

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS
University of Virginia, Academic Sponsor

Voyage: Spring 2016

Discipline: Anthropology

ANTH 3559-101: Aging in Cross Cultural Perspective

Division: Upper

Faculty Name: Annapurna Devi Pandey

Credit Hours: 3; Contact Hours: 38

Pre-requisites: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Growing old is a universal reality, but the process of aging and how the elderly are viewed varies from culture to culture. This course will explore what aging and being old entail in a variety of cultures as well in our own. We will focus on the influence of culture in the lives of older people in such areas as quality of life in relation to gender, caste, class, religion and ethnicity; and institutions taking care of the older people. Topics covered in this course are such as the increasing number of older people cross culturally, shrinking familial and institutional responsibility to the care of the elderly, the impact of globalization on the elderly population in different parts of the world and the role of state in policy making in relation to caring the old. Ethnographic examples to explore such issues will be selected from most of the sites we will be visiting during our voyage. We will explore cultural diversity dealing with old care through reading a body of literature, field exploration as well as viewing films.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To help students understand their own culture's assumptions about the aging process and later life.
2. To explore the sources and the kinds of power, authority, and respect accorded older people in various Asian, South Asian, South East Asian, African, non-Western and Western societies.
3. To understand the impact of modernization, industrialization, and social policy on the cultural treatment of the elderly in a global perspective.
4. To examine cultural differences in inter-generational relations and in the way older people themselves experience and feel about later life.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Author: Sokolovsky, J.(ed).

Title: The Cultural Context of Aging: Worldwide Perspectives. 3rd edition,

Publisher: Worldwide Perspectives. 3rd ed. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey

Year: 2009

ISBN:

Author: Hashimoto, Akiko.

Title: The Gift of Generations
Publisher: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Year: 1996
ISBN: 9780521555203

Author: Lisa Cliggett
Title: Grains from Grass Aging, Gender, and Famine in Rural Africa
Publisher: Cornell University Press
Year: 2005
ISBN: 13978-0-8014-7283-1

Author: Holmes, Ellen Rhoads and Lowell D. Holmes
Year: 1995
Title: Other Cultures, Elder Years. 2nd ed.
Publisher: Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
ISBN: 9780803951341

Other readings are available on the course [E] reserves folder.

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Depart Ensenada- January 5:

A1- January 7: Overview of the anthropology of Aging. Anthropological terms. Introduction to the course, overview of requirements, in-class diagnostic writing assignment.

Readings:

J. Sokolovsky, PART I: A GLOBAL VISION OF AGING, CULTURE AND CONTEXT
Kinsella, Kevin. "Global Perspectives on the Demography of Aging" in Sokolovsky, J.(ed) The Cultural Context of Aging: Worldwide Perspectives. 2009, chap.1.

A2- January 9: Culture and Aging: An evolutionary perspective

Readings: Toni Miles and Jacob Brody, "Aging as a Worldwide Phenomenon" In Biological anthropology and Aging: Perspectives on human variation over the life span. NY: Oxford UP.Pp.3-15 [E].

Gurven, Mike. "Beyond the Grandmother Hypothesis: Evolutionary Models of Human Longevity" in Sokolovsky,J.(ed)The Cultural Context of Aging: Worldwide Perspectives, 2009, chap.3.

The Grandchild Gap: The Effects of Low Birth Rates
http://www.pbs.org/thinktank/grand_special.html

Film "The Grandchild Gap"

A3- January 11: Aging in a comparative perspective

Readings: Holmes & Holmes, Other Cultures, Elder Years. 2nd ed. Chaps.1-4

Christine L Fry, et al. "Culture and the Meaning of a Good Old Age" -WEB Book,in Sokolovsky,J.(ed)The Cultural Context of Aging: Worldwide Perspectives, 2009, chap.7. Ikle, Charlotte and Cynthia Beall, 2001, "Age, Aging, and Anthropology" in Handbook of Aging and the Social Sciences, 5th ed. Pp. 125-140 (E). Jay Sokolovsky, "Aging, Center Stage: New Life Course Research in Anthropology" 31 October 2009 file:///Users/pandey/Desktop/Aging%20and%20the%20lifecourse.pdf [E].

Suggested reading for research: world Population Ageing 2013
<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/ageing/WorldPopulationAgeing2013.pdf>

Play the aging game <http://www.livingto100.com/>

UN Program on Aging: www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/ Gateway to UN programs, reports and activities related to aging and elders around the globe.

Honolulu: January 12

A4- January 14: The Life Cycle and the Life Course

Readings: Beall, Cynthia M. 1984 "Theoretical dimensions of a focus on age in physical anthropology." in Age and anthropological theory. David I. Kertzer and Jennie Keith, eds. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. Pp. 82-95.[E].

