

**COURSE OUTLINE**  
**SOCI-160**  
**The Aging Process: Gerontology**  
3 Semester Hours

**HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**Description**

This course will focus on the physiological, psychological, and social changes that impact the aging population. In addition, the student will focus on assessment and counseling skills relevant to preserving independence in the aged and meeting the health needs of the aging population. (3 hours weekly) NOTE: Also listed as HEED-160.

**Overall Course Objectives**

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Understand the theories, myths and stereotypes about aging.
2. Identify biological and psychological changes which occur in the normal aging process.
3. Understand that dementia and Alzheimer's disease are not a normal part of the aging process.
4. Identify the services, including alternatives to institutionalization, available to seniors through government, non-profit, and for-profit organizations.
5. Understand the myths and realities about sexual activity during later years.
6. Identify the stressors of caregiving, warning signs of elder abuse, and issues of crime targeting the senior population.
7. Identify the factors that contribute to loss of independence in later years.
8. Understand the dying process, formulate an opinion of the right to die controversy, controversy, and identify stages of dying and bereavement.
9. Develop sensitivity to different perspectives of varied cultural groups in relation to the aging process.
10. Understand the special needs and circumstances of elderly women.
11. Intelligently discuss and formulate opinions on Social Security, Medicare/Medicaid.

## **Major Topics**

- I. Aging: Facts and Fiction
- II. Aging Demographics
- III. Theories and Models of Aging
- IV. Physiology of Aging
- V. Misdiagnosis of the elderly
- VI. Health Aging
- VII. Growth and Development
- VIII. Society and the Old
- IX. Legal Issues and the Elderly
- X. Stressors of Aging
- XI. Retirement/Volunteerism
- XII. Senior Achievements
- XIII. Euthanasia/Death and Dying

## **Course Requirements**

### Grading/exams:

Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member but will include the following:

There will be two examinations – a midterm and a final. Each examination will be worth 20% of course grade. There will also be a paper and a presentation that will each be worth 20% of course grade. Finally, class participation will be worth 20% of course grade.

### Writing:

There will be one paper due during the semester. Additionally, there will be essay questions included in both the midterm and final examinations.

## **Other Course Information**

This course is an Arts and Sciences elective.  
Also listed as HEED-160.