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# CD 650 Aspects of Aging: Developmental, Cultural, Religious”

Harold W. Burgess

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**“ASPECTS OF AGING: Developmental, Cultural, Religious”  
CD/PC 650X**

**Fall 2003**

Harold W. Burgess, Ph.D.

Office: 859-858 (????)

Online hours: Tuesdays 3:00–4:30 pm; Thursdays 7:00-8:30 pm.

**Note:**

This syllabus is for students taking CD/PC 650X, **a course appropriate for students interested in counseling, education, and pastoral care with older adults**. The syllabus will be amended during training for EXL teaching and in my final preparations. However, the scope and range of the basic requirements will be as indicated here for fall 2003.

**Welcome and Personal Introduction:**

I am personally gratified by the opportunity to teach this course. It will be my first course using distance-learning technology. It is also my first full course on issues related to aging. However, I have had some experience and training in the subject area: I am getting older myself, even now I am dealing with many of the aging issues associated with retirement. (2) For more than ten years I was the primary caregiver as my mother and father lived through the typical stages of decline, illness and death. (3) Along the way I realized that I would have been a better pastor and counselor had I had training in being with people as they lived through “The Gray Zone.” My sensed needs moved me to enroll in a university course in gerontology. By applying material from the course I became a more effective caregiver for my parents. Then, too, I found myself wishing that I had been presented with this basic information in my seminary and university education. It would have enabled me to be a better counselor, teacher and pastor.

As a teacher, expect me to function as a “fellow learner.” I will share some things that I have written and am writing. But my gift as a teacher has always been as something of an organizer of, and cheerleader in, the learning process. One of the personality inventories that I took a number of years ago identified me as the kind of person who likes to “give books to others for them to read.” Expect me to be consistent. In its early stages, you may be tempted to think of this as purely a “reading course.” However, along the way I’ll also ask you to experience something of what you will read--by interacting with older persons. Then, of course, I’ll ask you to write. Your writing will be directed to other members of the class as well as to me. I will expect a reasonable amount of interaction among members of the class. Such interaction should display a both critique and affirmation.

I am a bit threatened by my own technophobia, but I intend to tackle it head on. Solving this problem is one way for me to stay young and stave off the entropy that threatens all who grow old.

## KEY TERMS, CONCEPTS, and CONTACTS

### ExL Support Team:

For technical support contact:

[ExL\\_Support@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:ExL_Support@asburyseminary.edu)

For questions related to the ExL Program contact Kevin Osborn:

[ExL\\_Director@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:ExL_Director@asburyseminary.edu)

For library reference support contact Hannah Kirsch:

[Hannah\\_Kirsh@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:Hannah_Kirsh@asburyseminary.edu)

### Windows, icons, and necessary stuff:

The *Course Center* contains a copy of the syllabus and all class modules. This is where the professor posts course materials. No discussion takes place here.

The *Discussion Center* will be used for all public, class communication. Anytime you have a question or comment about the course (modules, assignments, or anything of interest to classmates or professor), post it here.

The *CD/PC 650X Office* is for private correspondence between you and the professor. The *Office* will be used for items that you do not want to appear publicly before all of your classmates. These items include (1) assignments, (2) papers, (3) projects, and (4) personal correspondence. The *Office* should not be used to ask general course-related questions.

The *Chat Center* is intended primarily for real-time interaction among students. Here you will get together to study, ask questions, or explore topics. *Chat Center conversations are never saved.*

The *Resource Center* provides access to a number of necessary tools for ExL students. These include access to the B.L. Fisher Library, chapel services in Estes Chapel, ExL Updates, Guidelines for Success, Helpful Hints, Interesting Links, a PowerPoint Viewer, and a Real Audio Player.

## THE SYLLABUS

### Course Description:

This course begins with an introduction to gerontology, proceeds to a consideration of the role of older persons in the church as well as in our culture, moves to actual interaction with older persons (70+), and concludes with a research paper exploring a student selected topic. The course provides basic information and relevant experiences for professional needs of counselors, educators, and pastoral caregivers.

### Course Objectives:

Successful students taking CD/PC 650X will be able to:

- (1) Identify and be able to use key terms, concepts and persons identified with the scientific study of aging (gerontology). To be evaluated by one test
- (2) Express informed judgments in writing about how the various needs and potentials of aging persons can be most fruitfully addressed and/or utilized in our twenty-first century culture(s). To be evaluated by assigned papers, unit papers and class discussions.
- (3) Demonstrate the capacity to integrate scientific, cultural and theological perspectives on aging into counseling, educational, and/or pastoral-care practices (as appropriate to the individual student's career goals). To be evaluated by the concluding term paper.
- (4) Show familiarity with a reasonable range of literature on gerontology and career specific needs for work with aging persons. To be evaluated by the reading report{s}.

