

EXAM  
CODE **407**

CATALOG  
NUMBER **SOCx310**

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**PRACTICE  
EXAMS**

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# Foundations of Gerontology

CREDIT  
HOURS

**3**

LEVEL

**UPPER**

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## SECTION ONE

# Preparing for the Exam

## Before You Choose This UExcel Exam

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### Uses for the Examination

- Excelsior College, the test developer, recommends granting three (3) semester hours of upper-level undergraduate credit to students who receive a letter grade of C or higher on this examination.
- Other colleges and universities also recognize this exam as a basis for granting credit or advanced standing.
- Individual institutions set their own policies for the amount of credit awarded and the minimum acceptable score.

Examinees who have applied to Excelsior College should ask their academic advisor where this exam fits within their degree program.

Examinees **not enrolled** in an Excelsior College degree program should check with the institution from which they wish to receive credit to determine whether credit will be granted and/or to find out the minimum grade required for credit. Those who intend to enroll at Excelsior College should ask an admissions counselor where this exam fits within their intended degree program.

For more information on exam availability and actual testing information, see the [Exam Registration and Information Guide](#).

### Examination Length and Scoring

This examination consists of 130 multiple choice and other type questions. You will have three (3) hours to complete the exam. Your score will be reported as a letter grade. Questions are scored either correct (1) or incorrect (0). There is no partial credit. Each credit-bearing exam contains pretest questions, which are embedded throughout the exam. They are indistinguishable from the scored questions. It is to your advantage to do your best on all the questions. Pretest questions are being tried out for use in future versions of the exam.

The UExcel exams do **not** have a fixed grading scale such as A = 90–100%, B = 80–90%, and so forth, as you might have seen on some exams in college courses. Each UExcel test has a scale that is set by a faculty committee and is different for each exam. The process, called standard setting, is described in more detail in the [Technical Handbook](#). Excelsior puts each exam through a standard setting because different test questions have different levels of difficulty. To explain further, getting 70% of the questions right on the exam when the questions are easy does not show the same level of proficiency as getting 70% of questions correct when the questions are hard. Every form of a test (a form contains the test questions) has its own specific grading scale tailored to the particular questions on each exam form.

Please also note that on each form, some of the questions (referred to as pretest questions) count toward the score and some do not; the grading scale applies only to those questions that count toward the score. The area with percentage ratings on the second page of your score report is intended to help identify relative strengths and weaknesses and which content areas to emphasize, should you decide to take the examination again. Your grade

is **based on only the scored questions**. Therefore, the percentage ratings do not necessarily reflect the total percentage that counted toward your grade.

For the best view of the types of questions on this exam, see the sample questions in the back of this guide. Practice, practice, practice!

## Score Reporting

For most of our examinations, based on performance, an examinee is awarded a letter grade of A, B, C, or F. A letter grade of D can be given, but credit is awarded for A, B, and C letter grades only. The letter grades reported to examinees indicate that their performance was equivalent to the performance of students who received the same letter grade in a comparable, on-campus course.

More specifically, the letter grade indicates the examinee's proficiency relative to the learning outcomes specified in the exam content guide. Following are general descriptions of examinee performance at each level:

## Letter Grade Description

- A Highly Competent: Examinee's performance demonstrates an advanced level of knowledge and skill relative to the learning outcomes.
- B Competent: Examinee's performance demonstrates a good level of knowledge and skill relative to the learning outcomes.
- C Marginally Competent: Examinee's performance demonstrates a satisfactory level of knowledge and skill relative to the learning outcomes.
- D Not Competent (no credit recommended): Examinee's performance demonstrates weak knowledge of the content and minimal skill relative to the learning outcomes.<sup>①</sup>
- F Fail (no credit recommended): Examinee's performance demonstrates no knowledge of the content and no skill in the subject relative to the learning outcomes.

Credit is transcripted by Excelsior College for examinees who achieve letter grades of C or higher.

We encourage colleges and universities to use the Excelsior College letter grades of A, B, and C as acceptable standards for awarding credit.

<sup>①</sup> In general, two-hour exams do not award a D letter grade.

See page 30, at the back of this content guide, for a sample UExcel Grade Report for Examinations.

## Excelsior College Bookstore

The Excelsior College Bookstore offers recommended textbooks and other resources to help you prepare for UExcel exams.

The bookstore is available online at (login required): [www.excelsior.edu/bookstore](http://www.excelsior.edu/bookstore)

## Excelsior College Library

Library services are available to students enrolled in a degree program at Excelsior College. Created through our partnership with the Sheridan Libraries of The Johns Hopkins University, the library provides access to journal articles, books, websites, databases, reference services, and many other resources. To access the Excelsior College Library, visit [www.excelsior.edu/library](http://www.excelsior.edu/library) (login is required). Access to the library is available 24/7.

## Take Charge of Your Own Learning

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At Excelsior College, independent, self-directed study supported by resources we help you find is not a new concept. We have always stressed to students who take exams that they are acting as their own teacher, and that they should spend as much time studying for an exam as they would spend in a classroom and on homework for a corresponding college course in the same subject area.

