing knowledge acquired, all students participating in online SJSU courses must agree to abide by the following code of conduct.

1. **My work will be my own** in this online course, except where the assignment is to work in groups or teams (I will let you know which assignments allow group work).

2. I will not give any answers for individually graded assignments to anyone else or share assignments on the internet via course tutoring websites.

3. I will not engage in any other activities that will misrepresent my own work or improve my results falsely. I will not engage in any activities that will misrepresent others’ work.

4. I will not download, save, or otherwise retain materials from the course for anything but personal use.

**Class Environment**  
In an effort to create an environment conducive to sharing one’s thoughts, I require the following etiquette when engaging in online discussions:

- Be polite and respectful to the other people in the class
- Do not use profanity in posts

Respect for the rights and opinions of others is required. The free and open exchange of ideas is the cornerstone of higher education, but we must always remain respectful of others, even if we disagree strongly with them. Disagreement is acceptable, but discourtesy is not. Behavior that creates a threatening or harassing environment will not be tolerated. Severe and pervasive disruptions of course activities are a violation of the Student Code of Conduct will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development.

[http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/Student%20Conduct%20Code%202013.pdf](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/Student%20Conduct%20Code%202013.pdf)

If we all show each other courtesy and respect we can maintain a pleasant classroom climate. Thank you.

**Recording of Class Lectures**  
Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You may not make audio or video recordings of this class. The materials in this class can be used for your private, study purposes only. Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor. You may not publicly share or upload instructor-generated material for this course such as lectures, exam questions, classroom activities, or discussion material. You can also not share other students’ discussion material outside of the Canvas environment.

**Course Requirements and Assignments**  
Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical
practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus. As an example, the expectation of work for a 3-credit course is 150-minutes of direct faculty instruction and six hours of out-of-class student work each week.

For our online course, this means that you’ll need to spend about 9-10 hours per week on the course. For all of the assignments, late work is not accepted. If your submission indicates that your work is late, you will receive 0 points for that assignment. This class has a total of 410 points:

### Course Assignments and Requirements

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**Course Orientation Activities** = 15 points (5 points for the syllabus discussion post, 5 points for the online course readiness quiz, 5 points for the first class activity)

There will be three short activities during the first week to get you oriented to the course and make sure that you are prepared for the expectations of an online course. First you will make a discussion board post that will involve asking a question about the syllabus, or something about the course that you are unclear about (5 points). This will help you learn to use the discussion boards if you aren’t familiar with them and will make sure you are clear about the requirements of the course. I will respond to your questions, and you should also feel free to respond to other students’ questions if you know the answer. Next you will complete an online course readiness quiz which will help you learn more about your readiness for an online course (5 points). Finally, you will complete your first class activity that involves making a schedule of when you will do course assignments during a typical week.

**Exams** = 150 points (3 @ 50 points each)

There will be three exams in this class. The first two exams will be 20 multiple choice questions (2 points each) and a short-answer question (10 points). The final exam (not cumulative) will be 25 multiple choice questions (2 points each). The multiple-choice items will be based on your weekly quizzes, so you should familiarize yourself with these questions prior to the exams. You will have 3 hours to complete the exam. You will not need this long to complete the exam. However, I want to provide an environment where you can demonstrate your learning without the additional stress that can come from a timed exam. Please keep in mind that the...
clock will keep running if you log out of Canvas, so the exams will likely need to be completed in one sitting. There are no make-ups for the exams since you have a one-week window in which to complete the exams.

**Final Examination or Evaluation**
The final examination will be the third exam, which is not cumulative. The final exam will count the same as any other exam. The exam will be available online through Canvas.

**Reading Quizzes** = 90 points [10 @ 10 points each (LOWEST QUIZ DROPPED)]
Most weeks (except as noted in the course calendar) you will complete a 10-point, multiple choice reading quiz in Canvas about the week’s reading and activities. Each quiz will contain multiple choice and/or true/false items. Quizzes will remain open until Sundays at 11:59pm. There are no make-ups for the quizzes. Quizzes will focus on material presented in the textbook. There is no time limit for the quizzes, and you can come and go out of Canvas while taking the quiz.

**Class Activities** = 60 points total (12 @ 5 points each)
**Discussion Posts and Replies about the Class Activity** = 60 points (12 @ 5 points each)
Each week there will be an activity that goes along with the material for the week. Any specific instructions about the activity will be included on the activity assignment in Canvas. You will complete the activity independently and upload it by Sunday at 11:59pm. There are no make-up activity points. Activity points will be graded in an evaluative way (i.e., the number of points you receive will be based on the quality of your responses).