### Course Requirements:

(See course calendar for due dates and for percentage value of assignments toward the final grade)

1. A full reading of designated texts is required. Submit a brief, annotated reading log as per calendar, together with a one-paragraph evaluation of each of the two texts (Cavanaugh and Oakes). **This requirement is not graded, but completion is necessary to pass the course.**
2. Annotated log of self selected books, articles, internet pieces, and shared stuff from classmates. This log will naturally include items read in preparation for reports and research paper. Texts do not count in this log that will be

submitted with the final paper. The self-selected reading log must show at least 1,000 pages: or, if you prefer to record reading time, 50 hours. **This requirement is not graded, but completion is necessary to pass the course.**

3. One written test covering designated chapters of the Cavanaugh text and some designated material provided by the professor in posted lectures.
4. One four-page paper responding to two self-selected chapters of the Cavanaugh text that are not covered in the test. (Make all papers double space, 12 pt type, 1" margins).
5. One six-page review and response to the Oakes text.
6. One group project pursued in interest groups of three or four. Students with similar majors may wish to form groups (this might be to do a research project, visit and compare senior facilities, review a book, or other project as you choose). Submit an appropriate report agreed upon and completed by the group.
7. Personally spend at least 10 hours with individual seniors (or small group{s}) 70 or older. These may be persons from your community, living in a residence or care center, or persons you meet at sponsored senior recreation facility, or other older persons available to you. Report in a three-page paper posted both to the Discussion Center and to the Office.
8. Submit a fifteen-page research paper following APA or Chicago guidelines no later than 9:00 pm on December 12. Ideally, this research project will include at least 12 reference sources and will follow normal ATS standards. I would hope that this project can be pursued in a manner that follows a personal interest or need, or that it supports your career plans.

## GRADING

Grading will follow the Seminary catalogue description. An "A" grade is given for "exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives." A "B" is given for "good work" indicating "strong, significant achievement of course objectives."

Since grading is necessary part of the academy, I will do my best to be just, fair, and to take students seriously. To do this I will assign points to the several assignments students post to the Office. Total possible points will equal 100. Students receiving 75+ points will not get less than a "C," student receiving 85+ points will not get less than a "B" and students receiving 95+ points will not get less than an "A."

The **CALENDAR** section of the syllabus will designate the point possibilities for each segment of the course. Summary of grade point opportunities

Requirements #1 and #1	not graded, but must be completed to pass course
Requirement # 3	25 pts.
Requirement #4	10 pts.
Requirement #5	15 pts.
Requirement #6	10 pts.
Requirement #7	10 pts.
Requirement #8	30 pts.
Total Points =	100

## EXPECTATIONS

### Of classmembers

As the professor, I expect class members (1) to be punctual in doing the readings, (2) to complete assignments and submit work in a timely fashion, (3) to write creatively, interestingly, and well. I also expect them to address issues related to their own professional development (counselors, educators, pastors for example) – and to do this you well, they may need to be innovative, adventurous, and to exercise appropriate freedom – especially in the last half of the course. I expect class members to have fun – but to cheerfully read stuff that I think interesting, even if they think it boring. Most of all, **I expect you to learn a lot** --- unless you were a gerontology major in college. If you were, I guess we'll just have to work it out.

### Of the professor

#### *Graded Assignments:*

Class members may expect me, as professor, to read graded assignments promptly and to return work with at least some comment and a clear point value within a week.

#### *Dialogue, unit discussion, answers to student queries and the like:*

I'll interact with students at least at the designated times Tuesday and Thursday. I will also enter the discussion at other times as my time permits. Students may call my office number at any time. I will either answer, or return phone calls promptly.

Expect me to work at becoming a good ExL teacher--I'll value your critique. Expect me to have fun, but not at your expense. Expect me to learn at least as much as you do.

## HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR WORK:

Work will be submitted by posting it to the **CD/PC 650X Office** by the deadline stated in the **Course Calendar: It is the last item in this syllabus**. I will ask that you also post some designated assignments to the Discussion Center.

## TEXTBOOKS

1. John C. Cavanaugh and Fredda Blanchard-Fields, *Adult Development and Aging* (2002). This text presents a standard psychological perspective on aging and the scientific study of aging. It is a basic introduction to aspects of aging from a gerontological perspective.
2. Charles G. Oakes, *Working the Gray Zone* (2000). After a long career as a gerontologist, Oakes reflects on the ways in which the church could work more effectively (and Christianly) with older adults.

## SUGGESTED READINGS

Most books on the list below have been placed on my ATS Library reserve shelf. However, they are all books that may be readily available in libraries near you. Books, articles, and duplicated readings will be posted to the Course Center from time to time.

