

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS
Department of Sociology
SOC 4550: Sociology of Aging
Spring 2025, T/TR 12:30-1:50, GAB, Room 114

Dale E. Yeatts, Ph.D.
Office Hours: T/TR 2:00-3:10
and ideally by appointment

Sycamore Hall, Suite 288J
Phone: 940-565-2238
email: <http://www.yeatts.us>

I. Learning Objectives

- A. to understand how aging has been viewed over time
- B. to gain knowledge of aging and its relationship to politics, family, sexuality
- C. to understand the use and evolution of assisted-living, nursing homes, and health services
- D. to understand social security, Medicare, Medicaid, and health insurance for the Aged
- E. to gain knowledge of government and non-profit services for the elderly

II. Learning Components

- A. Readings: To help meet the objectives, the following book is required reading (available on Amazon.com and at UNT bookstore):

Required:

Hillier, Susan and George Barrow (2015, tenth edition). Aging, the Individual, and Society. Boston, Mass.: Cengage.

- B. Class time: will be focused on the objectives through class lectures, discussions, videos, and when it can be arranged professionals speaking to the class

III. Course Policies

- A. Class Attendance: regular and punctual class attendance is expected. It will be difficult to master all the material if class is missed. While students will not usually be penalized for missing class they will be penalized for coming to class late or leaving class early since these disrupt the class. If you will need to come late or leave early, please let me know. **Students can gain extra credit points by attending and paying attention in class (i.e., not using phone or laptop for other things)**. Students who miss a lot of class (i.e., 75% of classes) will be given NO leeway in grading and may lose points while students who miss no or only a few classes will be given MUCH leeway in grading and may gain points. For example, a recent student missed more than half the classes, had a test grade average of 69, and wanted one point added to their final grade in order to receive a "C". The student got a "D". Another student missed only a few classes had an average grade of 88 and was given two extra points to receive an "A".
- B. Academic integrity: as the student guidebook points out, academic integrity is required. Plagiarism and cheating will result in failure and a report to the Dean.

- C. Acceptable Student Behavior: Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012>
- D. Mental Health and Special Needs: UNT's counseling center provides free career and personal counseling to UNT students (up to 8 sessions per year). Appointments can be made by calling 940-565-2741. For our class, appropriate adjustments and auxiliary aid are available. See me and/or call 817-565-2456 (TDD access 1-800-735-2989).
- E. Cell Phones and texting: you should know that many professors and instructors find it insulting when a student is constantly texting or otherwise using their phones during class. Consequently, if the time comes that the student could use some "leeway" in her/his grade, and the student has constantly used his/her phone during class, no leeway will be given and points could be removed.
- F. Laptops: if you use a laptop in class, please refrain from using it for anything other than our class.
- G. Office Hours: I enjoy meeting with students. I learn a lot and I hope they do as well. Please email me (yeatts@unt.edu) so we can find a day/time that works for both of us. I will be happy to discuss the course material, your progress in the class, your plans for the future, personal issues, need for a letter of recommendation, or anything else of interest/importance to you. Some students will meet with me just to introduce themselves and share a bit about their activities and progress at UNT and I enjoy these meetings as well. I will try to be available during my office hours but emailing me so we can set a meeting time that works for both of us is best.
- H. **PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT**: If unexpected problems develop for you during the semester (e.g., health, emotional issues, breakups, family disruptions, death or illness in family), please contact me as soon as these become apparent. I can then work with you to develop a plan that will assist you. Students, who approach their instructors/professors when problems develop, are much more likely to receive help and consideration. Don't wait until the end of the semester to inform the professor of problems because it will be too late to find a solution. This is a good rule-of-thumb for any class you take.
- I. Grading: final grades will be based on the following:
1. Four (4) tests will be given worth 25% each—your four test grades will be averaged together to obtain your final grade. The fourth test will be given on the UNT assigned exam day but it will not be cumulative. The format is expected to include essay questions. Grades will be posted on Dr. Yeatts' web page under the code

number you provide on the student information sheet that you turn in the first day of class. (to get to our class webpage, go to: www.yeatts.us, click on 4550, then click on Grades).

