Healthy Aging I: Behavioral and Clinical Outcomes
GMS 6715
Course Syllabus

**Course Director:** Stephen Anton, PhD
Associate Professor
Department of Aging and Geriatric Research
Email: santon@ufl.edu
Phone: 352-273-7514

**Credit Hours:** Three (3) credit hours

**Course Format:** This online course is tailored for distance learners in an asynchronous format.

**Course Description:**
Behavior contributes significantly to health, well-being, and longevity. An abundance of research supports numerous behavioral guidelines for health promotion in older adults, including regular physical activity; the maintenance of appropriate weight; dietary intake of fruits, vegetables, and fiber, coupled with low consumption of saturated fats; moderate use of alcohol; and the ability to cope effectively with stress. Thus, the purpose of this course is to present an overview of effects of lifestyle interventions designed to promote health outcomes in older adults. The course will emphasize the role that specific lifestyle behaviors have in increasing risk of functional decline and/or chronic pain during aging, as well as the role lifestyle interventions, can have in promoting health and function during aging. Behavioral approaches for conceptualizing and changing behaviors to improve health will represent the major focus of the course. The primary focus of the course will be intervention at the individual and group level; however, we will also touch upon the contributions of sociology, epidemiology, medicine, political science and economics to understanding health and illness.

**Schedule:** This course will be offered yearly during the summer semester.

**Course Objective:**
The objective of this course is an in-depth exploration of the major health issues facing the growing population of older adults, namely physical disability, cognitive decline, and chronic pain. We will examine the behavioral antecedents of major of chronic disease conditions that can affect functional capacity during aging and potentially decrease longevity. We will focus in detail on behavioral interventions to modify risk factors for disease and improve or maintain function, including the conceptual basis for the interventions, clinical trial data supporting their efficacy, and their application in clinical practice.
**Learning Outcomes:**

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

1. Discuss the role of lifestyle in the development of age-related conditions and diseases
2. Describe the effects of healthy aging on clinical and functional outcomes relevant to older adults
3. Discuss theoretical models and strategies to improve adherence to healthy aging in older adults
4. Find, analyze, and summarize pertinent peer-reviewed research literature in this area

**Course website:**

The course will be delivered entirely via the UF Canvas system at http://lss.at.ufl.edu (Links to an external site). Weekly homework assignments will be distributed via Canvas, and should be submitted by the student through the Canvas site as instructed.

**Course Communications:**

The online discussion board can be used to comment on the readings and assignments, ask thoughtful questions, and explore related concepts. You may also use the online discussion board to ask specific questions about course content.

However, questions your individual performance in the class should be sent via email to the Course Instructor via email at santon@ufl.edu. All emails will be returned as soon as possible, but please allow 24-48 hours for a response.

**Course Outline and Assignments:**

Welcome to Healthy Aging I. The course is set up in modules that correspond to each weeks’ topic. Each Module contains a brief introduction, a list of required and supplemental readings, other associated content and finally the weekly assignment. Rubrics for grading are established for each assignment so that you are clear on the deliverables.

**Technical Assistance:**

Please contact the helpdesk between 8 AM and 5 PM ET for assistance with the course web site. For a list of additional student support services links and information please visit: http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-services.

**Learning Resources:**

1. Topic articles will be placed on the course website. The information in these articles is coordinated with online lecture materials and serves as the required text for the course.
2. Discussion questions will stimulate critical thinking about issues relevant to that week’s topic.

**Prerequisite:**

Students must be registered students in good standing at the University of Florida. The course is open to individuals from all disciplines.
**Course Requirements/Grading:**

Each week, students will be required to read a set of materials posted on the course Canvas site. The weekly modules also include videos posted on the course Canvas site that each student will be required to watch. Readings will be taken from relevant journal articles, web sites, and other sources that will be freely accessible to all registered UF students.

**Weekly assignments:**

Each week, students will be expected to submit a project or assignment related to that week’s course topic. Point values for each week’s assignment will vary but will be stated with each assignment. Assignments will be posted on the course Canvas site. Some assignments will involve discussions among all students in the class; other assignments will be more individual.

Grades in this class are earned on the basis of points and then converted to letter grades (as shown in this chart). Letter-grade GPA equivalents are shown in the second table below.

**Grading Scale:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-66%</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>59-62%</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>&lt; 59%</td>
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A grade of incomplete (I) may be given if a student fails to complete the course as scheduled for unforeseen circumstances beyond the student’s control.

**Course Evaluations:**

At the end of the course, students will be asked to complete the anonymous UF course evaluation. You will receive information about how to complete the course evaluation later in the semester.

**Make-Up Policy:**

All assignments/projects must be submitted via the deadline provided on the course web site. Late work will not be accepted without prior approval from the Course Instructor. In the event of an emergency where prior approval could not be sought, contact the Course Instructor as soon as possible.
## Course Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Module</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interventions to Improve Physical Function in Older Adults</td>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Health Promotion in Older Adults: An Overview</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Behavioral Contributors to Functional Decline</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Dietary Interventions to Improve Physical Function During Aging</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Exercise Interventions to Improve Physical Function During Aging</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Cognitive Interventions to Improve Physical Function During Aging</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interventions to Improve Cognitive Function in Older Adults</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Behavioral Contributors to Cognitive Decline</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Dietary Interventions to Improve Cognitive Function During Aging</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Exercise Interventions to Improve Cognitive Function During Aging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Cognitive Interventions to Improve Cognitive Function During Aging</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interventions to Reduce Chronic Pain in Older Adults</td>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Behavioral Contributors to Chronic Pain During Aging</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Dietary Interventions to Reduce Chronic Pain During Aging</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Exercise Interventions to Reduce Chronic Pain During Aging</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Complementary &amp; Alternative Interventions to Reduce Chronic Pain During Aging</td>
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Copyright Information:

Please review the University policy regarding the use of copyrighted materials, which can be found on the Health Science Center Library’s web page: http://www.library.health.ufl.edu/services/copyright.htm

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities:

Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Course Instructor when requesting accommodation. The student must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the Dean of Students Office as soon as possible in the term in which they are seeking accommodation. The College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to assist students in their coursework.

University Policy on Academic Misconduct:

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students/php

Students are expected to abide by the University’s Academic Honesty Policy, and to adhere to the following pledge:

“We, the member of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.”

On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

According to the UF Student Guide, Academic dishonesty includes the following:

- Cheating - copying another’s work for academic gain.
- Plagiarism - representing another’s work as your own.
- Bribery - offering, giving, soliciting, or receiving goods or services of value for academic gain.
- Misrepresentation - altering facts (e.g., signing an absent classmate’s name to an attendance sheet).
- Conspiracy - planning with others to commit academic dishonesty.
- Fabrication - making up information to avoid punishment or other difficulty.

Counseling and Student Health:

Students may occasionally have personal issues that arise in the course of pursuing higher education or that may interfere with their academic performance. If you find yourself facing problems
affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with an instructor and to seek confidential assistance at the University of Florida Counseling Center, 352-392-1575, or Student Mental Health Services, 352-392-1171. Visit their web sites for more information: http://www.counsel.ufl.edu/ (Links to an external site) or http://www.health.ufl.edu/shcc/smhs/index.htm#urgent (Links to an external site)

Crisis intervention is always available 24/7 from: Alachua County Crisis Center: (352) 264-6789.