1. Ken Dychtwald and Joe Flower, *Age Wave: How the Most Important Trend of Our Time Will Change Your Future* (1990). A popular and very readable cultural gerontology.
2. Win and Charles Arne, *Catch the Age Wave: A Handbook for Effective Ministry with Senior Adults* (1993). This small, useful book is just what the subtitle suggests.
3. Richard Gentzler and Donald Clingan, *Aging: God's Challenge to Church & Synagogue* (1996). Useful "stuff" and ideas for working with older adults.
4. Brunner and Mazel, *A Heart of Wisdom: Marital Counseling with Older and Elderly Couples* (1990).
5. David O. Moberg, *Aging and Spirituality: Spiritual Dimensions of Aging Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy* (2001). Helpful information on aging useful for counseling and program planning.

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

This random order bibliography will be refined from time to time. Additions and deletions will be posted in the online syllabus. I will seek to maintain this list at about twenty entries.

1. Ann Webber, *Life Later On: Older People in the Church* (1990).
2. Marty Richards, *Caregiving: Church and Family Together* (1999).
3. Gary McIntosh, *Three Generations: Riding the Waves of Change in Your Church* (1995).
4. Joan Roberts, *Caring for those with Alzheimer's: A Pastoral Approach* (1953).
5. Jeffery A. Watson, *Courage to Care: Helping the Aging, Grieving, and Dying* (1992).
6. David B. Oliver, *New Directions in Religion and Aging: A Handbook* (1887).
7. Henry C. Simmons, *Soulful Aging: Ministry Through the Stages of Adulthood* (2001).
8. Joan E. Lukens, *Affirmative Aging: A Creative Approach to Longer Life* (1994).
9. AARP. *The Aging Society: A Challenge to Theological Education* (1986).
10. Melvin Kimble, *Aging, Spirituality, and Religion: A Handbook* (1995).
11. Wilbert N. Warren, *Teaching Christian Adults* (1980).
12. William M. Clements, *Ministry with the Aging: Designs, Challenges Foundations* (1989).
13. Ram Dass, *Still Here: Embracing Aging, Changing, Dying* (2000).
14. Dorothy Miller, *A Song for Grandmother* (1990).
15. Janet L. Ramsey, *Spiritual Resiliency in Older Women* (1999).
16. Dosa Carleson, *Engaging in Ministry with Older Adults* (1997).
17. Reuel Howe, *The Creative Years* (1959).
18. Jean Beaven Abernathy, *Old is Not a Four-Letter Word* (1975).



19. Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Aging* (1974).

20. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, et al, *Death the Final Stage of Growth* (1975)..

### **SELECTED JOURNALS**

Almost all of the up-to-date findings in the field of gerontology are published in research journals. These are quite accessible to the non-technical reader, because researchers are anxious to have their work find use among practitioners. Gerontologists often have a deep interest in religious and spiritual issues. Here are just a few helpful suggestions.

*Journal of religion & aging.*

*Journal of religious gerontology.*

*Psychology and aging*, published by The American Psychological Association.

*Research on aging.*

## THE COURSE CALENDAR

For CD/PC 650X “Aspects of Aging: Developmental, Cultural, Religious”  
Fall 2003

Modules, assignments, due dates, and submission instructions are stated here.

**Module I: Introduction to Gerontology, the scientific study of aging.** This Module will be given our primary attention from September 2 through October 16.

The required reading for this Module is John C. Cavanaugh and Fredda Blanchard-Fields, *Adult Development and Aging* (2002). I also strongly suggest that you acquire and read Ken Dychtwald and Joe Flower, *Age Wave: How the Most Important Trend of Our Time Will Change Your Future* (1990).

Subject matter for this module will focus upon developmental and cultural aspects of aging. Primary attention will be given to Western world cultures, with some attention to cross-cultural issues.

Summary of Module Topics for Exam: Cavanaugh (chapters indicated):

- Ch. 1 Studying Adult Development and Aging
- Ch. 2 Physical Changes in Aging
- Ch. 3 Longevity, Health and Functioning
- Ch. 5 Person-Environment Interactions and Optimal Aging
- Ch. 10 Personality
- Ch. 11 Relationships
- Ch. 13 Dying and Bereavement

Other Topics: read all of text, report as per calendar assignment on two of the following topics.

- Ch. 4 Clinical Assessment, Mental Health, and Mental Disorders
- Ch. 6 Attention and Perceptual Processing
- Ch. 7 Memory
- Ch. 8 Intelligence
- Ch. 9 Social Cognition
- Ch. 12 Work, Leisure, and Retirement

Material from this module will be used in modules II and III and likely in your research paper.

Introductory materials, instructions, specific Module I assignments, and any revisions of due dates will be posted to the Course Center August 15.

**As a general rule, I will ask for assignments to be posted to The Course Office on Thursdays at 6:00 p.m. EST. I will reserve Thursday evenings for reading submitted materials and for being available online from 7:00-8:30.**

Expect some kind of weekly assignment for Module I. Tentatively, these informal dialogical assignments will be due on Sept. 4, 11, 18.

