

Psychology of Aging

PSYC 114

Spring 2026 Section 80 Fully Online 3 Unit(s) 01/22/2026 to 05/11/2026 Modified 01/21/2026

Contact Information

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For emails, please begin the email subject line with "Psyc 114." For all communication, please allow one to two business days for a response. As an example, if you email me after 6pm on a Friday, you may not hear from me until the end of the following Tuesday.

Office Hours:

Mondays 3-4:30pm, or by appointment, at <https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/814811888>
(<https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/814811888>) (Zoom meeting ID: 814 811 888). There is no password to the meeting. You'll start by entering a virtual waiting room. If no other students are "in line" ahead of you, I'll admit you to the meeting right away. However, if I'm currently chatting with another student, you'll need to remain in the waiting room until I'm done, after which I'll "admit" you to the meeting.

Course Description and Requisites

Psychological development of middle-aged and older adults emphasizing normative (typical) development in the context of cognitive, socioemotional, biological, and cultural processes. Course content also includes age-related health problems and their prevention.

Prerequisite: PSYC 001.

Letter Graded

Classroom Protocols

In an effort to create an environment conducive to sharing one's thoughts, I require the following etiquette when engaging in online discussions:

- Be polite and respectful to the other people in the class
- Do not use profanity in posts

Respect for the rights and opinions of others is required. The free and open exchange of ideas is the cornerstone of higher education, but we must always remain respectful of others, even if we disagree strongly with them. Disagreement is acceptable, but discourteousness is not. Behavior that creates a threatening or harassing environment will not be tolerated. Severe and pervasive disruptions of course activities are a violation of the Student Code of Conduct will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development.

If we all show each other courtesy and respect, we can maintain a pleasant classroom climate - thank you.

Program Information

Program learning outcomes (PLOs) are skills and knowledge that students will have achieved upon completion of the Psychology BA degree. Each course in our curriculum contributes to one or more of these PLOs. The PLOs for the Psychology BA degree are:

1. Knowledge Base of Psychology. Students will be able to demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.
 2. Research Methods in Psychology. Students will be able to design, implement, and communicate basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretations.
 3. Critical Thinking Skills. Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes.
 4. Applications of Psychology. Students will be able to apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues.
- Values in Psychology. Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

CLO1: Explain and identify changes in the structure of our population with regards to the changing demographic of older adults in the U.S. and internationally.

CLO2: Explain and identify the biological/physical processes that occur during the aging process.

CLO3: Be able to identify and discuss typical research designs used in the study of aging.

CLO4: Identify lifespan changes in cognitive functioning, physical and mental health, personality, and social relationships, including which components of these domains do not change substantially with age.

CLO5: Identify components of and explain theoretical models (psychological and biological) relevant to aging (socioemotional selectivity theory, continuity theory, random error theories, etc.).

CLO6: Report on the aging process through the perspective of an older adult through completion of interviews and experiential exercises; integrate these experiences with theoretical models presented in class.

CLO7: Discuss different viewpoints on the aging process gleaned from online interactions with your peers.

CLO8: Identify relevant legislation that pertains to older adults, including issues of nursing home care, Medicare, employment of older adults, and end-of-life care.

Course Materials

Required Textbook

Yochim, B. P., & Woodhead, E. L. (Eds.) (2018). *Psychology of Aging: A Biopsychosocial Perspective*. New York, NY: Springer. ISBN: 9780826137289

This book is available at the bookstore and through other outlets. **The SJSU library has a free ebook of our textbook.** [The Library's e-Reserves \(https://library.sjsu.edu/etextbooks\)](https://library.sjsu.edu/etextbooks) contain many course materials for free. Check it out!

Please note: Be sure to obtain the first edition of the book (i.e., the 2018 edition listed above), which differs significantly from its 2nd edition released in late 2024.

Other Materials

- Required educational videos, readings, reading quizzes, etc. are all available on our Canvas course shell.
- You will need to make use of readings you locate in the library or through the library's website. For assistance with using the library resources, you can reach the library liaison for Psychology students, [Christa Bailey \(mailto:christa.bailey@sjsu.edu\)](mailto:christa.bailey@sjsu.edu).
 - You may also utilize public sources on the Internet.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Course Format

This is a fully online, asynchronous course. There are no scheduled class meetings. Instead, you will move through the course independently by completing the modules in Canvas. To be successful in this course, you will need a reliable internet connection and access to a computer capable of accessing various course materials, which will include streaming video content.

The course is organized into several modules, typically one module per week. Each module includes all required materials and assignments for that unit, such as readings, homework, quizzes or exams, articles, handouts, videos, and learning activities. The curated materials are designed to support your learning, encourage critical and reflective thinking about the aging process, and foster a sense of community among us.

