

SOCIOLOGY OF THE LIFE COURSE
Winter 2013
Dr. Andrea S. Dauber-Griffin
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SSB 467

Where: Peterson Hall 102

When: Tuesday and Thursday, 3:30-4:50

Office Hours: Tuesday 5:15-6:30 pm, Thursday 5:15-6:30 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class examines how our understanding of the course of human lives is informed by theory and research in the social sciences. Applying a longitudinal approach to research has become more and more popular over the past decades. We will develop an understanding of how society shapes the life course of individuals; the notion that members of society make individual and more importantly autonomous choices about how they want to live is popular but must be considered relative. For example, life course research informs us that trajectories in our lives are institutionalized, therefore not always subject to unrestricted choice. The course provides students with the most important theoretical approaches to life course research while also introducing research methods that social scientists use to study population and the life course.

POLICIES

Grading

10%	Participation	15%	Online Discussions	40%	Paper
15%	Case Study	20%	Literature Reviews		

Class participation

Students will be dropped automatically on the **third missed class**. **Your participation** in our discussions is crucial to my understanding of your overall performance. If you are unable to attend one of the lectures, you are responsible for obtaining notes about the lecture from another student or you should come into my office hours to get an update.

Required Materials

The textbook, ***Population: An Introduction to Concepts and Issues (Tenth Edition)*** by John Weeks, is available for purchase at Groundwork Books.

All other readings are accessible via the UCSD library on-line reserves site (online course reader).

<http://reserves.ucsd.edu/eres/default.aspx>

Please use the following password: ad161

Students should have completed the day's assigned readings **before** class.

Online Discussions:

Access via <http://ted.ucsd.edu>. Use your **username** and **password** to enter the course.

In the first session, you will be assigned to a group which you will remain a member of throughout the whole quarter. Each group is required to conduct an online discussion in a given time frame. Each member of the group must contribute to the online discussion in a meaningful and scientifically valuable way. You *can* post as often as you like, however, you **must post on four different days**. **The initial topic for the discussion will be provided.** I encourage you to become familiar with your group's topic by researching and doing further reading, also because this will help you find a topic for your paper. The discussions will be observed and commented. After the online discussion, the group will briefly summarize the discussion and discuss its significance for our course.

Groups

#1 Mannheim	#7 Weber
#2 Marx	#8 Zimmerman
#3 Simmel	#9 Elder
#4 Durkheim	#10 Parsons
#5 Kanter	#11 Mead
#6 Comte	

Email

I will be sending emails containing important information to your UCSD accounts frequently. It is crucial that you check your UCSD email account regularly to ensure you are always up to date.

Paper

The Paper will be due on **March 15**. Requirements: 10-12 pages, **including** front page, content page, and references. Please make sure you adhere to the APA format.

Literature Reviews

In a literature review, you should meaningfully summarize the main findings of a particular piece of literature and connect it to similar findings. You can, for example, start out by saying, "Lu and Halfon (2003) found that life courses vary considerably across cohorts.....".

Literature Reviews should be **550 words max** and ideally include all literature discussed in class of the respective dates. Please use the **APA format** for referencing. If you're unfamiliar with it, become familiar. Don't hesitate to reach out if you have problems applying it. Reviews must be printed out and turned in on the due dates.

The syllabus is subject to change. Changes will be announced via email or in class.

SCHEDULE

Jan 8

Introductions
Syllabus and assignments
Groups
Paper

I Why Study the Life Course?

Jan 10

Elder, Glen H., Jr. 1994. "Time, Human Agency, and Social Change: Perspectives on the Life Course." *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 57:4-15.
Elder, Glen H. and Janet Z. Giele. 2009. Pp. 1-5. *The craft of life course research*. New York; London: Guilford Press.

II Population Trends and How Social Scientists Study Them

Jan 15

Weeks, Chap. 1, 2, & 4

III Demographic Perspectives

Jan 17

Eggebeen, David J. 2002. "The Changing Course of Fatherhood: Men's Experiences with Children in Demographic Perspective." *Journal of Family Issues*, 23:486-506.
Weeks, Ch. 3

IV Fertility Transitions

Jan 22

Hunt, Stephen. 2005. *The Life Course: A Sociological Introduction*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Chapter 3.
Weeks, Ch. 6

Group Mannheim: Online discussion from Jan 22 – Jan 29 (summary & discussion on Jan 29)

Jan 24

Lee, Jungmin and Myungho Paik. 2006. "Sex Preferences and Fertility in South Korea during the Year of the Horse." *Demography* 43(2):269-292.
Lu, Michael C. and Neal Halfon. 2003. "Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Birth Outcomes. A Life-Course Perspective." *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, 7(1):13-30.

Group Marx: Online discussion from Jan 24 – Jan 31 (summary & discussion on Jan 31)

V Age Transitions: Growing Up, Becoming Adults, Retiring

Jan 29

Acocella, Joan. 2003. "Little People" (Book Review). *The New Yorker*, August 18.
Kerckhoff, Alan C. 2003. "From Student to Worker." Pp. 251-267 in Jeylan T. Mortimer and Michael J. Shanahan: *Handbook of the Life Course*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.

Weeks, Ch. 8.

Group Simmel: Online discussion from Jan 29 – Feb 5 (summary & discussion on Feb 5)

Jan 31

Alwin, Duane F. 2002. Generations X, Y and Z: Are they changing America? *Contexts* 1(4): 42-51.

