HS 3702B – The Aging Mind

Winter 2025

**Instructor:** Dr. Dominic A. Alaazi

**Office:**

**Email:** dalaazi@uwo.ca

**Phone:**

**Office Hrs:** By appointment

**TAs:** TBA

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**Lectures:**

**Venue:**

**Time:**

**Instruction Mode:** In-person

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**NOTE:** All course information including grades, assignment outlines, deadlines, etc. are available via OWL. Check the website regularly for course announcements.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PREREQUISITES/ANTI-REQUISITES:**

This course examines the complexities of aging from a psychological perspective and provides students with learning opportunities to examine psychological theories of aging, the mind-body connection, common conditions associated with aging (e.g., Alzheimer’s Disease and other related dementias), and strategies to optimize cognitive vitality with advancing age.

*Pre-requisite:* HS 2700A/B and HS 2711A/B.

*Anti-requisite(s):* The former HS 4702A/B.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

*You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course pre-requisites, and that you have not taken an anti-requisite course.*

**NOTE:** If you wish to enroll in this course without the stated pre-requisite(s), you must obtain written approval from the course instructor. The approval should then be forwarded to your academic counsellor.

**COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

Students are expected to attend in-person classes, listen to lectures given by the instructor, and participate in class discussions. The purpose of the class lectures is to introduce the topics and
the required readings, and students are expected to complete all the required readings and come to class well-prepared to contribute to class discussions and debates. Students are encouraged to write their own notes based on the lectures given by the course instructor. Students who miss classes are responsible for obtaining the relevant notes from colleagues in the class. Students are expected to complete and submit all course assignments to the instructor by the stipulated dates. Students with medical conditions affecting their class participation can reach out to the instructor in advance for assistance.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- explain key psychological theories of the aging mind;
- describe key psychological changes in the aging process;
- explain how the aging mind impacts emotions, memory, and intellectual functioning;
- Compare and contrast normal and abnormal aging minds;

COURSE EVALUATION:

Class participation – 10%
Class participation will be based on class/tutorial attendance, engagement with the course instructor/teaching assistants, and contribution to team assignments, including team presentations. Students who attend classes regularly, demonstrate knowledge of the course material, and contribute meaningfully to class discussions and group work will receive higher participation grades.

Mid-term examination – 25%
This closed-book exam will take place during class time on February 25, 2025. This exam is designed to test students’ grasp of the material covered in lectures up to the week prior to the exam. This means that students will be expected to have read all the required course readings up to the week prior to the exam. The mid-term exam will consist of one essay question (worth 10%) and three short answer questions (worth 5% each). All exams will be assessed partly on organization of ideas and general clarity. Electronic devices (e.g., smart phones, smart watches, video cameras, smart glasses, recorders audio players, or of any sort, video games, DVD players, laptops, etc.) cannot be used during the mid-term exam, unless a student has a medical condition that requires accommodation or has explicit permission from the instructor to do so.

Group assignment – 25%
The purpose of the group assignment, due April 01, 2025 in class, is to offer students the opportunity to learn from each other in a team setting. Students will randomly be assigned to groups of 5-6 students. The task of each group is to identify, discuss, and critique three interventions for improving cognitive vitality among older adults experiencing mild cognitive impairment. Completion of this assignment shall consist of:

1) a formal report of the group’s findings; and
2) power-point presentation of the group’s findings in class.
Final Examination – 40%
The final exam (3hr) will be written in person on Western University campus (Student ID required). The test-able subject matter is cumulative for the course. The exam will consist of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions. We will practise how to appropriately respond to short-answer questions throughout the term. Date TBD by registrar. Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