Modules will be released gradually to help us progress through the course at a similar pace. However, some flexibility is built in to allow students to work one to two weeks ahead if desired. I believe this approach will help achieve a balance between the sense of community and the sense of autonomy.

Please note that this is not a lecture-based course. "Class time" primarily consists of your self-directed engagement with course materials and completion of assignments. Each student is responsible for reading the textbook as the primary way of obtaining the course content.

Because the course is self-paced, strong time-management skills and self-motivation are essential. Setting aside dedicated time each week to review materials and complete assignments will be key to your success.

Although the course is self-directed, you are not alone. I am available to support your learning through electronic messaging and meetings. You are welcome to email me, drop in during my scheduled office hours, or schedule an individual meeting with me.

Assignments

Except where explicitly noted, assignments are due on the Sunday (by 11:59pm) concluding the course module. Please check the Course Schedule (at the end of this syllabus) for the chronology of this course. This section here lists assignments by their type.

Course Orientation = 15 points (5 points for the Online Learning Survey, 5 points for Syllabus Activity, and 5 points for Introductions)

There will be three assignments during the initial part of semester to get you oriented to the course and make sure that you are prepared for the expectations of our online course.

Exams = 150 points (3 @ 50 points each)

There will be three open-book and open-notes exams in this class. Each exam consists of 25 multiple-choice type questions and covers about one-third of the course content. The final exam is the third exam, and all exams are not cumulative although key concepts often build on one another and together contribute to your learning success.

Because the exams are open-book and open-notes, the **questions will focus on conceptual understanding and application**. In other words, searching for definitions and keywords during the test will not be very helpful.

You can have your book and notes open during the exam, but **you are not allowed to work with others**. If there is evidence for test collaboration or other forms of dishonesty (e.g., by response patterns and/or IP addresses), you will receive zero points on the test and be reported to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development.

The exam items will be based on your related reading quizzes, so you should familiarize yourself with these questions prior to the exams. You will have 1 hour to complete the exam. Please keep in mind that the clock will keep running even if you log out of Canvas, so the exams will need to be completed in one sitting.

There are no make-ups for the exams since you will have several days to complete the exams at your chosen time.

Reading Quizzes = 100 points [11 @ 10 points each (Lowest score dropped)]

For each module of new content, you will complete a reading quiz that consists of multiple-choice type questions on the textbook content that has been assigned.

There is no time limit for the quizzes, and you can come and go out of Canvas while taking the quiz. They will remain open until Sundays at 11:59pm.

There are no make-ups for the quizzes since you will have one or more weeks in which to complete the quizzes.

Activities = 50 points total [(11 @ 5 points each (Lowest score dropped)]

& Discussions = 50 points [(11 @ 5 points each (Lowest score dropped)]

For each module, there will be an activity that goes along with the material for the module. Any specific instructions about the activity will be included on the activity's assignment page in Canvas. You will complete the activity independently and upload it by Sunday at 11:59pm. Activity points will be graded in an evaluative way (i.e., the number of points you receive will be based on the quality of your responses). You can find the corresponding grading rubrics in the activity assignment pages.

You will also be required to complete a discussion assignment during each module, which entails POSTING your responses to the discussion prompts and the REPLYING to another student's post. Discussion prompts will vary each module and may be tied to the class activity or reading. The post and reply can be on different days, but they both are due by Sundays at 11:59pm, and you need to submit both of them by the deadline to receive credit. The post and reply need to be at least 150 words each and will be worth 5 points combined (2.5 each for the post and reply). Posts will be graded on depth (meeting the length requirement) and whether you've expressed substantive thoughts that are tied back to our course content.

Older Adult Interview = 35 points total (5 points for the interview questions, 30 points for the interview paper)

The final paper in our class is an interview with one older adult (over age 65) about one of the topics covered in our textbook that is relevant to the current generation of older adults. For example, Chapter 3 of the textbook is about Age-Related Health Conditions, so the theme of your interview could be on how health has changed over time. The goal of the project is to have a professional interaction with an older adult and to see how our course content relates to real-world life experiences and scholarly research.

*If you need help finding someone to interview for this assignment, please reach out to me right away and I will help you!

There are two assignments associated with this project. First, around the middle of the semester you will be asked to brainstorm a list of questions with a group of your classmates (I will use Canvas to randomly generate groups) related to one of the chapters in our textbook. As a group, you will submit one assignment that is a list of questions you will each ask your interviewee (5 points). At the end of the semester, you will submit **your own unique paper** that includes a brief introduction to your topic, a summary of your interview, a section connecting the interview to the textbook and literature, and a conclusion/reflection of the interview process, which should include a critical analysis of your interview. In the section where you connect your interview to relevant research, you will be asked to integrate the interview material with the textbook and one peer-reviewed articles. This paper cannot exceed 5 pages (excluding title page and references). I will include more information about paper content and grading on Canvas.

