UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Our students, faculty and staff are located across Indigenous lands. On our Calgary campus, we acknowledge and pay tribute to the traditional territories of the peoples who made Treaty 7, which include the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprised of the Siksika, the Piikani and the Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation and the Stoney Nakoda (including Chiniki, Bearspaw and Goodstoney First Nations). The City of Calgary is also home to Métis Nation within Alberta (Districts 5 and 6). Our Calgary campus is situated on land northwest of where the Bow River meets the Elbow River, a site known as Moh'kins'tsis to the Blackfoot, Wîchîspa Oyade to the Îyâxe Nakoda (Stoney Nakoda), and Guts'ists'i to the Tsuut'ina and Otos-kwunee to the Métis.

At our Edmonton campus, we acknowledge the Treaty 6 region, the traditional homelands of Cree, Blackfoot, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/ Saulteaux/ Anishinaabe, Inuit and Métis people (Districts 9 and 10). We recognize the rich cultural history of the place, now called the City of Edmonton, which has, for centuries, been a traditional gathering place of Indigenous peoples from across Alberta, BC, and Saskatchewan.

At our Lethbridge campus, we acknowledge the traditional territories of the Blackfoot people of the Canadian Plains and pay respect to the Blackfoot people past, present and future while recognizing and respecting their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship to the land. We offer respect to the Métis and all who have lived on this land and made Lethbridge their home.

OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, RACIAL JUSTICE, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND DECOLONIZATION

The Faculty of Social Work (FSW), University of Calgary (UCalgary), is committed to promoting and actualizing equity, racial justice, diversity, inclusion and decolonization**.** We affirm that diversity and uniqueness are enriching and valuable, and that they can strengthen our teaching, learning, research, scholarship, and community connections. We aim to foster an inclusive, thriving and equitable environment for our students, non-academic and academic staff, and community members. We take the stand that equity does not mean sameness in treatment of people but rather requires measures and accommodations for diverse life experiences and circumstances to ensure that no one of a particular social group is disadvantaged, underrepresented or overlooked in all aspects of our work. We intend to address systemic inequities and compounded disadvantages due to intersectionality of social locations, particularly for those who are members of racialized communities, Indigenous peoples, Black peoples, persons with disabilities, migrant groups (including refugees and immigrants), 2SLGBTQ+ communities, linguistic minorities as well as those who have experienced socioeconomic, caregiving, religious, political, and/or cultural barriers to their education and employment. We also recognize, honour, and integrate into our work diverse perspectives, ways of knowing and doing, experiences, and strengths. An anti-oppressive lens, particularly intersectional, anti-colonial, anti-racist and decolonizing frameworks, will inform our work.

Please refer to our full statement of our [Commitment to Equity, Racial Justice, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization](#), our [Statement on Anti-Black Racism](#) and the work of the faculty's [Anti-Black Racism Task Force](#), our [Statement on Anti-Asian Racism](#), and the university's [Indigenous Strategy.](#)

Course & Session Number	SOWK 518 S01	Classroom	Online
Course Name	Gerontological Social Work		
Dates and Time	Start of Classes: January 12, 2026 End of Classes: April 14, 2026 Dates and Time: Synchronous Zoom sessions each Wednesday from 5:30pm - 7:30pm MT and 1 hour of asynchronous learning per week (see class schedule below) Add/Drop/Withdrawal Dates: Please refer to the course-specific deadline in your Student Centre[1].		
Instructor	Jennifer Hewson, PhD	Office Hours	Online by appointment
UCalgary E-mail	jahewson@ucalgary.ca	UCalgary Phone	N/A

SYLLABUS STATEMENT

Examines contexts, theories, practice models and skill development in the field of gerontological social work.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces the concept of aging, including definitions of aging and biological, cognitive and psychosocial correlates of aging. The course emphasizes critical examination of representations of aging, explores aging and related issues in social work practice with older adults and their families, communities and societies and examines a broad range of theories and contemporary issues related to aging and social work practice with older adults and their families. Domains of inquiry include biological, psychological, and sociological perspectives on aging and older adults. Students will critically examine the social constructions of old age, social work values and ethics, and social work practice within an aging society at the individual, community, and institutional levels. Social and economic justice, evidence-based practice, and capacity building will be highlighted throughout the course. Students will participate in applied learning projects as an integral part of this course. Professional communication skills will be practiced. Throughout the course, we will discuss how to apply the tenets of evidence-based practice to the theories and issues that impact aging. The purpose of this course is to highlight the key issues that face the emerging generation of diverse, heterogeneous older adults, as well as social workers and other professionals who will serve them.