Begin by studying the content outline contained in this content guide, at its most detailed level. You will see exactly which topics are covered, and where chapters on those topics can be found in the Recommended Resources. You will see exactly where you might need to augment your knowledge or change your approach.

The content outline, along with the learning outcomes for this exam and recommended textbooks, will serve as your primary resources.

## How Long Will It Take Me to Study?

Study for a UExcel exam is comparable to an equivalent college-level course. As an independent

learner, you should study and review as much as you would for the same subject in a campus-based college course. If you already have a background in the subject, you may be able to pass the exam successfully with fewer hours of study. It depends upon the learner as well as the subject, the number of credits (for example, a 6- or 8-credit exam will require more hours of study than a 3-credit exam), and the length of the exam. We strongly encourage you to create a long-term action or study plan, so that you have a systematic approach to prepare for the exam. We've included guidelines for creating such a plan.

## How Can I Create an Effective Long-Term Study Plan?

**1. Determine the time you will require to complete your preparation for this exam.** If you have not studied the subject before, you should plan to budget approximately 45 hours of study time for every credit: 135 hours for 3 credits, 180 hours for 4 credits, 270 hours for 6 credits, and 360 hours for 8 credits. These hours are rules of thumb based on expectations for a student taking a course in the subject; it may take you more or less time, depending on how familiar you are with the material and how easily you absorb the information studying on your own. Aside from the content review, you should then factor in time to search for and use other resources, and to complete any projects and assignments in the study materials that will clarify your understanding of the topics in the content outline (that part in the content guide where the specific areas of study are spelled out). Spend more time on concepts and areas in which you feel you are weak. Totaled, this is approximately the amount of time you should expect to devote to a three-credit, campus-based course. The actual amount of time you require depends on many factors, and will be approximate. If your background is weak, you may need to set aside substantially more than 135–150 hours. If your background is strong, you may budget less time.

Take a few minutes to review the content outline to assess your familiarity with the content. Then, in the space below, write the number of hours you will allocate to complete preparing for the exam.

Hours Required =

### **2. Determine the time you will have available for study.**

In self-study, you need structure, as well as motivation and persistence, and a methodical approach to preparation. There is no set class to keep you on task. You have to do that yourself. Construct a time-use chart to record your daily activities over a one-week period. The most accurate way to do this is to complete the chart on a daily basis to record the actual amount of time you spend eating, sleeping, commuting, working, watching television, caring for others and yourself, reading, and everything else in an adult's life. However, if your schedule is regular, you might prefer to complete the chart in one sitting and, perhaps, by consulting your appointment book or planner.

After you have recorded your activities, you will be ready to schedule study periods around these activities or, perhaps, instead of some of them. In the space below, write the number of hours you will be able to set aside for study each week.

Hours Required =

### **3. Divide the first number by the second number.**

This will give you the number of weeks you will need to set aside for independent study. For example, if you think you will require 170 hours of study and you have 10 hours available to study each week, divide 170 hours by 10 hours and you will get 17. This means that you will need about 17 weeks to complete this course of study. However, you will also need to allow about a week for review and self-testing. Moreover, to be on the safe side, you should also add two weeks to allow for unforeseen obstacles and times when you know you will not be able to study (e.g., during family illnesses or holidays). So, in this case, you should allot a total of 18 to 19 weeks to complete your study.

### **4. Schedule your examination to coincide with the end of your study period.**

For example, if you plan to allow 18 weeks for study, identify a suitable examination date and begin study at least 18 weeks before that date. (The date you begin study assumes that you will have received all of your study materials, particularly textbooks, by that time.)

### **5. Format a long-term study plan.**

You will need to use a calendar, planner, or some other tool to format and track your long-term study plan. Choose a method that is convenient and one that keeps you aware of your study habits on a daily basis. Identify the days and exact hours of each day that you will reserve for study throughout your whole independent study period. Check to see that the total number of hours you designate for study on your long-term study plan adds up to the number of hours you have determined you will need to complete this course of study (Step 1).

### **6. Record in your long-term study plan the content you plan to cover during each study period.**

Enter the session numbers, review, and examination preparation activities you will complete during each study period. While it is suggested that approximately 160–170 hours of study is required for this exam, each and every student may require different timelines based on their comfort with, and comprehension of, the material.

You now have a tentative personal long-term study plan. Keep in mind that you will have to adjust your study plan, perhaps several times, as you study. It is only by actually beginning to work systematically through the material, using the content outline, that you will be able to determine accurately how long you should allow for each unit.

## **What Learning Strategy Should I Use?**

The following guidelines are intended to help you acquire the grounding in the knowledge and skills required for successful completion of this examination.

### **1. Approach learning with a positive attitude.**

Most students are capable of learning subject content if they devote enough time and effort to the task. This devotion will give you a positive edge and a feeling of control.

### **2. Diligently complete the exact work you specified in your study plan.**

Your study plan is being designed for the specific purpose of helping you achieve the learning outcomes for this exam.

