

# Department of Gerontology

## Major in Gerontology

In order to complete a Major in Gerontology, students must complete a minimum of 39 credit hours of gerontology courses. These include the following introductory requirements (6 credit hours):

GERO-1013. Introduction to Gerontology I  
GERO-1023. Introduction to Gerontology II

In addition, students must complete the following core courses (18 credit hours):

GERO/PSYC-2673. Adult Development and Aging  
GERO-2113/SOCI 2523. Sociology of Aging  
GERO-3023. Aging and Health  
GERO-4013. Seminar in Gerontology  
GERO-4023. Advanced Seminar in Gerontology  
GERO-3053. Qualitative Research Methods in Gerontology

Finally, students are required to complete 15 credit hours of the following electives:

GERO-2273. Death and Dying in Later Life  
GERO-3033. Aging and Spirituality  
GERO-3043. Recreation, Leisure and Aging  
GERO-3073. Narrative Gerontology  
GERO-3093. Images of Aging in Film  
GERO-3103. Special Topics  
GERO-3123. Counselling Older Adults  
GERO-3213. Older Adults as Learners  
GERO-3223. Family Ties and Aging  
GERO-3233. Aging and Eastern Contemplative Traditions: Theory, Research, and Practice  
GERO-3673. Advanced Studies in Adult Development  
GERO-3743. Critical Approaches to Long-Term Care  
GERO-4003. Mental Health and Aging  
GERO-4033. Independent Study  
GERO-4036. Independent Study  
GERO-4113. Health Promotion for an Aging Population

## Minor in Gerontology

Students wishing to pursue a Minor in Gerontology must complete 18 credit hours, composed of any courses which they have the required prerequisites.

Subject to the approval of the Chair and the University registrar, students may be able to substitute other courses at St. Thomas University or the University of New Brunswick for the electives listed above.

Gerontology is a multidisciplinary field that studies the process of aging across the lifespan. Gerontologists draw on research from a variety of fields that include anthropology, economics, philosophy, physiology, psychology, and sociology, among others. The courses listed below are concerned with issues that concern older persons themselves and range from an examination of health-care needs to the understanding of wisdom. Some courses look at the impact of the way we choose to organize society and define aging socially and how individuals actually experience and understand their own later years. Gerontology uses a variety of theoretical perspectives that shed light on the social, psychological, emotional, and spiritual nature of being human as a background for the investigation of a wide variety of topics.

### **GERO-1013. Introduction to Gerontology I**

This course explores aging from a multidisciplinary perspective. Topics include myths and realities of aging; population aging globally and locally; the intersections of age with gender, ethnicity and class; the physical and psychological aspects of growing older; as well as key concepts in gerontological theory.

### **GERO-1023. Introduction to Gerontology II**

This course examines the various factors that impact growing older in Canadian society. Topics to be discussed include: health care, pensions, housing, transportation, family life, social support and death and dying.

### **GERO-2113. Sociology of Aging (SOC1 2523)**

This course explores cultural and social-structural determinants of aging through sociological theory. Students critically examine the social construction of "old age" as a social status through perceptions, descriptions, discussions and interactions with others, and how these relations are 'negotiated' by the older people themselves. Other topics include ageism and how various social institutions influence the experience of aging. Prerequisite: GERO 1013 OR GERO 1023, OR permission from the instructor.

### **GERO-2273. Death and Dying in Later Life** Exam(s) psychologysupport oring023, oldeo10.93ar3

impact of an aging population on the provision of acute care, long term care, and home care

**GERO-3103. Special Topics**

Topic chosen by the Visiting Chair. No Prerequisites.

**GERO-3123. Counseling Older Adults**

This course examines evidence-based theoretical models and assessments used when counselling older adults. Emphasis is placed on the counselling techniques and interventions used to assist older adults in meeting unique challenges experienced in the later part of life. This course is relevant for those preparing for a career in social work or counselling. Prerequisites: GERO 1013 AND 1023 OR permission of the instructor. GERO 2673 recommended.