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[1] In the Enrolled Courses table, under Deadlines, click on the Calendar icon by each course and the deadlines will appear.

This course will take place online via Desire2Learn (D2L) and Zoom. To best succeed in the course, students are expected to actively engage in all asynchronous learning tasks using the D2L learning environment and synchronous Zoom sessions. Dates and times of synchronous zoom sessions are indicated in the course schedule.

Course Hours: 3 units; (3S-0)
Pre-requisite: Admission to the Bachelor of Social Work

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. Identify and describe the trends, issues, and challenges related to aging and discuss their implications for aging in our society.
2. Explain and evaluate the theories of aging.
3. Apply theories of aging to practice with older adults and their families.
4. Identify and critically analyze a range of policy and programs designed to support an aging society.
5. Take responsibility as professional social workers to confront biases and stereotypes about older adults and to educate others about later years in life.
6. Adopt and apply an anti-ageist approach in their social work practice with individuals, families, and communities.

LEARNING RESOURCES

REQUIRED READINGS, TEXTBOOKS AND LEARNING MATERIALS

Hulko, W., Ferrer, I., Brotman, S., & Stern, L. (2020). *Gerontological social work in action: Anti-oppressive practice with older adults, their families, and communities*. Routledge.

Additional readings and resources for asynchronous activities will be provided in D2L throughout the semester.

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AND REQUIREMENTS

Web Delivery
This course is entirely web-based, delivered through Desire2Learn (D2L) and Zoom Meeting platforms. A laptop, desktop or mobile device with Internet access, microphone and speaker is required for D2L and Zoom access.

Desire2Learn
D2L is a course management system where you can access course outlines, assignment details and rubrics, additional course content, and the discussion board. A D2L site is set up for this course, which contains relevant class resources and materials. Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities located in the D2L site.

Zoom Meeting
Zoom meeting is an audio-visual, web-based program that will allow us to meet at a specific time for a "live" web conference (aka synchronous learning), so that we can have the opportunity to see and talk to each other virtually and discuss relevant issues. In the Zoom sessions, students can expect to debrief, discuss and build on their learning from asynchronous activities; engage in small and large group discussions; and connect with and share ideas with classmates and their instructor. Students are expected to actively engage in all Zoom sessions.

CONNECTION TO PRACTICE

Practice with older adults, their families, and communities is an important practice area aligned with the scope of practice, ethics, values, and grounding principles of the social work profession.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES

This course is an elective course in the BSW program. Students are encouraged to apply and integrate knowledge, skills and values learned in other social work and university coursework.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Important Dates for Winter 2026
- o Start of Term: Monday, January 5
- o First Day of Class: Monday, January 12
- o Fee Deadline: Friday, January 30
- o Alberta Family Day, no classes: Monday, February 16
- o Term Break, no classes: Sunday-Saturday, February 15-21
- o Good Friday, no classes: Friday, April 3
- o Easter Monday, no classes: Monday, April 6
- o Last Day of Class: Tuesday, April 14
- o End of Term: Thursday, April 30

Class Schedule (36 hours)

Weeks & Dates	Learning Modality	Weekly Topics*	Readings** & Assignment Due Dates
Week 1 Jan 12 - 18	**Zoom session** Jan 14 (5:30-7:30pm MT) **D2L Asynchronous Activities** (1 hr)	Demographics of aging in Canada and globally Role of social workers in gerontology practice	Introduction & Ch. 3
Week 2 Jan 19 - 25	**Zoom session** Jan 21 (5:30-7:30pm MT) **D2L Asynchronous Activities** (1 hr)	Intersectionality and diversity of older adults Ageism and counter-storytelling	Ch. 1 & 13 **Assignment 1 due Jan 23**