### **3. Be an active learner.**

You should actively engage in the learning process. Read critically, take notes, and continuously monitor your comprehension. Keep a written record of your progress, highlight content you find difficult to grasp, and seek assistance from someone in your learning community who can help you if you have difficulty understanding a concept.

### **4. Be patient: you may not understand everything immediately.**

When encountering difficulty with new material, be patient with yourself and don't give up. Understanding will come with time and further study. Sometimes you may need to take a break and come back to difficult material. This is especially true for any primary source material (original letters, documents, and so forth) that you may be asked to read. The content outline will guide you through the material and help you focus on key points. You will find that many concepts introduced in earlier sessions will be explained in more detail in later sessions.

### **5. Apply your learning to your daily life.**

Use insights you gain from your study to better understand the world in which you live. Apply the learning whenever you can. Look for instances that support or contradict your reading on the subject.

### **6. Accommodate your preferred way of learning.**

How do you learn best? Common ways to learn are reading, taking notes and making diagrams, and by listening to someone (on video or live). Others learn by doing. Do any of these descriptions apply to you? Or does your learning style vary with the learning situation? Decide what works for you and try to create a learning environment to accommodate your preferences.

## **Study Tips**

Become an active user of the resource materials. Aim for understanding rather than memorization. The more active you are when you study, the more likely you will be to retain, understand, and apply the information.

The following techniques are generally considered to be active learning:

- **preview or survey** each chapter

- **highlight or underline text** you believe is important
- **write questions or comments** in the margins
- **practice re-stating content** in your own words
- **relate what you are reading** to the chapter title, section headings, and other organizing elements of the textbook
- **find ways to engage** your eyes, your ears, and your muscles, as well as your brain, in your studies
- **study with a partner or a small group**
- **prepare your review notes** as flashcards or create recordings that you can use while commuting or exercising

When you feel confident that you understand a content area, review what you have learned. Take a second look at the material to evaluate your understanding. If you have a study partner, the two of you can review by explaining the content to each other or writing test questions for each other to answer. Review questions from textbook chapters may be helpful for partner or individual study, as well.

Study smart for your UExcel exam! Success starts with establishing a relationship with your advisor.

## Using UExcel Practice Exams

The official UExcel practice exams are highly recommended as part of your study plan. They can be taken using any computer with a supported web browser such as Google Chrome.

The practice exam package comes with two sets of questions. Please be aware that there will be fewer questions on the practice exams than there will be on the exam you take for credit. Generally, the practice questions will not be the same as the ones you will see when you take the actual exam for credit. They are intended to expose you to the types of questions you'll encounter in the actual exam. Practice questions are a tool, and do not provide a full exam experience. For example, the practice question sets do not have time limitations. Begin with the Content Guide, especially the detailed content outline. Memorizing specific questions and answers on the practice sets is not as effective as using the questions to practice, along with the content outline, to see which concepts you may need to study further. To register for the practice exam, visit [www.excelsior.edu](http://www.excelsior.edu) and log into your MyExcelsior

account. **Please note: You must be registered for the corresponding credit-bearing exam before you can register for the practice exam.**

Practice exams are not graded. Rather, they are intended to help you make sure you understand the subject and give you a sense of what the questions will be like on the exam for credit. Ideally, you would check any questions you got wrong, look at the explanations, and go back to the textbook to reinforce your understanding. After taking both forms of the practice exam, you should feel confident in your answers and confident that you know the material listed in the content outline.

Practice exams are one of the most popular study resources. Practice exams are typically shorter than the credit-bearing exam. Since the questions are drawn from the same pool of questions that appear on the credit-bearing exam, what you will see when you sit for the graded exam will be roughly the same. Used as intended, these practice exams will enable you to:

- Review the types of questions you may encounter on the actual exam.
- Practice testing on a computer in a timed environment.
- Practice whenever and wherever it is convenient for you.

Take two different forms of a practice exam within a 180-day period. (We highly recommend that you take the first form of the practice exam as a pretest, early in the study period. Use the results to identify areas to further study and carry out a plan. Then take the second form as a post-test and see how much you have improved.)

Although there is no guarantee, our research suggests that exam takers who do well on the practice exams are more likely to pass the actual exam than those who do not take advantage of the opportunity. Note that since the practice exams are not graded (calibrated) the same way as the scores on the credit-bearing exam, it will be hard for you to use the practice exams as a way to predict your score on the credit-bearing exam. The main purpose of the practice exams is for you to check your knowledge and to become comfortable with the types of questions you are likely to see in the actual, credit-bearing exam.

## About Test Preparation Services

Preparation for UExcel® exams and Excelsior College® Examinations, though based on independent study, is supported by Excelsior College with a comprehensive set of exam learning resources and services designed to help you succeed. These learning resources are prepared by Excelsior College so you can be assured that they are current and cover the content you are expected to master for the exams. These resources, and your desire to learn, are usually all that you will need to succeed.

There are test-preparation companies that will offer to help you study for our examinations. Some may imply a relationship with Excelsior College and/or make claims that their products and services are all that you need to prepare for our examinations.

