Course Expectation Resource Sheet - GER 180

"What can students expect if they choose this course?"

Course: GER 180 - Successful Aging
Department: Sociology, Anthropology, & Gerontology
Credit Hours: 3
Prerequisite: None
Catalog Description: Successful aging depends not only on an individual's personal lifestyle choices, but also on their community's attitudes toward aging and on society's resources for the aged. This course aims to educate learners about (1) strategies for personal health, wellbeing, and longevity, (2) the impacts of development life stages and socio-historical socialization on generational cohorts' worldviews, (3) the importance of considering multiple perspectives and striving for cultural competence of all ages, (4) how to become anti-ageist, and (5) ways to advocate for older adults and promote structural improvements that will increase the quality of late life for all citizens.
Catalog: 2025-2026 *Last Updated:* 9/12/2026

Gen Ed Course: Yes
Gen Ed Area: PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Gen Ed Requirement: Cultural Competence (GEC 115)

CORE-42 Course: No
CORE-42 Area:
MOTR Code - MOTR Title: -

Is credit also available through:

> **Advanced Placement (AP)?:** No
> **College Level Exam Program (CLEP)?:** No
> **International Baccalaureate (IB)?:** No
> *(click link for more information and required scores)*

Responses and Advice from Department Representatives
Last Updated: 2/17/2026

The following responses apply to: Both seated and online courses

What expectations do you have for students in this course?
Be open and curious about aging across the lifespan.
Be willing to reflect on personal assumptions about aging and consider alternative perspectives.
Complete readings and assignments on time and engage thoughtfully with the course materials.
Participate respectfully in discussions about generational differences, ageism, health, and society.
In online sections, manage time independently and remain consistent with journaling and module participation

What types of study skills do you expect students to use in this course?
Independent time management, especially in online sections
Careful reading and identification of key concepts
Reflective thinking skills, particularly for journaling assignments
Connecting course concepts with personal and observed experiences with aging
Ability to follow detailed assignment instructions and grading criteria

What study techniques seem to work best for students who do well in this course?
Spacing work out across the week, rather than completing it all at the last minute
Referring to the syllabus and assignment descriptions while completing work to ensure all criteria are addressed
Writing journal reflections consistently over time instead of rushing multiple entries at once
Connecting course material to real life observations
Rewriting key concepts in own words and applying them to practical examples
Asking clarifying questions early rather than waiting until deadlines approach

What behaviors or habits seem to cause students to struggle in this course? What types of struggles do you see most often? What recommendations do you give to students who struggle in this course? What other advice do you offer to students for success in this course?
Falling behind in weekly modules and trying to catch up all at once
Not carefully reading assignment instructions before submitting work
Skipping journaling until just before it is due, which reduces depth and reflection
Not communicating when confused about expectations
Not fully following assignment descriptions – Keep the syllabus and assignment rubric nearby when completing work. Double-check that all required components are addressed before submitting.
Time management in online sections – Set aside a consistent weekly time block for this course and treat it like an in-person class meeting.
Underestimating the depth of reflection required in journals – Move beyond summary by applying course concepts to your experiences.

How do you describe the course to students when they ask "What is this class about?" (without using the catalog description)?
This course explores what it really means to age well, not just physically, but socially, psychologically, and culturally. We examine how ageism operates in everyday life and institutions, how different generations develop distinct worldviews, and what individuals and communities can do to improve quality of life across the lifespan. The course is about both your own aging and the world you're aging in.

Beyond meeting a General Education requirement, what benefits can students realize from choosing this course?
Increased awareness of ageism and tools to identify and challenge it
Completion of an ageism training module that builds cultural competence across age groups
Improved ability to communicate respectfully and effectively with older adults
Greater understanding of generational similarities and differences
Personal insight into lifestyle factors that contribute to well-being across adulthood
Students often report that the course changes how they think about their own future and their relationships with older family members.

Other than your major/minor/certificate students, what groups of students could find this course relevant to their degree program or career path?
Almost anyone. It is particularly relevant to students in health professions (nursing, biomedical sciences, health sciences), social work, counseling, psychology, sociology, education, business and management,

public health and policy, communication, marketing, law, human services, nonprofit leadership. Because everyone is aging and most careers involve interacting with people across generations, understanding aging and age-related bias provides practical and professional advantages in almost any field.