INT86FH – Aging & Longevity Studies
First Year Exploration Seminar
Winter 2025
Mondays 1pm – 1:50PM (HSSB 1207)
Course Syllabus


Dr. Albada and great-grandmother, Nanny.

Welcome! I am Dr. Albada, your instructor for this Aging & Longevity Studies Seminar course. I am an Associate Teaching Professor in the Psychological and Brain Sciences Department. I received my BS in Psychology and a minor in Gerontology (the multidisciplinary study of aging) from the University of Florida. I continued at the University of Florida, earning my PhD in Developmental Psychology, with an emphasis on adult development and aging and a graduate certificate in Gerontology. I am the director of the Thinking About Life Experiences (TALE) Lab, which explores why and how people remember events from their life (autobiographical memory), the implications of sharing autobiographical stories with others, and the links between remembering the personal past and psychosocial wellbeing across adulthood and cultures. I am also the Director of Education and Outreach for the Center for Aging and Longevity Studies (CALS), which is a multidisciplinary center on campus that seeks to improve the human experience by augmenting healthspan, ameliorating age-related diseases, advancing the vitality of an aging population, and investigating the societal impact of extended longevity through research, education, and public outreach.

Course Community
My goal for you is to feel comfortable and welcomed in our course community so that you have a successful learning experience. We will work together to accomplish this goal in a number of ways. First, the course will be a mix of guest lectures and class discussion and participation. Learning through discussion with peers and guest lectures will give you a greater appreciation for diverse perspectives and ideas about aging and longevity. We will need to be respectful in our interactions and appreciative of our diverse learning community. Second, some of the topics we discuss in this course can be emotionally-charged (dementia among family members), and thus creating a safe community space to share thoughts and feelings is particularly important. Third, creating a safe space and sense of community in our course will also require having an open line of communication about any changes, modifications, if needed, to the course as the quarter progresses. If you feel uncomfortable in our course community at any time please reach out to me to discuss your concerns.

Course Overview

There are more older adults alive today than at any other point in human history. This demographic shift has implications for all aspects of society: the economy, healthcare, education, climate change, and individual wellbeing. This seminar will showcase just some of the research occurring across the UCSB campus that is addressing the problems and promises of growing older and living longer lives. Faculty from multiple disciplines, such as Psychology, Biology, Anthropology, Black Studies, Computer Science, and Engineering, will provide an overview of their research area, and discuss the most pressing questions that are being addressed to help ensure that we all age successfully.

Instructor Communication and Office Hours

The best way to reach me throughout the quarter is **via the email system in *Canvas***. I teach several other large courses and thus if you email me directly, I might miss seeing your message and/or will not know which of my courses you are in. However, I check the *Canvas* email system regularly and get reminders from *Canvas* to respond to your emails. If you need to email me directly outside of the *Canvas* portal for some reason you can reach me at: nicole.albada@psych.ucsb.edu.

Office hours for this course will be **by appointment**. I will also stay around for a few minutes after every class to answer any questions you may have about the course material, aging and longevity, undergraduate and graduate opportunities - basically, anything. For lengthier discussions, please email me via *Canvas* to set up an appointment that will work well for both of our schedules. Please do not hesitate to contact me!

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Our seminar will meet on Monday from 1:00-1:50pm. You are expected to be there during the scheduled seminar time and attendance will be taken. On most weeks, there will be guest speakers coming. The first 20-30 minutes or so of each class will be devoted to the guest lecture discussing their area of research in aging and longevity. The remainder of the time will be spent with you asking the guest speakers questions, and discussing ideas with them and among your peers. We may also spend some of the class time watching videos or reading material related to the weekly topic.

Course Resources

Course Website
All information pertaining to and required for this course will be made available on *Canvas*. This will include the syllabus, course announcements, links to outside resources, like videos and readings.

Internet and Computer
This course will be in person. However, you will need access to the internet and *Canvas* since this is where all of the needed information for the course will be posted.

Course Requirements

Your grade in this course will be based on two components described below.

Attendance = 40 points
There will be 8 seminar meeting times throughout the quarter (there are two Monday holidays). Attendance at the seminar is mandatory. **Each attended class session will count for 5 points.**

The attendance policies are as follows:

- ***One absence is allowed***, without penalty (i.e., the points will automatically be awarded). Thus, if you attend 7 out of the 8 seminars you can still earn all the points for your Attendance grade (40 points).
- Up to 10 minutes late is considered tardy. Two tardies equals an absence.
- More than 15 minutes late is considered absent; same with leaving more than 15 minutes early.
- Two absences or more will result in an automatic No Pass grade.