Excelsior College does not endorse the products and services of any tutorial or test preparation firm. We do not review the materials provided by these firms for the content or compatibility of their material and resources with UExcel® exams or Excelsior College Examinations®. No test preparation vendor is authorized to provide admissions counseling or academic advising services, or to collect any payments, on behalf of Excelsior College. Excelsior College does not send authorized representatives to a student's home nor does it review the materials provided by test preparation companies for content or compatibility with Excelsior College examinations.

To help you become a well-informed consumer, we suggest that before you make any purchase decision regarding study materials provided by organizations other than Excelsior College, you consider the points outlined on our website at [www.excelsior.edu/testprep](http://www.excelsior.edu/testprep).

## Exam Preparation Strategies

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Each learner is different. However, all learners should read the content outline in the exam's Content Guide and ensure that they have mastered the concepts. For someone with no prior knowledge of the subject, a rule of thumb is 135 hours of study for a 3-credit exam—this number is just to give you an idea of the level of effort you will need, more or less.

## Content Guides

This content guide is the most important resource. It lists the outcomes, a detailed content outline of what is covered, and textbooks and other study resources. It also has sample questions and suggestions for how to study. Content guides are updated periodically to correspond with changes in particular examinations and in textbook editions. Examinees can download any of the latest free UExcel content guides by visiting the individual exam page or from the list at [www.excelsior.edu/contentguides](http://www.excelsior.edu/contentguides).

### Using the Content Outline

Each content area in the content outline includes the most important sections of the recommended resources for that area. These annotations are not intended to be comprehensive. You may need to refer to other chapters in the recommended textbooks. Chapter numbers and titles may differ among textbook editions.

This content outline contains examples of the types of information you should study. Although these examples are many, do not assume that everything on the exam will come from these examples. Conversely, do not expect that every detail you study will appear on the exam. Any exam is only a broad sample of all the questions that could be asked about the subject matter.

### Using the Sample Questions and Rationales

Each content guide provides sample questions to illustrate those typically found on the exam. These questions are intended to give you an idea of the level of knowledge expected and the way questions are typically phrased. The sample questions do not sample the entire content of the exam and are not intended to serve as an entire practice test.

# Recommended Resources for the UExcel Exam in Foundations of Gerontology

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The resources listed below were selected by the faculty members on the examination committee for use in developing this exam.

Resources listed under “Strongly Recommended” were used by the committee to verify all the questions on the exam. Please refer to the Content Outline to see which parts of the exam are cross-referenced to these resources.

Resources listed under “Optional” provide additional material that may deepen or broaden your understanding of the subject, or that may provide an additional perspective on the exam content. Textbook resources, both Strongly Recommended and Optional, may be purchased from the Excelsior College bookstore at [www.excelsior.edu/bookstore](http://www.excelsior.edu/bookstore).

You should allow ample time to obtain the necessary resources and to study sufficiently before taking the exam, so plan appropriately, with an eye towards your own personal learning needs. See the sections in this guide on the Excelsior College Bookstore and the Excelsior College Library, and under Reducing Textbook Costs, to help you secure the Strongly Recommended resources successfully.

## Textbook Editions

Textbook editions listed in the UExcel content guides may not be the same as those listed in the bookstore. Textbook editions may not exactly match up in terms of table of contents and organization, depending upon the edition. However, our team of exam developers checks exam content against every new textbook edition to verify that all subject areas tested in the exam are still adequately available in the study materials. If needed, exam developers will list additional Strongly Recommended resources to ensure that all topics in the exam are still sufficiently covered. Public libraries may have the textbooks you need, or may be able to obtain them for you through interlibrary loan to reduce textbook costs. You may also consider financial aid, if you qualify, to further help defray the steep cost of textbooks. A section on open educational

resources (OER) has been included in this guide to help you locate additional, possibly free resources to augment your study.

## Strongly Recommended

Cox, H. (2006) *Later life: The realities of aging*. (6th ed.) Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Hooyman, N.R., & Kiyak, H.A. (2018) *Social gerontology: A multidisciplinary perspective*. (10th ed.) Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

The study materials may be purchased from the [Excelsior College Bookstore](#).

## Optional Resources

The examination development committee did not identify any specific optional resources for this exam. If you would like to explore topics in more depth, we encourage you to refer to available Open Educational Resources (OER).

## Library Resources for Foundations of Gerontology

This content guide is the first place to start to study. Excelsior's Library has also developed an Exam Resources page for the exam, based on this content guide. The Exam Resources page provides additional materials that complement the resources in this guide.

## Reducing Textbook Costs

Many students know it is less expensive to buy a used textbook, and buying a previous edition is also an option. The Excelsior College bookstore includes a buyback feature and a used book marketplace, as well as the ability to rent digital versions of textbooks for as long as students need them. Students are encouraged to explore these and the many other opportunities available online to help defray textbook costs.

## Open Educational Resources

There are many resources available online free of charge that may further enhance your study for the exam. Known as Open Educational Resources (OER), these may be textbooks, courses, tutorials, or encyclopedias. Any additional OER that you find independently should be used to augment study—not as replacements for the Strongly Recommended resources.

Most sites for university-based OER can be searched through [www.ocwconsortium.org](http://www.ocwconsortium.org) and/or [www.oercommons.org](http://www.oercommons.org).