Week 3 Jan 26 – Feb 1	**Zoom session** Jan 28 (5:30-7:30pm MT) **D2L Asynchronous Activities** (1 hr)	Theories of aging informing social work practice	Ch. 2
Week 4 Feb 2 - 8	**Zoom session** Feb 4 (5:30-7:30pm MT) **D2L Asynchronous Activities** (1 hr)	Micro, mezzo & macro level policies	Ch. 11 & 12
Week 5 Feb 9 - 15	**Zoom session** Feb 11 (5:30-7:30pm MT) **D2L Asynchronous Activities** (1 hr)	Community resources and supports	**Assignment 2 due Feb 12**
Week 6 Feb 16 – 22	**No Class – Term Break**	N/A	N/A
Week 7 Feb 23 – Mar 1	**Zoom session** Feb 25 (5:30-7:30pm MT) **D2L Asynchronous Activities** (1 hr)	Practice topics 1 – trauma, mental health & substance use	Ch. 8 & 9
Week 8 Mar 2 - 8	**Zoom session** Mar 4 (5:30-7:30pm MT) **D2L Asynchronous Activities** (1 hr)	Practice topics 2 – elder abuse, legal & ethical issues	Ch. 5 & 10
Week 9 Mar 9 - 15	**Zoom session** Mar 11 (5:30-7:30pm MT) **D2L Asynchronous Activities** (1 hr)	Practice topics 3 – living with dementia, risk & frailty	Ch. 4 & 7
Week 10 Mar 16 - 22	**Zoom session** Mar 18 (5:30-7:30pm MT) **D2L Asynchronous Activities** (1 hr)	Practice topics 4 – housing, home supports & aging in place	No textbook reading
Week 11 Mar 23 - 29	**Zoom session** Mar 25 (5:30-7:30pm MT) **D2L Asynchronous Activities** (1 hr)	Practice topics 5 – end of life care, advance care planning & caregiving	Ch. 6
Week 12 Mar 30 – Apr 5	**Zoom session** Apr 1 (5:30-7:30pm MT) **D2L Asynchronous Activities** (1 hr)	Living & aging well	No textbook reading **Assignment 3 due March 31**

Week 13 Apr 6 - 14	**Zoom session** Apr 8 (5:30-7:30pm MT) **D2L Asynchronous Activities** (1 hr)	Integrating key learnings across the course	Concluding thoughts p. 269 – 273 **Assignment 4 due April 9**

*order of topics may be modified
additional readings and resources **will be assigned for weekly asynchronous activities

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ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM CONDUCT AND RELATED INFORMATION

INSTRUCTOR EMAIL POLICY

All course communication must occur through your @ucalgary email. We will respond to emails sent via your @ucalgary emails within 48 hours excluding weekends and statutory holidays.

GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

You are expected to practice professional communication in all interactions with the instructor and your peers. Please use your UCalgary email for all school-related communications. Your email should start with a proper greeting (e.g. Dear or Hello), address the instructor by name (e.g., Jennifer or Dr Hewson), and include a sign-off (e.g. Thank you or Best regards) and your name.

GUIDELINES FOR ZOOM SESSIONS IN ONLINE CLASSES

You are expected to participate actively in all Zoom sessions. Please be prepared, as best as you are able, to join class in a quiet space that allows you to be fully present and engaged in Zoom sessions. Unless advised (or agreed) otherwise by your instructor, your video camera should be turned on during class, and you are expected to manage your microphone as required. Please reach out to your instructor if you experience challenges that prevent you from having your camera turned on. You are expected to behave in a professional manner during all Zoom sessions. Please do not share the Zoom links with anyone who is not registered in this course.

MEDIA RECORDING FOR ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING (By Instructor)

The instructor may use Zoom media recordings as part of the assessment of students. This may include but is not limited to classroom discussions, presentations, clinical practice, or skills testing that occur during the course. These recordings will be used for student assessment purposes only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose. Students will be advised before the instructor initiates a recording of a Zoom session.

RECORDINGS OF ONLINE CLASSES (By Students)

Recording of lectures by students is generally not permitted. You must seek authorization from your instructor to record any lecture. Any student with a disability who is registered with Student

Accessibility Services (SAS), and who requires an accommodation to make audio recordings of course material shall be provided with such an accommodation if determined necessary by an Access Advisor in SAS. Please refer to the [Recording of Lectures Policy](#) and [Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy](#) for the additional information.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS

All assignment are individual assignments.

