

Aging and the Spiritual Life
TS 689/RS 491
Fall 2011

Course Description: Through experiential, practical, reflective and theoretical learning, this course will assist students to explore spirituality as a central aspect of growth and development in later life. Spirituality will be explored from various faith and humanistic traditions. Topics will include: Biomedical, social, and cultural perspectives on aging; religious beliefs, and spiritual concerns in later life, spiritual care and dementia, spiritual care and death and dying.

Course Requirements:

Readings

You will be expected to read all the assigned readings prior to the weekly class. Lectures and discussions will assume that you have covered that material. While readings may not be addressed directly in class, students are expected to raise questions or engage the readings during class. Regular class attendance and participation is expected. **(15% of grade)**

Written Assignments

Due: September 23

A 3-5 page double-spaced engagement with chapters 7-9 of the book *Transforming Spirituality: Integrating Theology and Psychology*, F. LeRon Shults and Steven Sandage. This reading will form the grounding for how we approach spirituality throughout the course. More information will be given on the first day of class.

Due: October 14

A 3-5 page double-spaced paper on aging and spirituality from a faith or secular perspective of your choice; e.g. Muslim, Jewish, Native, Buddhist, Humanism, etc. The question framing the paper will be: "What do I need to know about this person's spirituality and faith tradition, so that I can best offer spiritual care to them?" Students will present a brief presentation in class on their particular topic. **(15% of grade)**

Due: November 11:

Practicum: Each student will meet for a minimum of 6 hours throughout the term with an aging person over the age of 70 and who is not a relative. Keep a journal of your experience. Write a 7-8 page double-spaced reflection paper about your senior partner. The goal for this paper is to attempt to see the world through the eyes of your senior partner. Your paper will be graded on your ability to reflect on this person from the perspective of their physical and cognitive abilities, their family and community system, their developmental capacity, and their religious and spiritual life. (We will be covering these various aspects of aging in class). In addition, insights gleaned from the Journal of your choice (see required readings) should be integrated into the paper. The paper should include a one-page spiritual care plan that includes the persons' strengths and resources as well as spiritual concerns and potential for growth. Reflect on the role of the faith community/congregation (if there is one), in this person's life. Both your journal and your paper are to be handed in, although the journal will not be graded. **(25% of grade)**

Due: December 7:

Research paper and class presentation: (RS 491 students: 12-15 pages, double-spaced; TS 689 students: Minimum of 20 pages. TS students will be expected to dedicate a section of their paper to ministry within their topic area. For example, if your topic area is Aging and Singleness, a section of the paper will be ministry with seniors who are single).

Choose a topic in the field of spirituality and aging that is of interest to you, e.g. sexuality and aging, aging as a disabled person, gay/lesbian experience of aging, developing a congregational ministry to aging persons, etc. Class presentations will be 20 minutes with 10 minutes for questions and discussion—a total of 30 minutes. Your presentation will include a one-page handout citing the main points and your primary resources.

Please note: Grammar, punctuation, and spelling will be given consideration when grading this paper. (30% of grade)

Writing Information

Students are referred to http://www.sju.ca/library/essay_writing.nhtml or <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/advise.html> for assistance in appropriate essay writing and footnoting form. Turabian/Chicago Manual of Style is the preferred footnoting form.

**TS689/RS491
Course Schedule**

- September 16** *Introduction to the Course, Topics, Readings and Assignments*
Setting the Context: What do we bring to the subject: Exploring our assumptions about aging.
Video: Embracing Aging: Families Facing Change
- September 23** *What is Spirituality?*
Readings:
F. LeRon Shults and Steven Sandage, *Transforming Spirituality: Integrating Theology and Psychology*, Chapters 7-9*
June Miers Driedger, "Spirituality According to Oprah" *Vision Journal*, Fall 2000
Reading Report Due
- September 30** *Exploring Aging from a biomedical, social, cultural and historical perspective*
Readings:
www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/04/30/07043fa_fact_gawanda *Annals of Medicine: The Way We Age Now: Reporting and Essays*
Fisher and Simmons, Introduction and Chapters 1-6
- October 7** *Exploring Aging from a Developmental Perspective*

Readings:

George Valliant, *Aging Well*, Chapters 4-7*

October 14

Aging and Faith: A Christian Understanding of Aging and Other Faith Perspectives

Readings:

Stanley Hauerwas, ed., *Growing Old in Christ*, Chapters 1, 2, 5*

Elizabeth MacKinlay, *Ageing and Spirituality across Faiths and Cultures*, Chapters 6, 8, 9, 10*

Papers Due, in class reporting

October 21

The Spiritual Journey and the Tasks of Aging

Readings:

Robert Atchley, *Spirituality and Aging*, Chapter 4*

Susan McFadden, “*Surprised by Joy and Burdened by Age: The Journal and Letters of John Casteel*”

