Course Description: In this course we will explore how gender structures the lives of individuals across the life span, and how other factors such as age, cohort, and class intersect with this reality. We will study how the experiences of women and men are different and the factors that influence how their life pathways are constructed. We will also consider how social policies shape individual lives and examine the age and gender assumptions that undergird those policies.

Prerequisites: There are no specific prerequisites for this course, although it is intended for upper level undergraduates. The course will be most valuable for those students interested in understanding how multiple characteristics describing individual lives intersect with cultural and institutional norms across the life course, and the consequences of gendered systems on role opportunities and constraints.

Course Expectations: Although there will be weekly lectures, the course will more generally be structured as a seminar. Students should be prepared to contribute to and sometimes lead discussions.

School of Education and Social Policy Academic Integrity Statement: Students in this course are expected to comply with the policies found in the booklet, Academic Integrity at Northwestern University: A Basic Guide. All final papers submitted for credit in this course must be sent as email attachments as well as delivered in printed form. Your written work may be electronically tested for plagiarized content. For details regarding academic integrity at Northwestern, visit: http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/. If you need a copy of the brochure, visit the SESP Student Affairs Office on the 1st floor of Annenberg Hall.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: In compliance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, Northwestern University is committed to providing equal access to all programming. Students with Disabilities seeking accommodation are encouraged to contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 467-5530 or ssd@northwestern.edu. SSD is located in the basement of Scott Hall and has a website at http://www.stuaff.northwestern.edu/ssd/.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Class attendance is required; all absences will result in lost points, although makeup assignments may be available if notice of the absence is provided. Assignments turned in late will result in lost points; assignments will not be accepted more than 24 hours late without prior written permission from the professor. Final course grades will be determined on a curve based on a total of 100 points. Generally, active participation, on time delivery of assignments, and thoughtful written products will result in an A or B grade; however, lower grades will be given if these expectations are not met.
Points:
1. Class attendance and participation 20 points
2. Class leadership and effort 10 points
3. Two interviews with individuals of different groups (2 pages each) 20 points
4. Mid-term 10 points
5. Final paper (7-8 pages) 40 points

Written Assignments: All written assignments must be delivered in hard copy form on standard size paper, typed, double-spaced in size 12 font (preferably Palatino or Times), pages stapled, with a header that includes the student’s name, the date the assignment is due, and the title of the course.

For interview assignments: write 2 pages; begin with a section that describes the interview subject in terms of relationship, gender, age, cohort, other characteristics, date and form of interview (e.g., telephone, face-to-face). For the interview itself, distinguish clearly between the question(s) asked and the responses provided; paraphrasing is acceptable if the interview is lengthy, but include the individual’s exact wording whenever possible. Conclude with a paragraph that delineates what you learned, surprises, the feelings that emerged during the interview.

The mid-term will be an in-class, short answer essay exam.

For the final paper: write 7-8 pages on independent research you will conduct on a choice of themes (to be identified later in the course). The final paper must also be delivered by email as a Microsoft Word electronic file attachment. References are required for the final paper only and should be prepared in American Psychological Association (APA) Style (see manual or copy the reading assignment format).

Assigned Readings: A Course Packet is available from Quartet Copies on Clark Street. From time to time, additional readings will be handed out in class.

Weekly Topical Outline and Assigned Readings:

WEEK ONE: Themes and Important Terms Associated with Gender and the Life Course

Tuesday March 27—Class One

Discussion:
• Introduction to the course and syllabus.

Thursday March 29—Class Two

Read in preparation for class:

Interview Assignment One distributed during class
WEEK TWO: Themes and Important Terms Associated with Gender and the Life Course

Tuesday April 3—Class Three

Read in preparation for class:


Thursday April 5—Class Four

*Film during class*: The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter.

*Interview Assignment One Due*

WEEK THREE: Early Life and Adolescence

Tuesday April 10—Class Five:

Read in preparation for class:


Thursday April 12—Class Six:

*Film during class*: Discovering Psychology.

*Interview Assignment Two distributed during class*

WEEK FOUR: Early Adulthood: Family and Work

Tuesday April 17—Class Seven

Read in preparation for class:

Thursday April 19—Class Eight

Film during class: The Double Shift.

Interview Assignment Two due

WEEK FIVE: Middle Adulthood and Growing Older

Tuesday April 24—Class Nine

Read in preparation for class:

Thursday April 26—Class Ten

Group activity during class

Mid-term during class

WEEK SIX: Old Age

Tuesday May 1—Class Eleven

Read in preparation for class:

Thursday May 3—Class Twelve

Film during class: Living Old.

WEEK SEVEN: Life Scripts

Tuesday May 8—Class Thirteen

Read in preparation for class:

**Thursday May 10—Class Fourteen**

*Film or group activity during class*

**WEEK EIGHT: Marginalized by Gender**

**Tuesday May 15—Class Fifteen**

*Read in preparation for class:*

**Thursday May 17—Class Sixteen**

*Watch one of these films in preparation for class (on reserve at the NU Library)*

Ma Vie en Rose
Boys Don’t Cry
TransAmerica

**WEEK NINE: Marginalized by Poverty**

**Tuesday May 22—Class Seventeen**

*Read in preparation for class:*

**Thursday May 24—Class Eighteen**

*Film during class: Waging a Living.*
WEEK TEN: Policies that Shape Life Pathways

Tuesday May 29—Class Nineteen

Read in preparation for class:


Thursday May 31—Class Twenty

Group exercise on social policy

Week of June 4—8 No Meeting: Finals Week

- Turn in final exam by June 6 at noon

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED READINGS