Sites that specialize in web courses designed by college professors under contract with the website sponsor, rather than in web versions of existing college courses, include:

[www.education-portal.com](http://www.education-portal.com)

[www.opencourselibrary.org](http://www.opencourselibrary.org) (abbreviated as OCL)

We have included specific courses that cover material for one or more UExcel® exams from the sites in the listings above. It's worth checking these sites frequently to see if new courses have been added that may be more appropriate or may cover an exam topic not currently listed.

Sites like Khan Academy ([www.khanacademy.com](http://www.khanacademy.com)) and iTunes U feature relatively brief lessons on very specific topics rather than full courses. Full courses are also available on iTunes U (<http://www.apple.com/education/ipad/itunes-u>). We have chosen a few courses and collections for this listing.

### **Open Online Textbooks**

BookBoon

<http://bookboon.com/en/textbooks-ebooks>

Flatworld Knowledge

<http://catalog.flatworldknowledge.com/#our-catalog>

### **College Readiness**

Khan Academy

<http://www.khanacademy.org/>

Hippocampus

<http://www.hippocampus.org/>

Open Course Library

<http://opencourselibrary.org/collg-110-college-success-course/>

### **Study Aids**

Education Portal

<http://education-portal.com/>

Khan Academy

<http://www.khanacademy.org/>

Annenberg Learner

<http://www.learner.org/>

OpenCourseWare

<http://ocwconsortium.org/en/courses/search>

OER Commons

<http://www.oercommons.org/>

Open Course Library

<http://www.opencourselibrary.org/>

To achieve academic success, rate yourself at Excelsior College's Self-Regulated Learning Lab. Visit the Diagnostic Assessment & Achievement of College Skills site at <https://srl.daacs.net/>

It's free!

## SECTION TWO

# Content Outline

### **General Description of the Examination**

The UExcel Foundations of Gerontology examination is based on material typically taught in a one semester, three-credit, upper-level course in gerontology.

The examination measures knowledge and understanding of the biological, psychological, and social aspects of aging, the ability to describe, understand, and analyze issues pertaining to the functioning and well-being of older people, and awareness of the needs and realities involved in the aging process and the implications of population aging for society. Emphasis is placed on typical aspects of aging and problems associated with aging. The content of the examination is multidisciplinary in nature and covers theories, concepts, empirical patterns, and their implications for policy and practice.

No prior knowledge of gerontology is required before beginning to study for this exam.

### **Learning Outcomes**

After you have successfully worked your way through the recommended study materials, you will be expected to demonstrate the ability to:

1. Define how and why attitudes toward older people have changed over time, and identify common myths. (Aligns to GECC 5.1)
2. Recognize the impact of the changing age structure on society. (Aligns to GECC 5.1)
3. Identify the advantages and disadvantages of research methods commonly used in the gerontology field. (Aligns to GECC 2.1)
4. Describe common biological changes associated with aging and their impact on physical health.
5. Identify common changes in cognitive functioning and perception associated with aging and describe strategies for coping with them.
6. Identify factors that promote or help maintain good mental health for older adults.
7. Understand the major social theories of aging. (Aligns to GECC 5.1)
8. Assess the impact of roles and norms on healthy aging. (Aligns to GECC 5.1)
9. Identify important aspects of successful employment and successful retirement. (Aligns to GECC 5.1)
10. Determine factors that affect elders' participation and success in the political process. (Aligns to GECC 5.1)
11. Describe the major social programs developed to meet the needs of older adults in the US and the policy issues associated with those programs. (Aligns to GECC 5.1)
12. Define major legal and ethical issues associated with death, dying, and bereavement. (Aligns to 6.1)

## General Education Career Competencies Addressed in this Exam

GECC-2: Mathematical and Scientific Problem Solving: Apply scientific knowledge and reasoning to make evidence-based decisions.

GECC-5: Global Understanding: Explain how social, political, economic, or cultural forces shape relations between individuals and groups around the world.

GECC-6: Ethical Reasoning: Explain different ethical positions in relation to a problem or issue.

## Content Outline

The content outline describes the various areas of the test, similar to the way a syllabus outlines a course. To fully prepare requires self-direction and discipline. Study involves careful reading, reflection, and systematic review.

The major content areas on the Foundations of Gerontology examination, the percent of the examination, and the hours to devote to each content area are listed below.

Content Area	Percent of the Examination	Hours of Study*
I. Important Concepts of Gerontology	10%	14
II. Demography of Aging: Trends and Projections	12%	16
III. Biology and Physical Health	17%	23
IV. Psychology and Mental Health	14%	19
V. Sociology	14%	19
VI. Economics, Work, and Retirement	14%	19
VII. Political Behavior and Public Policy	14%	19
VIII. Death and Dying	5%	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	

\*Approximate: For those examinees who know the topic well, less time may be needed to learn the subject matter. For those who are new to the subject matter, more time may be required for study.

NOTE: Occasionally, examples will be listed for a content topic to help clarify that topic. However, the content of the examination is not limited to the specific examples given.