**GERO-3213. Older Adults as Learners**

This course will draw on concepts and readings from adult education, the philosophy of education, and psychosocial, narrative, and educational gerontology. The course will consider how the content and processes of learning may change with advancing age in relation to physical health, sensory functions, reaction time, memory, motivation, and intelligence. Throughout the course, students will reflect on their life as a learner, experience a range of strategies for working with older learners, and learn to critique various formal organizations and informal contexts in which older adults learn.

**GERO-3223. Family Ties and Aging (WS/GS)**

This course examines a variety of issues regarding aging and the family. It considers historical and demographic trends as well as theoretical frameworks in family gerontology. The course covers a number of relationships including those of couples, siblings, and grandparents and grandchildren. It also looks at late-life transitions such as retirement, widowhood, and divorce, all of which affect family structures and relationships. GERO 1013 OR GERO 1023 OR permission of the instructor.

**GERO-3233. Aging and Eastern Contemplative Traditions: Theory, Research, and Practice**

There is growing interest in Eastern contemplative traditions in contemporary Canadian society, such as tai-chi, yoga, and mindfulness, that enhance quality of life for older adults. This course examines a range of benefits of these modalities to adults of all ages, exploring how these practices enable new relationships to ageing, health, and success. Students learn basic yoga, mindfulness, and tai chi practices at an introductory level. Prerequisite: GERO 1013 OR GERO 1023, or permission from the instructor.

**GERO-3263. Understanding Dementia**

As the proportion of older people increases, so will the prevalence of dementia-related neurocognitive disorders in this population. This course will examine the various types of Dementia, how they are assessed and the evidence based practices used to enhance the lives of individuals with this disorder. Pre-requisites: GERO 1013, GERO 2673

**GERO-3673. Advanced Studies in Adult Development**

This course is an in-depth study of the markers and challenges that occur during middle to late adulthood. Topics of study include: menopause, retirement, relocation, loss of spouse, caring for an ailing parent or spouse as well as pathological changes such as depression, substance abuse, terminal illness and dementia. Emphasis is placed on changes in response to these influences and on the individual's coping strategies. Prerequisite: GERO 2673 or PSYC 2673

**GERO-3743. Critical Approaches to Long-Term Care**

This seminar course draws upon ethnographic and critical gerontological approaches to examine the phenomenon of long-term care (LTC) and other models of care. The course pays particular attention to LTC in the Canadian context, longstanding and emergent issues surrounding long-term care, and older adults' lived experiences in LTC. The course looks at both theoretical and practical implications of LTC and its issues. Prerequisite: GERO 1013 OR GERO 1023, or permission from the instructor.

**GERO-3973. Introduction to Narrative**

Framed around three key approaches to narrative this course will provide students with the basis on which to develop their understanding of narrative and their skills in narrative analysis. The three approaches are: the narrative study of lives; the narrative analysis of texts; and, the analysis of narrative dynamics. Through these approaches students will be introduced to the work of key narrative thinkers. The course, in content and delivery, reflects the interdisciplinary nature of narrative.

**GERO-4003. Mental Health and Aging**

This course explores the range of factors affecting mental health in the elderly, from age-related organic brain disease, depression, and the other functional psychiatric disorders, to failure of adjustment induced by psychological, social, and environmental factors. Issues covered include the recognition of mental-health problems, their prevalence and dynamics; the cost to individual older people, their families, the health and community-care systems, and society; and the adequacy of current provisions and interventions. Prerequisites: GERO 1013, GERO 1023 and GERO 2673.

**GERO-4013. Seminar in Gerontology**

This seminar course consists of an in-depth analysis of a specific problem or issue in the

**GERO-4113. Health Promotion for an Aging Population**

This course will study health promotion as it relates to an aging population. Relevant terms, theories and methods will be examined, in addition to current public policies and how they relate to the health and wellbeing of older adults. A detailed investigation of evidenced based health promotion programs will be conducted. Pre-requisites: GERO1013, 1023, & 3023

*NOTE: Not all courses listed are offered each year. Please consult with the Department Chair for more information about current and planned course offerings.*