October 28

Spirituality and Dementia

DVD: “There is a Bridge”, Memory Bridge, Chicago, IL, 2007

Research Topics Due

Readings:

McFadden and McFadden, *Aging Together*, Chapters 1-4

November 4

Spiritual Care of Persons with Dementia

McFadden and McFadden, *Aging Together*, Chapters 5-11

November 11

Discussion of Senior Partners

Senior Partners Reflection Paper Due:

In Class Reporting

November 18

Spirituality and Aging Lecture

“Forgiveness and Spiritual Well-being” Dr. Steven Sandage
The Great Hall, CGUC

November 25

The End of Life: Aging and Death

Readings:

Fisher and Simmons, Ch. 8

Felicity B. Kelcourse, ed. *Human Development and Faith*. Ch. 14*

December 2

***Presentation of Papers* (See process on paper presentation on Course Syllabus)**

December 7

Final Paper Due

*Readings noted with an asterisk are on reserve in the library

Required Texts:

Fisher, James C. and Henry C. Simmons. *A Journey Called Aging: Challenges and Opportunities in Older Adulthood*. New York: The Haworth Press, 2007.

McFadden, Susan H. and John T. McFadden. *Aging Together: Dementia, Friendship and Flourishing Communities*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2011.

Shults, F. LeRon and Steven J. Sandage. *Transforming Spirituality: Integrating Theology and Psychology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic 2006.

Choose 1:

Athill, Diana. *Somewhere Towards the End*. London, UK: Granta, 2008.

Davis, Robert. *My Journey into Alzheimer's Disease*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publ., Inc., 1989.

Sarton, May. *Encore: A Journal of the Eightieth Year*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1993.

Sarton, May. *At Eighty-Two: A Journal*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1996.

Scott-Maxwell, Florida. *The Measure of My Days*. New York: Penguin Books, 1968.

Thelma-Anne, Sister SSJD. *In Age Reborn, By Grace Sustained*. Toronto, ON: ABC Publishing, 2007.

Recommended Texts

Athchley, Robert C. *Spirituality and Aging*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009.

Bianchi, Eugene. *Aging as a Spiritual Journey*. New York: Crossword, 1997.

Erikson, Erik H., (Extended Version with New Chapters on the Ninth Stage of Development, by Joan M. Erikson), *The Life Cycle Completed*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997.

Fisher, Kathleen. *Winter Grace: Spirituality and Aging*. Nashville, TN: Upper Room Books, 1998.

Hauerwas, Stanley, Carole B. Stoneking, and Keith G. Meador, eds. *Growing Old in Christ*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003.

Kimble, Melvin, Susan McFadden, James Ellor and James Seeber, eds. *Aging, Spirituality and Religion, Vol. I*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995

Kimble, Melvin and Susan McFadden, eds. *Aging, Spirituality, and Religion, Vol. II*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003.

Kelcourse, Felicity B., ed. *Human Development and Faith: Life Cycle Stages of Body, Mind, and Soul*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2004.

Kramer, Kenneth. *The Sacred Art of Dying: How World Religions Understand Death*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1988.

MacKinlay, Elizabeth, ed. *Ageing and Spirituality Across Faiths and Cultures*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2010.

MacKinlay, Elizabeth, ed. *Spiritual Growth and Care in the Fourth Age of Life*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2006.

Shamy, Eileen. *A Guide to the Spiritual Dimension of Care for People with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia*. London: Jessica Kingsley, Publ., 2003.

Thibault, Jane Marie and Richard L Morgan. *No Act of Love is Ever Wasted: The Spirituality of Caring for Persons with Dementia*, Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2009.

Valliant, George. *Aging Well: Surprising Guideposts to a Happier Life from the Landmark Harvard Study of Adult Development*. New York: Little, Brown and Co., 2002.

VandeCreek, Larry, ed. *Spiritual Care for Persons with Dementia*. New York: The Haworth Press, 1999.

Please note the following Academic Integrity Information:

To create and promote a culture of academic integrity, the behavior of all members of the University of Waterloo is based on honesty, trust, fairness, and respect and responsibility.

Note on avoidance of academic offenses: all students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offense is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy # 71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students are directed to consult Policy # 71.

<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71Sept2008htm>.

If you need help in learning how to avoid offenses such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your Academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean. Students who believe that they have been wrongfully or unjustly penalized have the right to grieve; refer to Policy #70.

<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70Sept2008htm>.

There is also a website, "Avoiding Academic Offenses"

[Http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html), available that all students are encouraged to check. It is important for students to be aware that one may commit plagiarism inadvertently, through ignorance of appropriate citation methods, so checking this website prior to submitting a paper is to the student's advantage.

Please note the following from the Office for Persons with Disabilities:

Note for students with disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

