GMS 6484 | Geriatric and Age-Related Diseases

Course Syllabus

Instructor Information

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Office Hours: By appointment via Zoom
Preferred Method of Communication: Email

Office Location

On Zoom. Link available on the course website.

Course Details

Course Format: Online
Credit Hours: 3 (Students are expected to engage in approximately 9 hours of coursework per week for this 3-credit course)

Course Description

As populations live longer, healthy aging is increasingly challenged by multimorbidity, geriatric syndromes and complex functional decline. This course helps students understand how multisystem aging processes shape clinical presentations in older adults and why aging care requires integrated, systems-based approaches.

Students will explore major geriatric syndromes, including frailty, falls, polypharmacy, delirium and functional impairment. Emphasis is placed on understanding aging as a heterogeneous, whole-body process driven by interconnected biological changes rather than a single-disease model. Through a patient-centered perspective, the course explores major geriatric syndromes, common age-related diseases, systems-level interactions among multiple organ systems, functional and cognitive changes with aging and the role of care teams in geriatric care.

Required Materials

There are no items required or recommended for this course.

Learning Resources

Learning resources in this course may include the following:

1. Articles will be provided through the course website and are coordinated with lecture materials to support key concepts and serve as primary course readings.
2. Recorded lectures, presentations, or other multimedia content may be provided to reinforce course topics and enhance understanding.
3. Weekly discussions may be available to address questions related to lectures and course materials. Discussion prompts are designed to encourage critical thinking and engagement with course concepts.

Course Goals

This course aims to develop an integrated understanding of multisystem aging processes and their impact on complex clinical presentations, while preparing students to evaluate and apply interdisciplinary approaches to the care of older adults with multiple chronic conditions.

Expectations and Student Learning Outcomes

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

- Examine multisystem aging processes contributing to multimorbidity.
- Describe the medical, psychosocial and environmental factors that contribute to geriatric syndromes, conditions and diseases.
- Describe how age-related changes across multiple organ systems interact to produce complex clinical presentations in older adults.
- Discuss approaches to the care of older adults with multiple chronic conditions, including the roles of interdisciplinary care teams from the perspectives of patients, healthcare providers and researchers, and the policy implications of Medicare modernization and aging in place.

Course Outline and Assignments

The course is divided into 15 modules. Each module consists of specific reading assignments, videos, and other internet resources. For each module students will: (1) review the learning objectives and corresponding lecture notes; (2) read and complete the assignments as given; (3) participate in weekly discussion boards as assigned. Examples of course assignments include:

Reading Assignments:

- Each module includes carefully selected readings from textbooks, peer-reviewed articles, and other online resources that provide in-depth information about the module topic.
- Students are expected to read (and/or view) all assigned materials before completing the activities for that module. These readings will form the foundation for assignments and discussions.

Writing Assignments:

- Short essays or case studies: Students will respond to questions or real-world scenarios, demonstrating their ability to apply course concepts to practical situations.
- In certain modules, students may be asked to create a “lecture” or narrated power point presentation that addresses a certain question or problem.

Discussion Boards:

- Students are required to participate in online discussion forums. Each forum will feature a discussion prompt based on the module's topic.
- Participation involves posting thoughtful responses to the prompt, referencing course materials, and engaging in meaningful dialogue with peers.
- Peer Interaction: Students should reply to at least two peers’ posts, offering constructive feedback or asking questions to deepen the conversation.
- Discussion board posts should demonstrate critical thinking and an understanding of the module's content, encouraging collaborative learning.

Quizzes and Short Answer

- Some modules’ assignments are in quiz and short answer format

Projects:

Project will require students to apply the knowledge gained from preceding modules to a comprehensive analysis. Each project is a bit different; however, the idea is to create content so that the student may use the intermediate projects to help construct the larger final project.

Methods of Evaluation

Each student’s final grade for the course will be calculated as follows:

- Assignments: 60%
- Discussions: 40%

Total: 100%

Grading Scale

Letter grade and percentage

Letter	Percentage Value
A	90-100%

A-	87-89.9%
B+	84 -86.9%
B	81-83.9%
B-	78-80.9%
C+	75-79.9%
C	72-74.9%
C-	69-71.9%
D+	66-68.9%
D	63-65.9%
D-	60-62.9%
E	59.9% and below

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.

Late Work Policy

All assignments/projects must be submitted via the deadline provided on the course website. Unless you have an approved excused absence, a 10% deduction will be applied for each week an assignment is late.

Course Schedule

Week	Module
Week 1	The Geriatric Patient
Week 2	The Role of Geriatrician and Interdisciplinary Care
Week 3	Depression
Week 4	Dementia & Cognitive Impairment
Week 5	Falls, Fall Prevention, Fall Detection Technology
Week 6	Urinary Incontinence
Week 7	Constipation
Week 8	Urinary Incontinence
Week 9	Constipation
Week 10	Weight-Loss and Malnutrition

Week 11	Osteoporosis
Week 12	Polypharmacy and Deprescribing Movement
Week 13	Understanding Medicare Benefits, Aging Policy and Reimbursement Trends
Week 14	Preventative Care for Older Adults and Aging in Place and Smart Home Technologies
Week 15	Understanding Acute and Post-Acute Care Facilities of Older Adults

University Policies and Resources

Information about grading policies, support for students with disabilities, course evaluations, the Honor Code, and other course policies and campus resources can be found on the Syllabus Policies page.

Attendance Policy

Requirements for class attendance and make-up work for this course are consistent with UF policies and can be found on the Attendance Policies page.

Academic Integrity

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. 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." The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. See the UF Conduct Code website for more information. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Accessibility and Accommodations

Students requesting accommodations for disabilities must first register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Accommodations are not retroactive. Therefore, students should contact the DRC as early as possible in the semester to ensure timely support. For more information, please visit the UF Disability Resource Center website.

Technology Requirements

To successfully participate in this course, students are expected to have regular access to a reliable internet connection and a computer capable of accessing the University of Florida's learning management system (Canvas).

Students should be able to:

- Access course materials, including readings, recorded lectures, and multimedia content
- Submit assignments through Canvas
- Participate in online discussions and course activities

Students are responsible for ensuring their technology meets the minimum requirements for Canvas. For technical assistance, please contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or visit the UF Computing Help Desk website.

Copyright Information

Please review the policy for the use of copyrighted materials on the UF Smathers Library Copyright Guide.

Technology in the Classroom

For this graduate level course, GMS6484 Geriatric and Age-Related Diseases, it is imperative that all work submitted is your own. The use of AI tools, including but not limited to, generative language models, code generation tools, and automated essay writer, is strictly prohibited for all assignments. Any work found to have been produced with the aid of such AI tools will result in a zero for that assignment. This policy is in place to ensure the integrity of your learning experience and to respect the academic standards of this course. If you have any questions about this policy or need assistance with your work, please do not hesitate to reach out to your instructor.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online. Students can complete evaluations in three ways:

1. The email they receive from GatorEvals
2. Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals
3. The central Portal at https://my-ufl.bluera.com

Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens.

Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/publice-results/.

Student Support Services

As a student in a distant learning course or program, you have access to the same student support services that on campus students have. For course content questions contact your instructor. For related to your course please contact the UF computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357. For Help Desk hours visit the UF Computing Help Desk website.