## I. Important Concepts of Gerontology

### 10 PERCENT OF EXAM

#### Hooyman & Kiyak (2011)

Ch. 1, The Growth of Social Gerontology

Ch. 16, Social Policies to Address Social Problems

#### Cox (6th ed., 2006)

Ch. 1, Emergence and Scope of Gerontology

Ch. 2, Problems, Public Perception, and Stereotypes of Older Americans

Ch. 3, Theoretical Perspectives on Aging

Ch. 7, Age Norms, Age Constraints, and Adult Socialization

Ch. 18, Aging and the Aged: Future Prospects and Issues

#### A. Definition of gerontology

1. The importance of gerontology
2. Study of aging as a normal developmental process over the life span
3. Study of aging from a societal perspective
4. Gerontology as a multidisciplinary field of study
5. Gerontology as a professional field: development and current status

#### B. Definitions of aging

1. Chronological aging
2. Biological aging
3. Functional aging
4. Psychological aging
5. Sociological aging

#### C. Variables involved in the aging process — similarities and differences

1. Intrinsic, age-related effects (for example: genetics, physiological changes, susceptibility to illness)
2. External, reactive effects (for example: social, cultural, and personal expectations)
3. Cohort effects: age differences vs. age change

#### D. Ageism

1. Definition and identification
2. Myths, stereotypes, and misconceptions concerning aging
  - a. Sources
  - b. Impact

#### E. Research issues

1. Cross-sectional vs. longitudinal designs
2. Validity and reliability of findings

## II. Demography of Aging: Trends and Projections

### 12 PERCENT OF EXAM

#### Hooyman & Kiyak

Ch. 1, The Growth of Social Gerontology

Ch. 2, Aging in Other Countries and Across Cultures in the United States

Ch. 11, Living Arrangements and Social Interactions

#### Cox

Ch. 1, Emergence and Scope of Gerontology

Ch. 4, Historical and Cross-Cultural Comparisons of Aging

Ch. 7, Age Norms, Age Constraints, and Adult Socialization

Ch. 8, Aging Minority Group Members

#### A. Population age structure (for example: numbers and percentages of older people, life expectancy, mortality, fertility, dependency ratio, population pyramid)

1. Cross-cultural similarities and differences

2. Historical views of aging and impact of modernization

**B. Description of the older population and comparison across age groups**

1. Demographic characteristics (for example: sex ratio, race, geographic location, mobility)
2. Social characteristics (for example: marital status, housing and living arrangements, education, income and poverty, labor force participation)
3. Health characteristics (for example: general patterns of acute and chronic illness, functional health, institutionalization, those over 85)

**C. Sources of variation within the older population — implications for policy and programs**

1. Cohort differences (for example: baby boom)
2. Age differences (for example: young-old vs. old-old)
3. Gender differences (for example: income, marital status, housing and living arrangements)
4. Racial and ethnic differences (for example: health and longevity, income, family, multiple jeopardy)
5. Locational differences (for example: urban, suburban, rural, and states)
6. Other groups (for example: homosexuals, prisoners, developmentally disabled, homeless)

### III. Biology and Physical Health

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**17 PERCENT OF EXAM**

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**Hooyman & Kiyak**

- Ch. 1,** The Growth of Social Gerontology
- Ch. 3,** The Social Consequences of Physical Aging
- Ch. 4,** Managing Chronic Diseases and Promoting Well-Being in Old Age
- Ch. 6,** Personality and Mental Health in Old Age
- Ch. 10,** Opportunities and Challenges of Informal Caregiving
- Ch. 11,** Living Arrangements and Social Interactions
- Ch. 17,** Health and Long-Term Care Policy and Programs

**Cox**

- Ch. 5,** Biological and Health Correlates of Aging
- Ch. 8,** Aging Minority Group Members
- Ch. 6,** Psychological Changes in Later Life
- Ch. 18,** Aging and the Aged: Future Prospects and Issues

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**A. General considerations**

1. Universality of aging
  - a. Senescence as end stage of aging
  - b. Inter- and intraindividual differences in senescence; commonalities in aging
2. Life span/life expectancy
3. Length of life and relationship to physiological parameters (for example: body weight, brain weight)
4. Aging vs. disease
5. Aging in populations

**B. Age changes**

1. Physiological vs. chronological
2. Control systems: nervous, endocrine, immune
3. Sensory systems
  - a. Internal (for example: stretch and pressure, chemical)

- b. External (for example: vision, hearing, pressure, pain, taste, smell)
  - 4. Structural systems: bone, muscle, skin
  - 5. Other organ systems: cardiovascular, respiratory, gastrointestinal, reproductive, urinary
- C. Theories of aging**
  - 1. Genetic program
    - a. Hayflick cellular clock
    - b. Gene coding for specific changes
  - 2. Wear-and-tear
  - 3. Cellular garbage and free radical
  - 4. Error
  - 5. Stress-induction
  - 6. Immunity-autoimmunity
  - 7. Somatic mutation
  - 8. Brain-endocrine aging
- D. Factors affecting aging and/or senescence** (for example: nutrition, stress, exercise, lifestyle, substance abuse, genetics, radiation)
- E. General concepts of health**
  - 1. Definition of health: World Health Organization (WHO) definition, objective health, subjective health, functional health
  - 2. Chronic vs. acute disease
    - a. Distinction
    - b. Relationship to age
    - c. Incidence in older people
  - 3. Presence of multiple chronic conditions
- F. Causes of illness and death among older people**
  - 1. Major diseases (for example: arteriosclerosis, arthritis, cancer, cardiovascular disease, cerebrovascular disease, diabetes)
  - 2. Stress-induced causes (for example: alcoholism, suicide)
- G. Psychosocial effects of illness**