You will also be required to make a discussion post each week and reply to another student’s post. Discussion prompts will vary each week and may be tied to the class activity or reading. Replies and posts are due by Sundays at 11:59pm. The post and reply need to be at least 150 words each and will be worth 5 points combined (2.5 each for the post and reply). Posts will be graded on depth (meeting the length requirement) and whether you’ve expressed substantive thoughts that are tied back to our course content.

**Final Paper: Elderly Care Assessment** = 35 points total (5 pts. for preparation content, 30 pts. for final paper)
The final project for the class will be an analysis and assessment of various qualities/characteristics of a set of nursing homes or assisted living facilities (of your choosing) and how they relate to older adult development. You will relate information you gather about senior care options to one of the topics covered in our textbook related to the well-being of older adults (aged 65 and older). For example, Chapter 3 of the textbook is about Age-Related Health Conditions, so you may wish to discuss in your paper the extent to which your selected nursing homes/assisted living facilities address the potential physical needs of older adults in their care.

You will choose and coordinate the “theme” of your interview with a group of 2 to 3 other students so that you all are asking the same questions about your chosen locations. The goal of the project is to gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which these facilities may or may not support the needs of older adults and to see the similarities and differences across the different places you and your group members research.

There are two assignments associated with this project: First, around the middle of the semester you will be asked to turn in (as a group) the list of questions you will address in your investigation of nursing homes/assisted living facilities (5 points; same points for each group member). At the end of the semester, each student will turn in a paper that provides a brief introduction, a summary of your findings, a section connecting your findings to the textbook and literature, and a conclusion/ reflection of the investigation process, which should include a comparison of similarities and differences across your and your group
members’ findings. This means that you have to communicate with your group throughout the semester to be able to compare and contrast their findings with yours in the final paper. In the section where you connect your findings to relevant research, you will be asked to integrate what you learned about the locations of your choice to the textbook and to one peer-reviewed journal article. The final paper cannot exceed 5 pages (excluding title page and references). You should not list your questions in your paper in a Q&A style. Instead, summarize the findings from your investigation and choose a couple of interesting quotes or facts to include in your paper.

Note: Keep in mind that you may find information about nursing homes/assisted living facilities in different ways: You may visit websites to gather information for your paper, but you may also call places and speak to someone about the specific services, fees, supports, etc. they offer. You may even see if there is feedback (internet groups, review forums) about specific nursing homes/assisted living facilities on the internet.

You should write your paper in narrative form and adhere to APA style conventions (7th Edition). More information about the details of this assignment will follow on Canvas.

The paper will be graded as follows: 5 points for the introduction and conclusion, 10 points for the summaries of your findings about locations (including integration of your group members’ findings), 10 points for the research integration section (this includes use of appropriate references), and 5 points for APA formatting and writing style.

Late policy for this paper: Papers are due in Canvas on the due date listed in our course schedule by 11:59pm. A paper is considered late if it is not turned in by that time. Papers can be turned in up to 24 hours late with an automatic 10 point deduction. Papers that are more than 24 hours late will receive no points.

Grading Information
Your final letter grade will be based on a percentage obtained by dividing your points by the total points for this course (410 total points). I will use the following grading rubric.

Please note that I do not round your grades:
97.0 to 100 = A+ 93.0 to 96.9 = A 90.0 to 92.9 = A- 87.0 to 89.9 = B+
83.0 to 86.9 = B 80.0 to 82.9 = B- 77.0 to 79.9 = C+ 73.0 to 76.9 = C
70.0 to 72.9 = C- 67.0 to 69.9 = D+ 63.0 to 66.9 = D 60.0 to 62.9 = D-
59.9 or less = F

SJSU Writing Center
Writing tutors are available to help you anytime! All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter.

SJSU Counseling Services
It is not always easy getting through college! As students, you must all navigate the many demands on your time, resources, and interpersonal relationships. SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th and San Carlos St. (across from the Event Center) in the Student Wellness Center, Third Floor, Room 300B. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit the Counseling Services website at http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling or call (408) 924-5910.
Library Liaison

Christa Bailey is the Reference Librarian assigned to assist Psychology students in using databases, helping with key word searches, etc. She will be available throughout the semester to meet with individual students. Her phone number is (408) 808-2422 and her email is christa.bailey@sjsu.edu

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs’ Syllabus Information web page at http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/"
Psyc/Gero114: Psychology of Aging
Fall 2020
Course Schedule

Note: Schedule is subject to change with fair notice – if changed, I will announce it via Canvas messaging.