Foner, Anne and David Kertzer. 1978. "Transitions over the Life Course: Lessons from Age-Set Societies." *American Journal of Sociology* 83:1081-1104.

McLanahan, Sara and Dona Schwartz. 2002. "Life without Father: What Happens to the Children?" *Contexts* 1(1): 35-44.

Group Durkheim: Online discussion from Jan 31 – Feb 7 (summary & discussion on Feb 7)

VI Transitions to Relationships, Marriage, and Family

Feb 5

Baxter, Janeen, Hewitt, Belinda and Michele Haynes. 2008. "Life Course Transitions and Housework: Marriage, Parenthood, and Time on Housework." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 70:259-272.

Cherlin Andrew J. 2003. "Should the Government Promote Marriage?" *Contexts* 2(4): 22-29.

Weeks, Ch. 10

Group Kanter: Online discussion from Feb 5 – Feb 12 (summary & discussion on Feb 12)

*1st Literature Review due on February 5
(Jan 10, 22, 24, 29, 31)*

Feb 7

Gerstel, Naomi and Natalia Sarkisian. 2006. "Marriage: The Good, the Bad, and the Greedy." *Contexts* 5(4):16-21.

Williams, Kristie and Debra Umberson. 2004. "Marital Status, Marital Transitions, and Health: A Gendered Life Course Perspective." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 45(1):81-98.

Exercise: Marriage Quiz (Stephanie Coontz, *New York Times*, February 19, 2006).

Group Comte: Online discussion from Feb 7 – Feb 14 (summary & discussion on Feb 14)

VII Life Course Paradigm

Feb 12

Elder, Glen H., Jr. 1985. Perspectives on the Life Course. Pp. 23-49 in Glen H. Elder. *Life Course Dynamics. Trajectories and Transitions, 1968-1980*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Elder, Glen H., Jr. 2009. Pp. 8-15. *The Craft of Life Course Research*. New York; London: Guilford Press.

Group Weber: Online discussion from Feb 12 – Feb 19 (summary & discussion on Feb 19)

Feb 14

Gecas, Viktor. 2003. "Self-Agency and the Life Course." Pp. 369-390 in Jeylan T. Mortimer and Michael J. Shanahan. *Handbook of the Life Course*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.

Hunt, Stephen. 2005. *The Life Course: A Sociological Introduction*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Chapter 1.

Group Zimmerman: Online discussion from Feb 14 – Feb 21 (summary & discussion on Feb 21)

VIII Aging

Feb 19

Morgan, David L. 1982. "Failing Health and the Desire for Independence: Two Conflicting Aspects of Health Care in Old Age." *Social Problems* 30(1):40-50.

Weeks, Ch. 9

Group Elder: Online discussion from Feb 19 – Feb 26 (summary & discussion on Feb 26)

Feb 21

Carr, Deborah. 2003. "A 'Good Death' for Whom? Quality of Spouse's Death and Psychological Distress among Older Widowed Persons." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 44(2): 215-232.

Hunt, Stephen. 2005. *The Life Course: A Sociological Introduction*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Chapter 9.

Group Parsons: Online discussion from Feb 21 – Feb 28 (summary & discussion on Feb 28)

IX Mortality Transitions

Feb 26

Rosenfeld, Dana, Bernadette Bartlam, and Ruth D. Smith. 2012. "Out of the Closet and Into the Trenches: Gay Male Baby Boomers, Aging, and HIV/Aids." *The Gerontologist* 52(2):255-264.

Weeks, Ch. 5

Group Mead: Online discussion from Feb 26 – Mar 5 (summary & discussion on Mar 5)

Feb 28

Gravseth, H M., Mehlum, L., Bjerkedal, T., and P. Kristensen. 2010. "Suicide in Young Norwegians in a life course perspective: population-based cohort study." *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 64:407-412.

Gee, GC., Walsemann, KM., and E. Brondolo. 2012. "A life course perspective on how racism may be related to health inequalities." *American Journal of Public Health* 102(5):967-974.

*2nd Literature Review due on February 28
(Feb 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21, 26)*

X Criminal Careers: Crime & deviant behavior in a life course perspective

March 5

Sampson, Robert J. and John H. Laub. 1990. "Crime and Deviance over the Life Course: The Salience of Adult Social Bonds." *American Sociological Review* 55(5):609-627.

Uggen, Christopher and Michael Massoglia. 2003. Pp. 311-330 in Jeylan T. Mortimer and Michael J. Shanahan. *Handbook of the Life Course*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.

March 7

Laub, John H. 1992. "Crime and Deviance in the Life Course." *Annual Review of Sociology* 18:63-84.

Moult, Kelley. 2008. "Gender and the Life-Course Theory of Crime: Developing a Model to Explain Women's Desistance from Delinquency." *The Public Purpose* 6(1):7-37.

XI The institutionalized life course**March 12**

Settersten, Richard A. Jr. 2003. "Age Structuring and the Rhythm of the Life Course." Pp. 81-102 in Jeylan T. Mortimer and Michael J. Shanahan. *Handbook of the Life Course*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.

Henretta, John C. 1992. "Uniformity and Diversity: Life Course Institutionalization and Late-Life Work Exit." *The Sociological Quarterly* 33(2), 365-279.

March 14

Leisering, Lutz. 2003. "Government and the Life Course." Pp. 205-255 in Jeylan T. Mortimer and Michael J. Shanahan. *Handbook of the Life Course*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.

Kohli, Martin. 2007. "The Institutionalization of the Life Course." *Research in Human Development* 4(3-4), 253-271.