A5- January 17:

Study Day: January 19

A6- January 20: Aging,Culture And The meaning of a Good Old Age: A cross cultural perspective

Readings: Maria G. Cattell, "Culture and the Meaning of a Good Old Age", Cattell, Maria and Steve Albert. "Elders, Ancients, Ancestors and the Modern Life Course" in Sokolovsky,J.(ed)The Cultural Context of Aging: Worldwide Perspectives, 2009, chap.8. Holmes & Holmes, Other Cultures, Elder Years. 2nd ed. Chap.5 Traphagan, John. "Brain Failure, Late Life and Culture in Japan" in Sokolovsky, J.(ed) The Cultural Context of Aging: Worldwide Perspectives, 2009, chap.42.

First short essay assignment due in class on January 20th. The details will be discussed in class on the first day of instruction.

A7- January 22: Aging and Intergenerational relationship: A comparison of cultures

Readings: May L. Wykle, Peter J. Whitehouse, Diana L. Morris. "From Successful Aging to Conscious Aging" in Sokolovsky,J.(ed)The Cultural Context of Aging: Worldwide Perspectives, 2009, chap.4.

Akiyama, Hiroko, Toni C. Antonucci and Ruth Campbell. "Exchange and Reciprocity among Two Generations of Japanese and American Women - Web Book in Sokolovsky, J.(ed).Chap.12. Jenike,Brenda and John Traphagan."Transforming the Cultural Scripts for Aging and Elder Care in Japan",in Sokolovsky, J.(ed). chap.17.

Yokohama: January 24-25
In-Transit: January 26
Kobe: January 27-28

A8- January 29: Varieties of Aging experience: A cross cultural perspective
Reading: Holmes & Holmes, Other Cultures, Elder Years. 2nd ed. Chaps.6
Zhang, Hong. "The New Realities of Aging in Contemporary China: Coping with the Decline in Family Care" in Sokolovsky, J.(ed). chap.15.

Shanghai: January 31-February 1
In-Transit: February 2-3
Hong Kong: 4-5

A9- February 6: Case studies from South East Asia
Readings: Barbara W.K. Yee. "The Social and Cultural Context of Adaptive Aging by Southeast Asian Elders" -Web Book in Sokolovsky, J.(ed). chap.26.
Holmes & Holmes, Other Cultures, Elder Years. 2nd ed. Chaps.7-8

Ho Chi Minh: February 8-12

A10- February 13: The aged and Cultural Change
Readings: Holmes & Holmes, Other Cultures, Elder Years. 2nd ed. Chaps.9-10.

A11-February 15: Midterm exam

Yangon: February 17-21

A12- February 22: Families, Community And Eldercare homes: transforming Cultural Spaces For Aging
Cattell, Maria G. "Global Perspectives on Widowhood and Aging" in Sokolovsky, J.(ed).Chap.11.
Readings: Lawrence Cohen, "Old Age: Cultural and Critical Perspectives"
Annual Review of Anthropology 1994. 23:137-58. [E]
Lamb, Sarah. "Elder Residences and the Outsourced Son: Remaking Aging in Cosmopolitan India" in Sokolovsky, J.(ed).Chap.30.
Annapurna Pandey, "Giving New Life to the Widows in Puri: A Temple City in Odisha" [E]

A13- February 24:
Readings: Beyene, Yewoubdar. "Menopause: A Biocultural Event" In Sokolovsky, J.(ed), chap.6.
Christine L Fry, et al. "Culture and the Meaning of a Good Old Age" -WEB Book in Sokolovsky, J.(ed). chap.7.

Cochin: February 26-March 2

A14- March 3: Aging, Gender and Social Change
Readings:

Rosenberg, Harriet G. "Complaint Discourse, Aging and Caregiving among the Ju' hoansi of Botswana – update in Sokolovsky,J.(ed). chap.2.

Lisa Cliggett, Grains from Grass Aging, Gender, and Famine in Rural Africa, Chap.1, “Aging in the Non-Western World”.

Study Day: March 5

A15- March 6: Aging, Gender and Social Change

Readings: Lisa Cliggett, Grains from Grass Aging, Gender, and Famine in Rural Africa, Chap.2. Getting Down in the Valley and Chap.3 The Space and Time of Vulnerability

Port Louis: March 12

A16- March 9: Gender, Aging and Social Change

Readings: Lisa Cliggett, Grains from Grass Aging, Gender, and Famine in Rural Africa, Chap. 4. Making a Village-Style Living and Chap.5 Making a Village-Style Living

Study Day: March 11

A17- March 12: Discussion of changes in aging culture

Readings: Lisa Cliggett, Grains from Grass Aging, Gender, and Famine in Rural Africa, Chap 6. Mother's Keepers, Father's Wives, and Residential Arrangements of the Old and Chap 7. Ancestors, Rituals, and Manipulating the Spirit World.

