INSTRUCTOR:
Carlos F. Mendes de Leon, PhD
Office: SPH-1 # 2679 (cross-tower)
Tel: 734-615-2909
Email: cmendes@med.umich.edu
Office Hours: by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course will review and discuss our understanding of health changes in late life, covering a broad range of topics, including social and biological models of aging; disability, cognitive decline and dementia; quality of life; and health care issues. The course will be offered seminar-style, with each class consisting of lecture presentation and class-discussion of selected readings from the gerontological literature.

COURSE GOALS/OBJECTIVES:
The goal of this course is to familiarize the student the major medical and public health challenges associated with the aging of the population. A second goal is to expose the student to a broad range of theoretical and empirical literatures on aging research, and to master the ability to report on and critique a summary of a relevant age-associated health topic in an oral presentation and written account.

COURSE COMPETENCIES:
After completing this class, students are expected to be able to attain the following Epidemiology Department PhD competencies:

- Critically evaluate and synthesize the scientific literature and develop new hypotheses to address gaps in our knowledge
- Demonstrate mastery in a substantive area of population health, and in this area integrate relevant biological, behavioral, and social mechanisms that operate at multiple levels of causation
- Demonstrate excellent skills in the writing of scientific papers and grant applications

PREREQUISITE (Advisory):
Basic epidemiology research methods (EPID 600 or an equivalent) and basic biostatistical methods (BIOSTAT 523 or its equivalent)

COURSE MATERIALS:
COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:
Each student is expected to attend class and come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. For 4 of the 12 weekly topics, students will be expected to write a one-page summary (3-4 paragraphs, single-spaced), based on the required readings, and answering the following questions:

1) Provide a succinct summary of the reading(s)
2) Provide a short critique, in terms of strengths and weaknesses, and potential intervention or policy relevance
3) How this research may improve quality of life for future generations of older adults

These assignments are due at the beginning of the day (9 AM) of the relevant class. Students can select their own 4 topics for this assignment.

Course grades will be based on class assignments (10% for each assignment, 40% total); final paper and presentation (40%); and attendance and in-class participation (20%).

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS/ETIQUETTE:
No laptops or smart phones will be normally allowed in class without the instructors’ permission. University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their standard University e-mail address. Students should check this account frequently. Group work and didactic discussions are a key element of this class. Students will be expected to engage and participate fully.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:
The faculty and staff of the School of Public Health believe that the conduct of a student registered or taking courses in the School should be consistent with that of a professional person. Courtesy, honesty, and respect should be shown by students toward faculty members, guest lecturers, administrative support staff, community partners, and fellow students. Similarly, students should expect faculty to treat them fairly, showing respect for their ideas and opinions and striving to help them achieve maximum benefits from their experience in the School.

Student academic misconduct refers to behavior that may include plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, falsification of records or official documents, intentional misuse of equipment or materials (including library materials), and aiding and abetting the perpetration of such acts. Please visit [http://www.sph.umich.edu/academics/policies/conduct.html](http://www.sph.umich.edu/academics/policies/conduct.html) for the full SPH Code of Academic Integrity and further definition of these terms.

STUDENT WELL-BEING:
SPH faculty and staff believe it is important to support the physical and emotional well-being of our students. If you have a physical or mental health issue that is affecting your performance or participation in any course, and/or if you need help connecting with University services, please contact the instructor or the Office of Academic Affairs.
Please visit [http://www.sph.umich.edu/students/current/#wellness](http://www.sph.umich.edu/students/current/#wellness) for more information.
STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS:
Students should speak with their instructors before or during the first week of classes regarding any special needs. Students can also visit the Office of Academic Affairs for assistance in coordinating communications around accommodations.

Students seeking academic accommodations should register with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). SSD arranges reasonable and appropriate academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Please visit http://ssd.umich.edu/accommodations for more information on student accommodations.

Students who expect to miss classes, examinations, or other assignments as a consequence of their religious observance shall be provided with a reasonable alternative opportunity to complete such academic responsibilities. It is the obligation of students to provide faculty with reasonable notice of the dates of religious holidays on which they will be absent. Please visit http://www.provost.umich.edu/calendar/religious_holidays.html#conflicts for the complete University policy.
Course schedule

Week 1 (date): Course overview, Introduction – Key Concepts and Outcomes

Readings
Public Health and Aging, Chapter 1: Introducing Public Health and Aging

Week 2 (date): Demography of Aging – Secular Trends in Life Expectancy

Readings
Administration on Aging, A Profile of Older Americans: 2012.

Week 3 (date): Cognitive Aging, Cognitive Reserve

Readings

Week 4 (date): Dementia and Alzheimer’s Disease

Readings
Public Health and Aging, Chapter 6: Cognitive Function: Dementia

Week 5 (date): Disability and Participation

Readings
Public Health and Aging, Chapter 5: Disability and Functioning

Week 6 (date): Geriatric Syndromes and Co-morbidity

Readings
Public Health and Aging, Chapter 4: Chronic Disease in Older Adults

**Week 7 (date):** Presentation/Discussion of term paper drafts

**Readings** – no readings

**Week 8 (date): Health Disparities in Aging**

**Readings**


**Week 9 (date): Lifecourse Perspectives on Aging**

**Readings**


**Week 10 (date): Psychosocial Determinants of Aging**

**Readings**


**Week 11 (date): Aging, Public Health, and Long Term Care**
Readings
Public Health and Aging, Chapter 9: Aging, Public Health, and Long-Term Care

Week 12 (date): End-of-Life Issues

Readings
Public Health and Aging, Chapter 10: Mortality and End-of-Life Care

Week 13 (date): “Successful Aging” – A Critique

Readings
Special Issue: Successful Aging. The Gerontologist, February 2015; 15(1). Three papers from this Special Issue will be selected for in-class discussion.

Week 14 (date): Presentations Term Papers

Readings: no readings