Missing a class: You can decide how and when to use your absence. You get one without penalty, and do not have to tell me how you use it —you can use it for illness or to sleep in or to study for another class. There is no such thing as an "excused" or "unexcused absence." Coming to class is important to let the guest speakers know that you care about their topic and because much of the learning will take place in the in-class discussions. Thus, attendance and participation is important. If you are absent, please find a classmate who can fill you in, or ask Dr. Albada, if you have questions about anything specific.

Discussion Forum Posts = 60 points
The Discussion Forums will be a way for you to prepare for the topic and speaker each week, and to reflect on what you have learned in the class. There will be ***8 Discussion Forum Posts*** throughout the quarter, and each one will have two components:

(i) ***Speaker Question Post***: BEFORE coming to class, you must do the reading and/or activity that the guest speaker has assigned. This information is posted on the schedule below. The readings are popular press articles (non-scientific so even those without a background in the area can understand them) and the activity might include watching a video or listening to a podcast. After you complete the reading and/or activity, you will need to post a question to the Discussion Forum that you would like to ask the speaker about their research on aging and longevity. *The question should be detailed enough to demonstrate that you have read their work and/or done the activity.* This will get you to think more deeply about their research area, and also means that you will be prepared to actually ask them the question when they come to our class! After Week 1, ***the Speaker Question Post is due by Sunday evening by 11:59pm.*** **No late posts will be accepted.** Week 1 we will complete the Speaker Question post during class. This will help to ensure that you are prepared for Monday morning class (i.e., have read the speaker's work and/or done the activity, and thought of a question), and will give me time to read through your questions Monday morning so that I know what question you have for the Speaker! ***Each Speaker Question Post is worth 5 points (40 points).***

(ii) ***Peer-Response Post:*** AFTER you post your own speaker question, you will need to respond to one of your peer's posts in the Discussion Forum. Your peer's Speaker Question Post will ONLY show up after you have made your own Question post. This Peer-Response Post is to be made after coming to class, once you have learned more about that research area (e.g., "The speaker answered this question by saying that…"). *The response should be detailed enough to demonstrate that you have read your peers question and thought about it more deeply and/or thought about your peers question in light of what you learned during the class session from the speaker.* Responding to your peers' posts will give us an indication of overlap in questions that students have for speakers, and how engaged students were with the speaker during the class session. **The Peer-Response Post is due by Friday evening by 11:59pm.** **No late posts will be accepted.** Each Peer-response Post is worth 2.5 points.

Missing a post: One missed Speaker Question Post and one missed Peer-Response Post is allowed, without penalty. Thus, if you forget one week, or you did not do the reading/activity and thus do not have a Speaker Question, you can miss that post. You can still do the Peer-Response Post.

Course Grading

Your grade for the course will be based on: **Attendance and Participation (40 points) and Discussion Forum Posts (60 points).** Discovery seminar courses are graded Pass (P)/No Pass (NP). Based on UCSB policy, P grades will be assigned only for coursework equivalent to a C or better on the

letter-grade basis (73%/73 points or above). NP grades will be assigned for work equivalent to a C- or below (72%/72 points or below). No credit is given for courses graded NP. No extra credit is offered in this course.

All grades are final. Every effort will be made to ensure that your grade has been calculated correctly. ***A grade will only be changed if work was incorrectly graded or your points were miscalculated***. Grades are not given, they are earned. There are numerous opportunities to earn points in this class. Use them all to your advantage: every point counts!

Student Resources

Are you experiencing...	**Then you need...**	**You can find them...**
Challenges as a first-year, first generation, or minority student?	ONDAS Student Center (Opening New Doors to Accelerating Success)	1150 Kerr Hall | (805) 893-5009
Mental health or relationship issues?	Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)	CAPS Office (Building 599) | (805) 893-4411
Difficulty with financial aid, loans, or work study?	Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships	SAASB, Room 2103 | (805) 893-2432
Physical health issues?	Student Health Services	Student Health Building | (805) 893-3371
Facing drug or alcohol abuse issues?	Alcohol and Drug Program (ADP)	Student Health Building | (805) 893-5013
Food insecurity? Hunger?	Associated Students Food Bank	University Center (UCen), Room 3167 A | (805) 893-2276
Sexual assault, interpersonal violence, or stalking?	Campus Advocacy Resource & Education (CARE)	Student Resource Building (SRB), Room 1220 | (805) 893-4613
Need for accommodations for learning or mobility disabilities?	Disabled Students Program (DSP)	Student Resource Building (SRB), Room 2120 | (805) 893-2688
Need for tutoring, study skills?	Campus Learning Assistance Services (CLAS)	Student Resource Building (SRB), Room 3210 | (805) 893-3269
Challenges as a first generation student?	Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)	Student Resource Building (SRB), Room 2210 | (805) 893-4785
Challenges as an international student?	Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS)	Student Resource Building (SRB), Room 3130 | (805) 893-4785
Challenges as a transfer student?	Transfer Student Center (TSC)	Davidson Library, First Floor | (805) 893-2038