October 2 -- The Module exam will be posted, with instructions..

**October 9 -- The Module exam will be due at 9:00 pm on this date. This test will be awarded up to 25 points.** A point represents 1% of the final grade.

**October 16 -- Submit a four-page paper discussing topics raised in two chapters of the Cavanaugh text not included in the exam.** You may do this assignment alone, or in dialog with one other student. If you work with another person, submit one paper, both will receive the same grade. Choice of the chapters you discuss is up to you. On one page briefly state the topics and why they are of interest to you. On the remaining pages, discuss the meaning and importance of the particular topics covered. **This paper will be awarded up to 10 points.**

**Module II: Working With Gray Zone Citizens in the Church.** This topic will occupy our primary attention from October 16 through November 6.

This module will pay specific attention to working with older adults in the larger context of the church (counseling, organizing to use their gifts, educating, supporting, planning programs and buildings). Quite obviously the module will draw upon the psychological and cultural underpinning developed in Module I.

Required textual reading is Charles G. Oakes, *Working the Gray Zone*. Suggested reading is Win and Charles Arne, *Catch the Age Wave: A Handbook for Effective Ministry with Senior Adults* and David O. Moberg, *Aging and Spirituality: Spiritual Dimensions of Aging Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*.

Specific module assignments and instructions will be posted on October 14..

**November 6 -- Submit a six-page review and response to the Oakes text. This review is worth up to 15 points.**

**Also on November 6** – Submit a reading log showing that you have completely read each of the two texts. Include a one-paragraph evaluation of each. **See Requirement #1.** This reading log and the two evaluations are not graded, but are required to pass the course.

**Module III: Experiencing Older Adults in Life Context.** This Module will be the take place November 6 to December 4. Wise students will integrate preparation for the final paper with Units I, II, and III.

This module requires interaction with and reflection upon older adults in typical life contexts

Working in cooperation (in groups of 2-4), visit and compare senior facilities from the different areas in which you live, review a book (for example, counseling students review a book on counseling with older persons), or develop some other project as you choose. Submit an appropriate group report agreed upon and completed by the group. **This group assignment accounts for 10 points, or 10% of final grade. Post report to Discussion Center and to the Office Dec. 4.**

Personally spend at least 10 hours with seniors 70 or older. These may be persons from your community, living in a residence or care center, or persons you meet at sponsored senior recreation facility, or other older persons available to you. **Report and evaluate experience in a three-page paper posted both to the Discussion Center and to the Office Dec. 12. This assignment is worth up to 10 points, 10% of the final grade.**

### **Final Research Paper**

A list of possible topics for the final paper is included as an appendix to this syllabus (following the Calendar). This list will be supplemented from time to time. A topic must be selected and declared by October 16. Changes in declared topics may be made up to November 6.

Submit the fifteen-page research paper following APA or Chicago guidelines no later than 9:00 pm on December 12. Ideally, this research project will include at least 12 reference sources and will follow normal ATS standards. I would hope that this project can be pursued in a manner that follows a personal interest or need, or that it supports your career plans (see requirement #8)..

**This Research Project will be worth up to 30 points, 30 % of the final grade.**

The annotated log of self selected books, articles, internet pieces, and shared stuff from classmates. (see requirement #2) is to be submitted at the same time as the Final Research Paper. This log will naturally include items read in preparation for reports and research paper. Texts do not count in this log that will be submitted with the final paper. The self-selected reading log must show at least 1,000 pages: or, if you prefer to record reading time, 50 hours. This annotated log will not be graded, but it must be submitted to pass the course.

## APPENDIX A

### Some Ideas For Research Projects on Aging

Taking the Church to Immobile Elderly  
Elderly Abuse  
Dietary Issues and the Elderly  
Positive Changes with Aging  
Selecting a Nursing Home for a Parent  
Caring for Caregivers Coping With Alzheimer's Disease  
Place of the Church in Helping Plan Retirement  
Aging in Selected Cultures  
Psychological Health and Aging  
Effects of Parkinson's Disease  
Community Services for The Homebound  
Meaning of Place in Aging  
Problems of Caring For Children and Parents: "Sandwich Generation"  
Sexuality & Aging  
Working Late In Life  
Roles for Older Volunteers in the Church  
Family Patters & Aging  
Recreation and the Aging  
Exercise and the Aging  
Ministry of Hospice  
What to Do When Your Parent Dies  
Living Wills & The Elderly  
Aging & Minorities  
Pensions and the Elderly  
Spiritual Issues for Aging Persons  
Spiritual Formation of Aging Persons  
Careers in Gerontology (and related terms)  
Political Issues Related To The Aging Population  
Computers and Aging  
Keeping Alive in Retirement  
Counseling With Individuals in Their Seventies  
The Three Generation Home