SEMMESTER 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.
TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Depart Ensenada- January 5:


Readings:
J. Sokolovsky, PART I: A GLOBAL VISION OF AGING, CULTURE AND CONTEXT

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

Film "The Grandchild Gap"

A3- January 11: Aging in a comparative perspective
Readings: Holmes & Holmes, Other Cultures, Elder Years. 2nd ed. Chaps.1-4

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

**A5- January 17:**

Study Day: January 19

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

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
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  

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

A9- February 6: Case studies from South East Asia  
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”  
Annapurna Pandey, “Giving New Life to the Widows in Puri: A Temple City in Odisha” [E]  

A13- February 24:  

Cochin: February 26-March 2  

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

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

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].”