Departmental and University Policies

Academic Misconduct Policy

Instructors who have reasonable evidence of academic misconduct both report misconduct to the UCSB Office of Student Conduct. This allows the OJA to conduct an evidentiary hearing that may clear the student or may compellingly establish misconduct. If academic misconduct is established, the OJA, not the Instructor, decides the consequences other than the course grade, which is conferred by the Instructor. Any work (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill an academic requirement must represent a student's original work. Any act of academic dishonesty, such as ***cheating or plagiarism***, or ***unapproved use of AI***, will subject a person to Department and University disciplinary action. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, looking at another student's examination, referring to unauthorized notes or other sources of information during an exam, providing or receiving test or exam or paper answers, and having another person take an exam or write a paper for you. Representing the words, ideas, or concepts of another person without appropriate attribution is plagiarism. Whenever another person's written work is used, whether it is a single phrase or longer, quotation marks must be used and sources cited. Paraphrasing another's work, i.e., borrowing the ideas or concepts and putting them into one's "own" words, must also be acknowledged. Thus, submitting work that is similar to another students' work in the class is considered plagiarizing. Submitting your own work for multiple assignments is also a form of plagiarism.

Reproduction of Course Materials

All course materials (class lectures and discussions, handouts, examinations, Web materials) and the intellectual content of the course itself are protected by United States Federal Copyright Law, and the California Civil Code. UC Policy 102.23 expressly prohibits students (and all other persons) from recording lectures or discussions and from distributing or selling lectures notes and all other course materials without the prior written permission of the Instructor. Students are permitted to make notes solely for their own private educational use. Exceptions to accommodate students with disabilities may be granted with appropriate documentation. To be clear, in this class students are forbidden from completing study guides and selling them to any person or organization. This text has been approved by UC General Counsel.

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Course Schedule, Speakers, and Activity

Week	Speaker	Topic	Reading/Activity to be Completed BEFORE class
1 **Jan 6**	**Dr. Nicole Alea Albada** Associate Teaching Professor, *Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences*, Director of Education & Outreach, *Center for Aging & Longevity Studies*	Overview: Why to study aging and longevity	None
2 **Jan 13**	**Dr. Joel Rothman** Director and Founder, *Center for Aging & Longevity Studies,* Distinguished Professor, Wilcox Family Chair in Biotechnology, *Department of Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology*	Genetic mechanisms of aging, longevity, and resilience	Reading: Zen and the Art of Mitochondrial Maintenance: The Machinery of Death Makes a Healthier Life
3 **Jan 20**	**No Class Holiday - Martin Luther King Jr. Day**		
4 **Jan 27**	**Dr. Ebenezer Larnyo** Postdoctoral Scholar, *Data Science Center for Black Studies Research*	Effect of socioeconomic status, structural, and techno-cultural determinants on the quality of life of older adults	Video: Alzheimer's Disease Caregiver Burden
5 **Feb 3**	**Dr. Michael Beyeler** Assistant Professor, *Computer Science* and *Psychological and Brain Sciences*	Age-related vision loss and accessible technologies	Video: Towards a Smart Bionic Eye
6 **Feb 10**	**Dr. Brooke Gardner** Assistant Professor, *Molecular, Cellular, & Developmental Biology*	The role of peroxisome dysfunction in aging-related diseases	Reading: Brooke Gardner Probes the Cell's Peroxisomes.
7 **Feb 17**	**No Class - Presidents' Day**		
8 **Feb 24**	**Dr. Amy Boddy** Associate Professor, *Anthropology*	Comparative biology of cancer, human cancer in evolutionary perspective	Reading: Researchers Complete the Largest Compilation of Cancer Prevalence across Vertebrates

9 **Mar 3**	**Dr. Nic Thompson Gonzales** Assistant Professor, *Anthropology*	Changes in social relationships and integration with aging in non-human primates and across human cultures	Video: Leeky Foundation - Benefits of Social Connections During Development in Blue Monkeys and Chimpanzees
10 **Mar 10**	**Dr. Siddharth Dey** Assistant Professor, *Chemical Engineering* and *Biological Engineering*	Epigenetic mechanisms of aging	Reading: Keeping the Faith
Finals **Mar 17**	**No Class or Final Exam**		