Cape Town: March 14-19

A18- March 20: Aging and the Life Course

Readings:Lisa Cliggett, Grains from Grass Aging, Gender, and Famine in Rural Africa, Chap.8. Migration and Family Ties over Distance and Time
Chap. 9. Getting By "Just Like That"

A19- March 22: Aging and the Life Course

Readings: Sokolovsky, Cultural Context of Aging, Pt. III, Ch, 15, 18

A20- March 24: Losing, Using and Crafting Spaces for Aging in the diaspora

Readings: Sokolovsky, Cultural Context of Aging, Pt. IV, Ch, 19 and 21

Tema: March 26-28

Takoradi: March 29-30

A21- March 31: Aging in the diaspora

Readings: Sokolovsky, Cultural Context of Aging, Pt. IV, Ch. 23 and 24

A22- April 2: The Quest For Gerontopia: Culture and Health In Late Life

Readings: Timothy B. Fowler, Margaret A. Mcnamara, “Aging trends: Morocco” Journal of

Cross-Cultural Gerontology, April 1993, Volume 8, Issue 2, pp 161-168 [E].
Sokolovsky, Cultural Context of Aging, Pt. V, Ch. 28, 31

A 23- April 4: Eldercare plans and policies in the post Industrial societies
Readings: Sokolovsky, Cultural Context of Aging, Pt. VI, Ch. 40, 41, 43, 44.

Casablanca: April 6-10

Study Day: April 11

A24- A Day Finals, April 12

April 16: Disembarkation Day

FIELD WORK

Experiential course work on Semester at Sea is comprised of the required field lab led by your instructor and additional field assignments that span multiple ports.

FIELD LAB (At least 20 percent of the contact hours for each course, to be led by the instructor.)

Field lab attendance is mandatory for all students enrolled in this course. Do not book individual travel plans or a Semester at Sea sponsored trip on the day of your field lab.

The field lab for this course takes place in Shanghai on: Date TBA

Field lab attendance is mandatory for all students enrolled in this course. Do not book individual travel plans or a Semester at Sea sponsored trip on the day of your field lab.

Field Lab: The changing life experiences of elderly in China, Japan and Asia in the process of Globalization, Neo liberal economy and state development programs

This lab will include material on aging programs and policies in China, Japan and greater Asia, and feature a visit to an elderly home and interactions with the residents and the concerned officials.

Field Lab Paper: Each student is required to participate in and eventually write up the field lab from Shanghai: your paper (5-6 pages) should also include comparisons with what you have learned about aging, and social programs and policies, from your experiences in at least one other country on our voyage.

Your paper should address the following topics:

1. Your own understanding of the aging process as a human experience.
2. A description and analysis of the lives of elders in China based on your ethnographic study, our readings and discussions.

3. A comparison of the situation in China and what you learned about elders' life experience situation in at least one other country during our voyage.
4. Your analysis of the process of globalization, individualistic neo liberal economy affecting the elderly life experiences in the USA vs. a vs. the country of your research focus.

FIELD ASSIGNMENTS

This field lab, other field trips, and independent experiences you have, will be incorporated into a paper, and these will count for 20% of the course grade. In some of the other projects and trips you choose, focus on one or more of the central themes in this course, including family, community and life in a traditional society becoming modern; the daily lives of older people; intergenerational relations; medical care and public health as these affect young and old; social and governmental services for different generations; the role of religion over the life course; and the place of historical memory in the lives of elders.

Beyond the field lab in Shanghai, your other field experiences can include participant-observation and/or service learning at historical sites, senior centers, medical facilities, religious institutions, social agencies, nursing homes, and other organizations that serve elderly people, their families and communities. A family home stay or visit would also be a very suitable project: this would provide a chance to learn directly about inter-generational relations, and about the status and treatment of elders within households.

Some key issues and questions to investigate in your experiences and travels:

1. Make a note of cultural attitudes towards elderly and analyze the differences between the text and the cultural context, and use your comparative lenses from American society.
2. How do the members of different generations interact and in what settings and circumstances do these relationships occur? How does it compare with the American society?
3. Make a note of issues of age related power, segregation and integration.
4. What are the government and non-government elderly facilities provided for elders and their families and under what circumstances? How does it compare with the American society?
5. How do older people feel about their roles and responsibilities in life?
6. How involved are older men and women in religious rituals, practices and institutions?
7. How are death and dying practiced in these cultures compared to the Western world you are part of?
8. What major events in the countries we are visiting contribute to the historical memory of older people?

METHODS OF EVALUATION / GRADING RUBRIC

Class attendance and participation - 10%

Field Journals - 20%

Field Lab/Reports - 30%
Midterm Exam - 20%
Final Exam - 20%

RESERVE BOOKS AND FILMS FOR THE LIBRARY

The Grandchild Gap

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

Other readings are available on the course [E] reserves folder.

HONOR CODE

Semester at Sea students enroll in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and thus bind themselves to the University's honor code. The code prohibits all acts of lying, cheating, and stealing. Please consult the Voyager's Handbook for further explanation of what constitutes an honor offense.

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by the student as follows: "On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment." The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed "[signed]."