- 1. Disability, excess disability, and impact on lifestyle
  - 2. Coping mechanisms
- H. Health care: Awareness and attitudes about health care; availability, accessibility, and use and effectiveness of health care**
  - 1. Prevention (for example: nutrition, drugs and interactions, physical activity, smoking, knowledge and beliefs about health, life satisfaction)
  - 2. Community-based services (for example: health maintenance organizations [HMOs], geriatric screening teams, visiting nurses, in-home services, informal network of care)
- I. Institutional care**
  - 1. Levels of care
  - 2. Causes of institutionalization
  - 3. Psychological effects of institutionalization
  - 4. Trends
  - 5. Quality of care

## IV. Psychology and Mental Health

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### 14 PERCENT OF EXAM

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#### Hooyman & Kiyak

**Ch. 5, Cognitive Changes with Aging**

**Ch. 6, Personality and Mental Health in Old Age**

**Ch. 8, Social Theories of Aging**

**Ch. 10, Opportunities and Challenges of Informal Caregiving**

#### Cox

**Ch. 6, Psychological Changes in Later Life**

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#### A. Cognitive functioning in later life

- 1. Reaction time/psychomotor performance (for example: physiological correlates, individual variations, impact of exercise)
- 2. Learning and memory
  - a. Information processing

- (1) Conditions affecting the learning of older people (for example: pacing, motivation, anxiety, disease)
      - (2) Age differences and learning ability
    - b. Short- and long-term memory: continuity and change
    - c. Implications for life-long learning
  - 3. Intellectual ability
    - a. Measurements of intelligence (for example: classic cross-sectional vs. longitudinal studies)
    - b. Factors affecting intelligence (for example: health, education, cohort differences, activity patterns)
  - 4. Creativity: needs and abilities
- B. Personality — continuity and change**
- 1. Definition, types, and measurement of personality
  - 2. Factors affecting personality (for example: personal resources, cognitive abilities, self-concept, physical status, sense of control, social competence)
  - 3. Theories of personality
    - a. Psychoanalytic viewpoint
    - b. Erikson: psychosocial development
    - c. Havighurst: developmental tasks
- C. Measures of well-being**
- 1. Dimensions of successful aging (for example: life satisfaction, morale, self-esteem)
  - 2. Theories (for example: disengagement vs. activity, exchange)
  - 3. Correlates and predictors
- D. Mental health and aging**
- 1. Psychopathology in later life
    - a. Affective disorders (for example: major depression)
    - b. Cognitive disorders
  - 2. Social factors affecting the mental health status of older people
    - a. Situational (for example: socioeconomic status, marital status, specific life events)
    - b. Labeling
    - c. Stress and coping
  - 3. Approaches to mental health intervention
    - a. Psychotherapies (for example: group, activity, milieu, reality orientation, pet therapy)
    - b. Pharmacotherapy/medical intervention
    - c. Institutionalization
    - d. Community-based services
- (1) Reversible vs. irreversible brain disorders (for example: acute disorders vs. dementias; causes, symptoms, progression, and treatment of organic disorders)
  - (2) Differentiation between dementia and depression
  - c. Other disorders (for example: functional, anxiety, paranoid, somatization, substance abuse)

## V. Sociology

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### 14 PERCENT OF EXAM

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#### Hooyman & Kiyak

**Ch. 2,** Aging in Other Countries and Across Cultures in the United States

**Ch. 8,** Social Theories of Aging

**Ch. 9,** The Importance of Social Supports: Family, Friends, Neighbors, and Communities

**Ch. 10,** Opportunities and Challenges of Informal Caregiving

**Ch. 11,** Living Arrangements and Social Interactions

**Ch. 12,** Productive Aging: Paid and Nonpaid Roles and Activities

**Ch. 14,** The Resilience of Elders of Color

**Ch. 15,** The Resilience of Older Women

#### Cox

**Ch. 7,** Age Norms, Age Constraints, and Adult Socialization

**Ch. 8,** Aging Minority Group Members

**Ch. 9,** Family Patterns in Later Life

**Ch. 10,** Work, Leisure, and Retirement Patterns

**Ch. 11,** Living Environments in Later Life

**Ch. 14,** Exploitation of the Aged: Crimes, Confidence Games, and Frauds

**Ch. 18,** Aging and the Aged: Future Prospects and Issues

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#### A. The social context for aging — basic perspectives and concepts

