

The University of Georgia

Sociology 4660

Sociology of the Life Course

Tu/Th 3:30-4:45, Baldwin 311

Instructor:	Dr. Joseph C. Hermanowicz	Term:	Fall, 2005
Telephone:	542-3129	Office:	Baldwin 324A
E-mail:	jch1@uga.edu	Office Hours:	By Appointment

Purpose:

This course provides an overview of work that defines the sociological study of lives, which is broadly concerned with the paths and turning points that socially situate individual lives. We will focus on a number of topics that ground life course analysis as a specialized area of inquiry within the larger sociological discipline, including: socialization over the life course; methods for the sociological study of lives; the cultural construction of the life course; age norms; the stratification of lives; education, work and the life course; deviance and the life course; health and the life course.

Format:

The format of the course will be combination lecture and discussion. There will also be films and a semester-long independent research project in which each student will conduct a comparative study of two people's accounts of their life story.

Readings:

The required readings for the course are listed on the course schedule. They are available by two means:

- 1) UGA electronic course reserves: <http://gil.uga.edu/> The password is: _____.
- 2) Course packet available for purchase at Bel-Jean.

WebCT Page:

This course has a WebCT page containing copies of important course materials. If you do not already have a "MyID" account, establish one for access to the course page.

Requirements:

There are four requirements for this course:

1. Preparation and participation in class discussion of the required reading, which includes (but is not confined to) questions for discussion that are distributed to the class. You are responsible for preparing complete responses/answers to these questions in advance of the class meeting for which they are assigned. You should bring to class the reading assigned for that day's class along with your completed discussion questions.
2. Term Research Project, which will involve conducting two life story interviews with respondents of your choice; participating in discussions over the course of the term about your research-in-progress and reporting your progress to the class; an 8-10 pp. research paper presenting, analyzing, and interpreting your results. (See special handout).

The Research Project includes the mid-semester submission of an interview protocol and interview tapes—due dates listed on the course schedule. Credit for the interview protocol and tapes will be given only if they are submitted in hard copy on or before the listed due dates.

Policy on late papers: The due date, time, and place for paper submission is listed on the syllabus. Late papers will not be accepted.

3. Four in-class exams. The exams will cover all of the reading assignments; the lectures; class discussions; and films up to the date of the exam. Exam format is true/false and multiple choice. All of the exams are non-cumulative.

Make-Up Exam Policy: If you miss an exam, you are required to take a make-up exam. All make-up exams are given at one universal time: any and all make-up exams will immediately follow Exam IV, the date for which is listed on the syllabus.

4. Five quizzes. There will be five quizzes at random points throughout the semester. The quizzes will be short (normally a few questions) and will be based strictly on the assigned questions for that day. The quizzes will consist of questions found word-for-word on the reading/film questions.

Quiz Policy: Quizzes will usually be given during the first 10 minutes of class. Because they are random, there are no make-ups. The lowest quiz score will be dropped, resulting in the four top quizzes counted toward the final grade.

Grades:

Each of the above requirements will count as follows toward the final course grade:

Term Research Project:	100 pts.
Mid-Semester Interview Protocol:	5 pts.
Mid-Semester Interview Tapes:	5 pts.
Quizzes (best 4 out of 5):	10 pts. X 4 = 40 pts.
<u>Exams:</u>	<u>50 pts. X 4 = 200 pts.</u>
Total:	350 pts.

Your final grade is based on the point totals below. There is no rounding.

A = 315-350 pts.
B = 280-314 pts.
C = 245-279 pts.
D = 210-244 pts.
F = 0-209 pts.

Attendance Policy:

- Attendance is taken everyday by signing your name on the class roster.
- It is each student's responsibility to sign their names on the list each day.
- Students who miss more than four classes will be administratively withdrawn.
- No distinction between “excused” and “unexcused” absences.
- If you leave before the end of a class, you forfeit attendance and any quiz that day.
- This policy applies to all students.

Withdrawals:

Withdrawals that occur before the midpoint of the semester—including administrative withdrawals for non-attendance—will receive the grade of W. In accordance with University policy, withdrawals that occur after the midpoint of the semester—including administrative withdrawals for non-attendance—will receive the grade of WF.

General Classroom Etiquette:

- The functioning of a class depends upon everyone's cooperation and courtesy.
- Take care of all necessary business before coming to the classroom. Unless it is an emergency, refrain from exiting and entering the room once class has begun—this is distracting to other students and the instructor.
 - Avoid private conversations during lecture—this is disruptive to others taking notes.
 - Be certain to turn off cell phones and watches that are distracting to others.
 - Overall, treat other students in the class and the instructor in ways you would like to be treated by them.

Course Schedule

Aug. 18: Introduction

Aug. 23: Film: Seasons of Life—Early Adulthood: 20-40.

Aug. 25: Development of the Life Course as Field of Sociological Inquiry

O’Rand, Angela M. and Margaret L. Krecker. 1990. “Concepts of the Life Cycle: Their History, Meanings, and Uses in the Social Sciences.” Annual Review of Sociology 16:241-262.