You are responsible for using the restroom prior to the beginning of a test so do not ask to use the restroom in the middle of a test (unfortunately a few of us would use this as an opportunity to review our notes in the middle of taking the test).

2. Test Schedule:

February 11 (Tuesday)	Test 1	25%
March 6 (Thursday)	Test 2	25%
April 8 (Tuesday)	Test 3	25%
UNT assigned exam day/time	Test 4	25%

3. Make-up Tests: may be allowed within one week from the original exam day. The test score will be reduced by one letter grade unless there is documentation or other means of verifying an illness, personal issue, or other serious situation. On the other hand, if you have **not missed any or very few classes** and you oversleep and miss the test (or some other less serious situation), this may be excused or very few points deducted.
4. Class Participation: Those who contribute meaningful, thoughtful, and knowledgeable comments/ideas will receive extra points added to their final grade if their final grade is close to the next higher grade and they **have not missed a lot** of classes. For example, an 88 could be raised to a 90. Similarly, those who attend and pay attention in all (or almost all) classes will receive extra points.
5. Extra Credit Opportunities: Please see the “**Opportunity for Extra Credit**” below for details.

IV. Schedule of Class Topics and Reading Assignments

Week 1 (January 14 and 16):

- A. Overview of class
- B. Introduction to Sociology of Aging
- C. youtube: experience of being old

Week 2 (January 21 and 23):

- A. Introduction to Sociology of Aging
- B. Chapter 4: Physical Health and Well-Being

Week 3 (January 28 and 30):

- A. Chapter 4: Physical Health and Well-Being
- B. Chapter 5 Mental Health (functional and organic mental disorders)

Week 4 (February 4 and 6)

A. Chapter 5: Mental Health (functional and organic mental disorders)

Test 1, February 11, Tuesday, on Introduction (PowerPoint slides), Chapters 4 and 5 and the PowerPoint slides for these chapters (all PowerPoint slides shown in class will be provided before the test on Dr. Yeatts' webpage; films listed in the syllabus may or may not be shown depending on time available)

Week 5 (February 13 and 18):

A. Chapter 6: Friends, Family, and Community

Week 6 (February 20 and 25):

A. Chapter 7: Intimacy and Sexuality

Week 7 (February 27 and March 4):

A. Chapter 8: Work and Leisure

Test 2 Chapters 6, 7, 8 and PowerPoints (Thursday, March 6)

Week 8: Spring Break, March 10 – 14

Week 9 (March 18 and 20)

A. Chapter 9: Finances and Lifestyles

Week 10 (March 25 and 27)

A. Chapter 9: Finances and Lifestyles

B. Chapter 10: Living Environments

Week 11 (April 1 and April 3)

A. Chapter 10: Living environments

Test 3 on Chapters 9 and 10 (Tuesday, April 8)

Week 12 (April 10 and April 15)

A. Chapter 14: Death and Dying

Week 13 (April 17 and April 22)

A. Chapter 15: Politics, Policies, and Programs

Week 14 (April 24 and April 29)

A. Chapter 15: Politics, Policies, and Programs

B. Chapter 12: Special Problems

Week 15 (May 1 and May 6)

A. Chapter 12: Special Problems

Test 4 on Chapters 14, 15 and 12 and PowerPoint slides will be taken during exam week on the day/time UNT assigns our class. (The exam day/time for our class is determined by UNT and UNT has not yet set the exam day/time for our class. They typically put the exam schedule up for all classes on the UNT webpage around the middle of the semester (as of January 3, UNT had not posted exam schedule))

Opportunity for Extra Credit Points

Students will obtain one extra credit point for each class period that they attend and participate in class (**assuming they do not come to class late or leave early**). Participation might include watching a film in class, a small group activity, or contributing to the class discussion. The extra points accumulated from class attendance will be added to the student's next test grade. Students who come to class late will not get an extra point unless they have notified me that they would be late. Similarly, students who leave class early will not be eligible for these extra points unless notifying me prior to class. A student who does not miss class will typically accumulate 6 points to be added to their next test grade. So, if you get an 85 on the test but have six points accumulated, you would receive a 91 for that test.

*****If our class is moved on line (as what happened at the beginning of the pandemic), we will keep everything as it is currently planned but have our classes through zoom during the same days/times. I will email the class with further instructions at that time.**