CLASS SCHEDULE
This schedule is subject to change. Students should refer to OWL for the most up-to-date information on course content and readings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assigned readings</th>
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| Jan 07 & 09, 2025  | Theory and methods in aging studies I          | * Psychological theories of aging  
| Jan 14 & 16, 2025  | Theory and methods in aging studies II          | * Methods of assessment  
  - Chapter 9 (p. 163)  
  - Chapter 10 (p.184)  
  - Chapter 11 (p. 223)  
  - Chapter 14 (p. 285)                                                                                     |
| Jan 21 & 23, 2025  | Psychological distress in old age I:          | * Loneliness and health in later life  
  * Physical comorbidity  
  - Chapter 18 (p. 381)  
  - Chapter 21 (p. 436)                                                                                     |
| Jan 28 & 30, 2025  | Psychological distress in old age II:          | * Late-life depression  
  * Late-life anxiety  
  * Psychosis in older adults  
  - Chapter 20 (p. 412)  
  - Chapter 22 (p. 470)  
  - Chapter 23(p. 490)                                                                                     |
| Feb 04 & 06, 2025  | Cognitive issues in aging I:                   | * Memory  
  * Intellectual functioning  
  - Chapter 5 (p. 132)  
  - Chapter 6 (165)  
| Feb 11 & 13, 2025  | Cognitive issues in aging II:                  | * Dementia  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 18 &amp; 20, 2025</td>
<td>Reading week; no classes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 25</td>
<td>Mid-Term Exam; Venue: FNB-1250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Social engagement</td>
<td>Chey, J. (Ed.). (2023). Society within the Brain: How Social Networks Interact with Our Brain,</td>
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COURSE/UNIVERSITY POLICIES

1. The website for Registrar Services is http://www.registrar.uwo.ca.

In accordance with policy, the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual’s official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at his/her official university address is attended to in a timely manner.

2. Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, in the Academic Calendar (westerncalendar.uwo.ca).

Plagiarism

Student work is expected to be original. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and could lead to a zero on the assignment in question, a zero in this course, or your expulsion from the university. You are plagiarizing if you insert a phrase, sentence or paragraph taken directly from another author without acknowledging that the work belongs to him/her. Similarly, you are plagiarizing if you paraphrase or summarize another author’s ideas without acknowledging that the ideas belong to someone else. All papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western University and Turnitin.com (www.turnitin.com).

Re-submission of Previously Graded Material

Without the explicit written permission of the instructor, you may not submit any academic work for which credit has been obtained previously, or for which credit is being sought, in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere.

Use of Statistical Pattern Recognition on Multiple Choice Exams

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

3. Use of Electronic Devices

During Exams: Unless you have medical accommodations that require you to do so, or explicit
permission from the instructor of the course, you may not use any electronic devices during ANY tests, quizzes, midterms, examinations, or other in-class evaluations.

During Lectures and Tutorials: Although you are welcome to use a computer during lecture and tutorial periods, you are expected to use the computer for scholastic purposes only, and refrain from engaging in any activities that may distract other students from learning. From time to time, your professor may ask the class to turn off all computers, to facilitate learning or discussion of the material presented in a particular class. Unless explicitly noted otherwise, you may not make audio or video recordings of lectures – nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.

Personal Response Systems (“clickers”) may be used in some classes. For those classes in which we use this technology, it is your responsibility to ensure that the device is activated and functional. You must speak with the course instructor immediately, if you have any concerns about whether or not your clicker is malfunctioning. You must use only your own clicker. For all components of this course in which clicker records are used to compute a portion of the grade:

- The use of somebody else’s clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence;
- The possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offense

4. Academic Considerations and Absences from Lectures and Assessments

Religious Accommodation
When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request (in writing) any necessary academic considerations at least two weeks prior to the holiday to the academic counsellors in their Home Department. Additional information is provided in the Western Multicultural Calendar.

Academic Accommodation
Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. Students with ongoing accommodation needs within this course are also encouraged to contact Accessible Education, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found here.

Academic Consideration
The University recognizes that a student’s ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by extenuating circumstances that are medical or compassionate in nature. These extenuating circumstances may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. In all cases, students are advised to consult with the academic counsellors in their home units, at their earliest opportunity. Academic counsellors may refer students to Accessible Education for ongoing academic accommodations.
Most forms of academic consideration require documentation, and this documentation is to be submitted to academic counsellors within five (5) business days of their return to academic responsibilities. Any such documents will be retained in the student’s file, and will be held in confidence in accordance with the University’s Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy. Once the petition and supporting documents have been received and assessed, appropriate academic considerations shall be determined by academic counseling, in consultation with the student’s instructor(s). Academic considerations may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements for classes/labs/tutorials, arranging Special Exams or Incompletes, re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawals without academic penalty. Academic considerations shall be granted only where the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete their academic responsibilities. (Note – it will not be sufficient to provide documentation indicating simply that the student “was seen for a medical reason” or “was ill.”).