Assignment 1: Exploring Your Perspectives on Aging
Value: 25% Due: January 23, 2026 by 11:59pm MT
Aligned Course Learning Outcomes: 5 & 6

Assignment details: Complete one of the facts on aging tools provided in our D2L site (Assignment 1 module). After completing the assessment, submit a 500-word (approx. 2-pages double spaced) critical analysis of your responses reflecting on what did/did not surprise you about your responses, the underlying values and assumptions you hold about aging that may have impacted your responses, factors (e.g., culture, religion, social media, specific person) that may have shaped your values and assumptions, and next steps you would like to take to further explore your perspectives on aging.

Assessment Criteria: Further details and an assessment rubric will be provided in D2L.

Assignment 2: Life Story Narrative and Counter Story
Value: 30% Due: February 12, 2026 by 11:59pm MT
Aligned Course Learning Outcomes: 1 – 6

Assignment Details: Refer to one of the life story narratives detailed in Chapter 13 of the required textbook or select an alternative life story narrative (to be discussed in advance with the instructor). Apply your learnings about ageism, intersectionality, theories of aging, and anti-oppressive practice to analyzing the selected narrative. Share your analysis as a visual representation of their story and provide a counter-story to demonstrate your learnings about anti-oppressive gerontology principles in social work practice.

Assessment Criteria: Further details and an assessment rubric will be provided in D2L.

Assignment 3: Environmental Scan of Practice Topic
Value: 30% Due: March 31, 2026 by 11:59pm MT

Aligned Course Learning Outcomes: 1 & 4

Assignment details: Select one of the practice topics from Weeks 7-11 or identify an alternative practice topic (to be discussed in advance with the instructor). Share the rationale for your selection and relevance to social work practice with older adults. Using the Internet, conduct an environmental scan of community resources and supports available in your city and/or community. Use this scan to develop a practical resource guide. Identify an agency or organization that could benefit from your scan (i.e., contribution of knowledge to impact/dissemination).

Assessment Criteria: Further details and an assessment rubric will be provided in D2L.

Assignment 4: Course Engagement
Value: 15% Due: Ongoing engagement throughout the term & summative reflection
and self-assessment due by Thursday, April 9, 2026 11:59pm MT
Aligned Course Learning Outcomes: All

Assignment details: This class is highly experiential in nature, and student participation is considered essential to individual and class learning. The course engagement grade is based on your dedication to being an active and engaged learner in **weekly**: 1) synchronous Zoom sessions and class activities, 2) required readings, and 3) asynchronous activities. A template will be provided for you to include a reflection and self-assessment mark of your engagement each week as well as a summative reflection of your engagement across the term and the total of your weekly self-assessment marks. Your instructor will provide an overall grade for this assignment based on your submission and their observations throughout the course.

Detailed instructions and a grading rubric will be posted in D2L.

ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE AND COURSE ENGAGEMENT EXPECTATIONS

You are expected to be fully present and engaged in all class activities and discussions. These are part of the course engagement grade, as outlined in the assessment components section above.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

Submit all assignments electronically through their respective D2L dropbox or discussion board. The required format for assignments (e.g., visual, written) will be indicated in the assignment details in D2L. Assignment submissions should have a file name as follows: "Full name of student and assignment number" (e.g., Jasper Tremblay Assignment 2). Please note that it is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that the proper version is submitted.

MISSED OR LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignments will be accepted only in exceptional circumstances with instructor approval. Late assignments that have not been granted an extension will have 5% per day deducted.

EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITING

All assignments will be assessed partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization. Sources must be properly documented and referenced using APA 7th edition format. If you need writing support, please connect with the Student Success Centre.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

It is expected that all work submitted in assignments is the student's own work, written expressly by the student for this particular course. Students are reminded that academic misconduct, including plagiarism, has serious consequences, as set out in the University Calendar.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TOOLS

In this course, you are expected to integrate, critically analyze, and reflect on the required readings, Zoom session content, weekly asynchronous resources, and additional resources you identify to complete the assignments and asynchronous activities. If you intend to use artificial intelligence tools as learning aids or to help produce assignments, please discuss with your instructor in advance. You are ultimately accountable for the work you submit. Your approved use of AI tools must be documented in an appendix for each assignment. The documentation should include what tool(s) were used, how they were used, how the results from the AI were incorporated into the submitted work, what you did to verify the AI generated results, what you did to extend your work beyond the AI generated contents and your critical reflection on ethical use of AI tools. Failure to cite the use of AI generated content in an assignment will be considered a breach of academic integrity and subject to Academic Misconduct procedures.

GRADING

A student's final grade for the course is the sum of the separate assignments. It is not necessary to pass each assignment separately in order to pass the course. The University of Calgary Undergraduate Grading System and Faculty of Social Work Percentage Conversion will be used. This grading system overrides the grading system in D2L.

Final, overall grades only will be rounded to the nearest whole number (not individual assignments). For example, a final course numeric grade of 84.5% will be rounded to 85%, and a final course numeric grade of 84.3% will be rounded to 84%.

Grade	Grade Point	Description	Percentage Range
A+	4.0	Outstanding performance	95-100
A	4.0	Excellent performance	85-94
A-	3.7	Approaching excellent performance	80-84
B+	3.3	Exceeding good performance	77-79
B	3.0	Good performance	73-76
B-	2.7	Approaching good performance	70-72
C+	2.3	Exceeding satisfactory performance	67-69
C	2.00	Satisfactory performance	63-66

C-	1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance	60-62
D+	1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	57-59
D	1.00	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject.	50-56
F	0.00	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	Below 50
CG		Credit Granted. Not included in the GPA calculation. See section F.1.3 for additional detail.	
CR		Completed Requirements. Carries no weight in calculating the grade point average. This will be noted in the calendar description as "Not Included in GPA" where applicable.	

COURSE EXPERIENCE FEEDBACK

At the close of each term, students can provide feedback on their academic learning experience in their courses, including their instructors, through university-wide online surveys. They will receive an email from UCalgary Course Experience Surveys with direct links to their current course surveys, or they can access within the D2L course shell. Students are welcome to discuss the process and content of the course at any time with the instructor. They are expected to provide comments that are consistent with the University of Calgary Code of Conduct, the Alberta College of Social Work Standards of Practice (2023) and the Canadian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics (2024).

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY POLICIES AND SUPPORTS

Professional Conduct

As members of the University community, students and staff are expected to demonstrate conduct that is consistent with the University of Calgary's Code of Conduct. They are also expected to demonstrate professional behaviour in class that promotes and maintains a positive and productive learning environment. Consistent with the aims of the Social Work Program and the University of Calgary, all students and staff are expected to respect, appreciate, and encourage expression of diverse world views and perspectives; to offer their fellow community members unconditional respect and constructive feedback; and to contribute to building learning communities that promote individual and collective professional and personal growth. While critical thought and debate is valued in response to concepts and opinions shared in class, feedback must always be focused on the ideas or opinions shared and not on the person who has stated them.

Students and staff are expected to model behaviours in class, including evaluations of teaching and learning, that are consistent with our professional values and ethics, as outlined in the Canadian

Association for Social Workers, Code of Ethics (2024) and the Alberta College of Social Work Standards of Practice (2023).

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures. Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS). SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their instructor. Please refer to the full policy on Student Accommodations.

Research Ethics

Students are advised that any research with human participants – _including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation – _must have the approval of the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board or the Conjoint Health Research Ethics Board.
In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required. Some courses will include assignments that involve conducting research with human participants; in these cases, the instructor will have applied for and received ethics approval for the course assignment.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please refer to the Integrity and Conduct section in the University of Calgary Calendar.

Instructor Intellectual Property

Course materials created by professor(s) (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the professor(s). These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the professor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

Copyright Legislation

All students who use materials protected by copyright are expected to comply with the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright and requirements of the Copyright Act to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of Calgary's Sexual and Gender-based Violence Policy guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances.

Other Important Information

Please visit the Registrar's website for additional important information on the following:
- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/ Assembly Points
- Safewalk