**Term Projects: Overview & Discussion

Aug. 30: Life Phases—I

Erikson, Erik H. 1982. “Major Stages in Psychosocial Development.” In The Life Cycle Completed: A Review, 55-82. New York: W.W. Norton.

Sept. 1: Life Phases—II

Levinson, Daniel J. 1978. “The Novice Phase: The Early Adult Transition, Entering the Adult World and the Age Thirty Transition” and “The Life of James Tracy, Executive.” In Seasons of a Man’s Life, 71-89; 112-125. New York: Ballantine.

Sept. 6: Life Phases—III

Levinson, Daniel. 1996. “Age 30 Transition: Homemakers,” “Age 30 Transition: Career Women.” In Seasons of a Woman’s Life, 117-141; 296-333. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Sept. 8: Age Norms

Roth, Julius. 1963. “Some Other Career Timetables.” In Timetables, 63-92. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.

Sept. 13: Exam I

Sept. 15: Ceremonial Designations of the Life Span: Death

Nuland, Sherwin B. 1994. "Alzheimer's Disease." In How We Die: Reflections on Life's Final Chapter, 89-117. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Sept. 20: Film: Pop

Sept. 22: Methods of Life Course Research

Hermanowicz, Joseph C. 2002. "The Great Interview: 25 Strategies for Studying People in Bed." Qualitative Sociology 25: 479-499.

Sept. 27: Methodological Considerations in Life Course Research

Clausen, John A. 1998. "Life Reviews and Life Stories." In Janet Z. Giele and Glen H. Elder, Jr. (eds.), Methods of Life Course Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches, 189-212. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sept. 29: **Interview Protocol Due**

Your Interview Questions: Today's class is devoted to discussing the set of interview questions you have developed for your term research project.

- Construct your own, complete list of organized interview questions.
- Identify your three most important questions, why they are important, and what you might expect to find in asking them.
- Remember on your protocol to include the following, as covered in the last reading and the last lecture:
 - 20-30 main questions
 - Topical Headings
 - Probe Questions
 - Written Introduction for Interviewees (3 ingredients)
- Turn in a type-written copy of your interview protocol at the end of class.
- Submit your protocol in hard copy only—no e-mail submissions.

Oct. 4: **Exam II**

Oct. 6: Age and Social Stratification

Modell, John. 1989. "The Changing Life Course of America's Youth." In Into One's Own: From Youth to Adulthood in the United States, 1920-1975, 35-66. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Oct. 11: Film: 28 Up, Part I

Oct. 13: Film: 28 Up, Part II

Oct. 18: Lives Through the Years: Studying 28 Up as Life Course Sociology

Oct. 20 & 25: Term Projects: Fieldwork Interviewing/No Class

Oct. 27: Fall Break/No Class Meeting

Nov. 1: Term Projects: What makes a great paper?

Interview Tapes Due:

Turn-in your interview tapes, labeled with your name on them.

Nov. 3: Film: 42 Up, Part I

Nov. 8: Film: 42 Up, Part II

Nov. 10: Exam III

Nov. 15: Health and the Life Course

George, Linda K., David B. Larson, Harold G. Koenig, and Michael E. McCullough. 2000. "Spirituality and Health: What We Know, What We Need to Know." Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology 19: 102-116.

Nov. 17: Crime and the Life Course

Laub, John H. and Robert J. Sampson. 2003. "Why Some Offenders Persist." Shared Beginnings, Divergent Lives: Delinquent Boys to Age 70, 150-195. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Nov. 22 & 24: Thanksgiving Holiday/No Class Meeting

Nov. 29: Education, Work and the Life Course

Harrington, Charles C. and Susan K. Boardman. 1997. "Work and Careers." In Paths to Success: Beating the Odds in American Society, 96-123. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Dec. 1: Exam IV

**Dec. 6: Term Research Papers Due—Follow Checklist on Handout
No Class Meeting
Deliver Project Materials in Hard Copy To:
Baldwin Hall 324A (Instructor's Office)
No later than 5 p.m.**

Dec. 19: All scores posted on WebCT by this date.
Papers may be picked-up now or next semester.

The Department of Sociology has a Human Rights Committee for the resolution of student grievances. Any student registered for a sociology course at the University who feels that he or she has not been treated in a fair or professional manner by an instructor is advised to follow these procedures:

- 1) The student should discuss his or her problems with the instructor of the course, unless extenuating circumstances prohibit such discussion.
- 2) If that discussion does not resolve the grievance, the student should then discuss the problem with the Head of the Sociology Department.
- 3) If that discussion does not resolve the grievance to the student's satisfaction, the student may request the activation of the Human Rights Committee by submitting a letter to the Chair of the Committee.

The Human Rights Committee will have the responsibility of investigating all charges in accordance with procedures on file in the Sociology Department, copies of which are available to students. The Committee will also have the responsibility of making recommendations in writing to the Head, copies of which will be made available to the student and instructor. The Department Head will review the recommendations, and make a decision, in writing, with copies to the student and instructor. Any appeal of that decision must be made to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.