Sociology of Aging
Possible Test Questions for Test 2:
Unless otherwise notified, 4 of these questions
(or some version of them) will be randomly selected for Test 2

Be sure to link your answers to the text, PowerPoint slides and class discussion. Feel free to use personal experiences or those you know of to provide examples when answering the questions.

UPDATED: February 22, 2025

Chapter 6 (and PowerPoints):

1. (a) What has social research found with regard to sibling relationships among older persons? (b) How are blue-collar families different from white collar and (c) rural families different from urban?

2. (a) Describe five relationship types between grandparents and grandchildren. (b) Describe the experiences of the grandparent who is raising her/his grandchildren. (c) Is there a difference between older men and women with regard to caring for grandchildren? Explain.

3. (a) What is equity theory? (b) What has research shown with regard to it? (c) How does it compare to your own experience with older people? (d) How is a confidant different from a companion? (e) Explain how personal changes that occur as one ages affects an older person's social relationships.

4. (a) What is the most common social organization older persons participate in? (b) Second most? (c) Describe several other organizations that older person's participate in. (d) How are social networks different from social supports?

5. (a) How is religion different from spirituality? (b) How is extrinsic religiousness different from intrinsic religiousness? (c) Does religiosity increase with age? Describe some of the possible explanations/models for explaining how age is related to religion.

6. (a) Provide three American values and explain how each affects an older person's self-image. (b) Explain how personal changes that occur as one ages affect an older person's social relationships. (c). How is widowhood different between older men and women? How is it similar?

Chapter 7 (and PowerPoints):

7. (a) Describe at least three factors that can reduce an older person's number of friendships and perhaps opportunities for friendships. (b) Describe ways in which older persons compensate. (c) Describe at least three factors or conditions that can assist older persons in the development of friendships?

8. (a) Define (not list) five marital categories for older persons? (b) How do older men and women differ with regard to issues surrounding marriage? (c) How does marriage affect an older person's health? (d) Do older men and women differ in this regard? (e) Does marital satisfaction tend to increase, decrease or stay the same over time? Explain.

9. (a) Under what conditions and circumstances do older people have more problems adjusting to retirement? (b) How does retirement affect the older person's marriage? (c) What factors contribute to life satisfaction after retirement? (d) Over the course of a marriage, does marital satisfaction tend to increase, decrease or stay the same over time? Explain.

10. Dr. Natasha Josefowitz has identified 7 stages that older people experience when they become widowed (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VIxYj8FEZ34). (a) Describe at least 5 of these. (b) What has research found with regard to the relationship between family and a widow's level of depression?

11. (a) Describe at least four factors that help widows cope with widowhood? (b) In a traditional marriage, how is adjustment different for a widow than a widower? (c) What differences have been found between the widow's feelings/experiences and those of a divorcee? (d) How does society treat widowed and divorced older people differently? (e) What are the children's responses if their widowed parent remarries?

12. (a) How is sexual activity positive for older persons? (b) In what way(s) is it negative? (c) Describe at least three myths related to woman and sexual matters? (d) How do sexual patterns and attitudes change with age, if at all? (e) In same sex relationships, how are older widows/widowers treated differently than those in heterosexual relationships?

Chapter 8 (and Power Points)

13. (a.) How has the age of retirement changed over time? (b) Is there a trend toward later retirement or earlier retirement (or both)? Explain why. (c.) How is Social Security related to trends in retirement?

14. (a) Provide several reasons why a company would discriminate against an older worker? (b) In what ways are older workers discriminated against? (c) What does the Age Discrimination in Employment Act have to do with retirement, describe several effects? (d) Regarding retirement, provide an example where a business could be successfully sued for intentionally firing older workers. (e) What are contingent workers and how are they related to older workers?

15. (a) According to Hillier and Barrow, which older workers are most likely to lose their jobs. (b) provide at least three strategies companies use to release/let go of older workers without getting accused of age discrimination? Explain.

16. (a) Describe at least four myths that Hillier and Barrow point out about older workers. (b) What are some reasons for these myths? (c) Provide at least three reasons noted by Hillier and Barrow for why a company would want to maintain its older workers.

17. (a) How difficult is an older person's adjustment to retirement according to Hillier and Barrow? (b) What factors affect successful adjustment (describe at least three)? (c) Why do some want to retire while others do not? Provide at least four reasons. (d) Describe the work ethic as noted in class. (e) Describe at least three attitudes toward leisure and the elderly as described by Hillier and Barrow.

18. (a) What can older persons do to prepare for retirement as noted by Hillier and Barrow (provide at least three)? (b) Describe several reasons why an older person would want to work part-time? (c) What programs are available to assist older people in finding part-time work? (d) What is the advantage of job-sharing beyond not having to work full-time and getting paid? (e) Describe the Job Training Partnership Act.