Whenever possible, students who require academic considerations should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Under no circumstances are students expected to submit rationales for (or documentation of) any absences, to course instructors. Students are, however, required to follow-up with course instructors, in a timely fashion, to identify the ways in which the academic consideration will be implemented.

**Examination Conflicts**
A student completing tests or examinations with flexible submission times (e.g., where one or more evaluation is a take-home assessment) cannot request alternative arrangements unless a conflict cannot be avoided by rescheduling writing the exam to a different time within the window specified by the instructor. This applies to direct conflicts as well as “heavy load” conflicts (e.g., three exams within a 23-hour period). The student should discuss any concerns about a potential conflict and/or request academic considerations with their academic counselling unit prior to the deadline to drop a course without academic penalty.

In the case of online tests and examinations, use of a “Conflict Room,” wherein student can write two proctored exams concurrently, will be interpreted as arrangements for continuous proctoring.

5. **Contingency Plan for an In-Person Class Pivoting to 100% Online Learning**
In the event of a situation that requires this course to pivot to online content delivery, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Note that disruptive behaviour of any type during online classes, including inappropriate use of the chat function, is unacceptable. Students found guilty of Zoom-bombing a class or of other serious online offenses may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.

6. **Online Proctoring**
Tests and examinations in this course may be conducted using a remote proctoring service. By taking this course, you are consenting to the use of this software and acknowledge that you will be required to provide **personal information** (including some biometric data) and the session will be **recorded**. Completion of this course will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that meets the technical requirements for this service. More information about this remote proctoring service, including technical requirements, is available on Western’s Remote Proctoring website at: https://remoteproctoring.uwo.ca.

7. **Grades**

Where possible assignment objectives and rubrics will be posted on OWL. Generally, students can expect some form of feedback on their performance in a course before the drop date.

- **December 2, 2024** (for first term half-courses)
- **December 2, 2024** (for full-year courses)
- **March 31, 2025** (for second term half-or full year courses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>One could scarcely expect better from a student at this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>Superior work that is clearly above average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>Good work, meeting all requirements and eminently satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>Competent work, meeting requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>Fair work, minimally acceptable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 50</td>
<td>Fail</td>
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</tbody>
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**Rounding of Grades** (for example, bumping a 79 to 80%): This is a practice some students request. The final grade documented is the grade that you have achieved. There is no rounding to the next grade level, or ‘giving away’ of marks. Please don’t ask me to do this for you; the response will be “please review the course outline where this is presented”.

**Appealing a Grade Within this Course**

You have the right to appeal any grade within this course. The grounds for a grade appeal may be one or more of: medical or compassionate circumstances, extenuating circumstances beyond the student’s control, bias, inaccuracy, or unfairness. All grounds advanced in a request for relief must be supported by a clear and detailed explanation of the reasons for the request together with all supporting documentation.

Appeals generally proceed in this order:

1. Course instructor (informal consultation)
2. Department Chair (submission of written request)
3. The Dean of the Faculty (submission of written request)

In the case of perceived procedural unfairness, steps 2 and 3 are carried out within the Department and Faculty offering the course. In the case of extenuating medical or compassionate circumstances that impact on a grade, steps 2 and 3 are carried out within a student’s Home Department and Faculty.
A request for relief against a mark or grade must be initiated with the instructor as soon as possible after the mark is issued. In the event that the instructor is not available to the student, or fails to act, or if the matter is not resolved satisfactorily with the instructor, a written request for relief must be submitted to the Chair of the Department within three weeks of the date that the mark was issued. In the case of a final grade in a course, the written request for relief must be submitted to the Chair of the department by January 31\textsuperscript{st} (for first-term half courses) or June 30\textsuperscript{th} (for second-term half courses or full-year courses).

8. **Support Services**

**Health and Wellness:**
Information regarding health and wellness-related services available to students may be found at [http://www.health.uwo.ca/](http://www.health.uwo.ca/).

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western ([http://www.health.uwo.ca/](http://www.health.uwo.ca/)) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

There are various support services around campus and these include, but are not limited to:
- *Student Development Centre* -- [http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/)
- *Ombudsperson Office* -- [http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/](http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/)

9. **Student Code of Conduct**
The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct is to define the general standard of conduct expected of students registered at Western University, provide examples of behaviour that constitutes a breach of this standard of conduct, provide examples of sanctions that may be imposed and set out the disciplinary procedures that the University will follow. For more information, visit [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/board/code.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/board/code.pdf)