✓ Grading Information

Late Submission Policy

Except noted below (see Note 1 and Note 2), assignments will be considered late if they are not submitted through Canvas by the submission deadline (11:59pm on the due date). It is the student's responsibility to ensure that assignments are uploaded correctly. Late assignments are subject to a penalty of 10% per day, including weekends and holidays, beginning the day after the assignment is due. Assignments will not be accepted after the last day of classes.

Note 1: For Exams and Reading Quizzes, there are no make-ups since you have several days to complete them at your chosen time.

Note 2: The Older Adult Interview Paper is subject to a penalty of 10 points (~33%) daily deduction. In other words, a final paper submitted within the next day after the due date will receive an automatic 10-point deduction (~33%). If submitted in the day after this, the final paper will receive an automatic 20-point

deduction (~67%). Afterwards, the paper is more than 2 days late and will not be eligible for credit (due to 100% grade deduction).

Calculating Your Letter Grade

Your final letter grade will be based on a percentage obtained by dividing your points by the total points for this course. I will use the following grading rubric. Work hard all semester to obtain as many points as possible so you do not find yourself at the cusp of a letter grade at the end of the semester.

Total possible points = Course Orientation (15 pts) + Exams (150 pts) + Reading Quizzes (90 pts) + Activities (55 pts) + Discussions (55 pts) + Older Adult Interview (35 pts) = 400 pts

A plus = 99.00+%	A = 98.99-93.00%	A minus = 92.99-90.00%
B plus = 89.99-87.00%	B = 86.99-83.00%	B minus = 82.99-80.00%
C plus = 79.99-77.00%	C = 76.99-73.00%	C minus = 72.99-70.00%
D plus = 69.99-67.00%	D = 66.99-63.00%	D minus = 62.99-60.00%
F = 59.99-0%		

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Course Schedule

The schedule is subject to change with fair notice; changes will be announced via electronic communication. It is your responsibility to stay informed of the course schedule and announcements.

Week	Dates	Topics(s)	Read/Review	Assignments Due (concluding Sunday at 11:59pm unless otherwise noted)
1&2	1/22-1/25 1/26-2/1	Introduction, Syllabus Review, Course Orientation	Syllabus, Canvas Course site	*Online Learning Survey *Syllabus Activity *Introductions
3	2/2-2/8	Introduction to the Psychology of Aging	Ch. 1	*Reading Quiz 1 *Activity 1 *Discussion 1
4	2/9-2/15	Biological Theories of Aging	Ch. 2	*Reading Quiz 2 *Activity 2 *Discussion 2
5	2/16-2/22	The Aging Body and Age- Related Health Conditions; Prevention	Ch. 3	*Reading Quiz 3 *Activity 3 *Discussion 3
6	2/23-3/1	Neurocognitive Disorders in Late Life	Ch. 9	*Reading Quiz 4 *Activity 4 *Discussion 4

7	3/2-3/8	Exam 1 - Available March 2 at 9am until March 8 at 11:59pm	Chapters 1, 2, 3, 9	*Group Submission: Older Adult Interview Questions Due March 8
8	3/9-3/15	Cognition and Aging	Ch. 7	*Reading Quiz 5 *Activity 5 *Discussion 5
9	3/16-3/22	Personality and Emotional Development	Ch. 5	*Reading Quiz 6 *Activity 6 *Discussion 6
10	3/23-3/29	Mental Health and Aging	Ch. 6	*Reading Quiz 7 *Activity 7 *Discussion 7
11&12	3/30-4/5 (spring recess) 4/6-4/12	Relationships, Families, and Aging: Changes in Roles with Aging	Ch. 10	*Reading Quiz 8 *Activity 8 *Discussion 8
13	4/13-4/19	Exam 2 - Available April 13 at 9am until April 19 at 11:59pm	Ch. 5-7, 10	Older Adult Interview Paper due April 19
14	4/20-4/26	Aging and the Legal System	Ch. 14	*Reading Quiz 9 *Activity 9 *Discussion 9

15	4/27-5/3	Aging, Work, and Retirement	Ch. 11	*Reading Quiz 10 *Activity 10 *Discussion 10
16	5/4-5/10	Death and Dying; Cultural Differences in Aging	Ch. 12 Ch. 13	*Reading Quiz 11 *Activity 11 *Discussion 11
Final	5/13-5/17	Exam 3 – Available May 13 at 9am until May 17 at 11:59pm	Ch. 11-14	