Most assignments and videos are available for each module leading up to the exam, so the course is somewhat self-paced. For example, you’ll be able to complete all the quizzes leading up to the first exam if you want. Once the first exam opens, the next set of modules will open and so on.

Weekly Due Dates: All assignments are due by Sundays at 11:59pm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Lecture Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 and 2</td>
<td>8/19-8/30</td>
<td>Introduction; Syllabus Review; Course Orientation</td>
<td>Syllabus</td>
<td>*Syllabus Discussion Post</td>
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<td>Canvas Course Site</td>
<td>*Online Course Readiness Quiz</td>
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<td>*Class Activity 1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>8/31-9/6</td>
<td>Introduction to the Psychology of Aging</td>
<td>Ch. 1</td>
<td>*Reading Quiz 1</td>
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<td>*Class Activity 2 with Discussion Post and Reply</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>9/7-9/13</td>
<td>Biological Theories of Aging</td>
<td>Ch. 2</td>
<td>*Reading Quiz 2</td>
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<td>*Class Activity 3 with Discussion Post and Reply</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>9/14-9/20</td>
<td>The Aging Body and Age-Related Health Conditions; Prevention</td>
<td>Ch. 3</td>
<td>*Reading Quiz 3</td>
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<td>*Class Activity 4 with Discussion Post and Reply</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>9/21-9/27</td>
<td>Neurocognitive Disorders in Late Life</td>
<td>Ch. 9</td>
<td>*Reading Quiz 4</td>
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<td>*Class Activity 5 with Discussion Post and Reply</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>9/28-10/4</td>
<td>Exam 1 - Available 9/28 at 9:00am until 10/4 at 11:59pm (Chapters 1-3, 9)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>10/5-10/11</td>
<td>Cognition and Aging</td>
<td>Ch. 7</td>
<td>*Reading Quiz 5</td>
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<td>*Class Activity 6 with Discussion Post and Reply</td>
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<td>*Elderly Care Assessment Paper: Group Questions due by 10/11 at 11:59pm</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>10/12-10/18</td>
<td>Personality and Emotional Development</td>
<td>Ch. 5</td>
<td>*Reading Quiz 6</td>
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<td>*Class Activity 7 with Discussion Post and Reply</td>
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Course Schedule – Psyc/Gero 114, cont.
Weekly Due Dates: All assignments are due by Sundays at 11:59pm.

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Lecture Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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</table>
| 10   | 10/19-10/25 | Mental Health and Aging                                                       | Ch. 6      | *Reading Quiz 7  
  *Class Activity 8 with Discussion  
  Post and Reply |
| 11   | 10/26-11/1 | Relationships, Families, and Aging: Changes in Roles with Aging               | Ch. 10     | *Reading Quiz 8  
  *Class Activity 9 with Discussion  
  Post and Reply |
| 12   | 11/2-11/8  | Exam 2 - Available 11/2 at 9:00am until 11/8 at 11:59pm (Chapters 5-7, 10)    |            |                                                                            |
| 13   | 11/9-11/15 | Aging and the Legal System                                                    | Ch. 14     | *Reading Quiz 9  
  *Class Activity 10 with Discussion  
  Post and Reply |
| 14   | 11/16-11/22 | Aging, Work, and Retirement                                                 | Ch. 11     | *Class Activity 11 with Discussion  
  Post and Reply  
  (no reading quiz due this week) |
| 15   | 11/23-11/29 | Cultural Differences in Aging Experiences of Ethnic and Sexual Minority Older Adults | Ch. 13     | *Reading Quiz 10 |
| 16   | 11/30-12/6  | Death and the Dying Process, Bereavement, and Widowhood Cultural             | Ch. 12     | *Class Activity 12 with Discussion  
  Post and Reply  
  Final Paper: Nursing Home Assessment due by 12/6 at 11:59pm |

Exam #3 [Final Exam] (Chapters 11-14): Available Mon, Dec 7 at 9am until Sun, Dec 13 at 11:59pm  
(180 minute Time Limit; not cumulative)

“The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another.”  
-- William James

Three Keys to Your Success...

* Keep it simple  
  stay organized, write things down, ask for help when stuck, focus on ‘right now’
* Own your path  
  this is your experience, don’t compare yourself to others, know yourself
* Remember the journey  
  enjoy your experience, keep big picture in mind, focus on your goals

You can do it…and let me know how I can help!!