1. Life course perspective: intersection of history, society, and individual biography
2. Age stratification: age-grading of roles, age norms, and socialization
3. Person-environment congruence: implications for housing and services
4. Support systems
  - a. Relationship between formal and informal support
  - b. Types and sources of informal support

#### B. Sources of variation in aging — aging and the life cycle as social constructions

1. Historical and cross-cultural patterns: the impact of modernization
2. Cohort flow and social change
3. Population subgroups (for example: gender, race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status)

#### C. Housing and community context

1. Housing and neighborhood quality
  - a. Patterns
  - b. Sources
  - c. Variation (for example: urban, suburban, rural)
2. Friends and neighbors
  - a. Patterns of involvement
  - b. Role in support networks
  - c. Variation (for example: gender, socioeconomic status)
3. Age density of housing: advantages and disadvantages of age-segregated and age-integrated settings
4. Fear of crime and victimization
  - a. Age-related patterns
  - b. Consequences

#### D. Family roles and relationships in later adulthood — patterns and trends

1. Marital roles, marital satisfaction, and role realignments (for example: empty nest, retirement)
2. Unmarried older persons: widowed, divorced, never married, homosexual
  - a. Trends
  - b. Consequences of unmarried status
  - c. Variations (for example: cohort and gender differences)
3. Sexual interest and activity
  - a. Age and cohort differences
  - b. Normal aging vs. disease processes
4. Extended family

- a. Intergenerational exchange: patterns of interaction and assistance (for example: informal support, strains of caregiving, elder abuse)
  - b. Historical trends and future projections
  - c. Sources of variation (for example: socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity)
5. Grandparent role
- E. Other roles and activities — patterns and trends, age and cohort differences, sources of variation** (for example: gender, socioeconomic status, health)
- 1. Leisure activities and pets
  - 2. Voluntary associations and senior centers
  - 3. Volunteer roles
  - 4. Participation in education
  - 5. Religious involvement
- F. Multicultural perspectives on aging**

## VI. Economics, Work, and Retirement

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### 14 PERCENT OF EXAM

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#### Hooyman & Kiyak

**Ch. 12, Productive Aging: Paid and Nonpaid Roles and Activities**

**Ch 17, Social Policies to Address Social Problems**

#### Cox

**Ch. 10, Work, Leisure, and Retirement Patterns**

**Ch. 14, The Economics of Aging**

**Ch. 19, Aging and the Aged: Future Prospects and Issues**

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#### A. Income

- 1. Sources of and changes in income
- 2. Comparisons with younger age groups (or example: income levels and sources)

#### B. Consumer patterns

- 1. Expenditure patterns
- 2. Experiences: inflation, fraud
- 3. Growing private sector interest in older consumers (for example: Administration on Aging [AoA] initiatives, marketplace responses)

#### C. Work

- 1. Age-related patterns of work
  - a. Performance
  - b. Attitudes toward work
- 2. Job prospects and economic realities: retraining, redesign, part-time vs. full-time work, flexible careers
- 3. Age discrimination
  - a. Sources
  - b. Types
  - c. Legal status

#### D. Retirement

- 1. The retirement process — as a role, an event, and a phase of life
- 2. Decision to retire
  - a. Patterns and trends: individual and societal factors
  - b. Mandatory retirement: status in law and practice
- 3. Attitudes toward retirement: individual and cultural
- 4. Individual responses and adjustments to retirement
  - a. Impact on income, housing, morale, health, activity
  - b. Variation by gender, socioeconomic status
- 5. Retirement income
  - a. Social Security
    - (1) Development, financing, and current status
    - (2) Future issues and proposals
  - b. Private pensions
    - (1) Development
    - (2) Provisions

- (3) Legislation
- 6. Preretirement programs
- 7. Cross-cultural variations in retirement patterns and policies

## VII. Political Behavior and Public Policy

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### 14 PERCENT OF EXAM

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#### Hooyman & Kiyak

- Ch. 11, Living Arrangements and Social Interactions
- Ch. 12, Productive Aging: Paid and Nonpaid Roles and Activities
- Ch. 16, Social Policies to Address Social Problems
- Ch. 17, Health and Long-Term Care Policy and Programs

#### Cox

- Ch. 11, Living Environments in Later Life
- Ch. 15, Politics of Aging
- Ch. 16, Social Services for Older Americans

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#### A. Political participation — age and cohort effects

- 1. Voting behavior
- 2. Political identification
- 3. Political attitudes: conservatism, liberalism, alienation

#### B. Older adult movements

- 1. History, background, and impact
- 2. Advocacy
  - a. National organizations (for example: American Association of Retired Persons [AARP], National Council on Aging [NCOA], National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, National Council of Senior Citizens, Gray Panthers)
  - b. Administration on Aging [AoA] network

#### C. Policies and programs

- 1. Major public policies
  - a. Social Security Act of 1935: the three-pronged approach
  - b. Older Americans Act of 1965 and amendments: provisions and results
  - c. Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- 2. Health care policy issues
  - a. Medicare and Medicaid
    - (1) Basic elements, coverage
    - (2) Present and future problems
    - (3) Costs and financing
  - b. Long-term care alternatives
- 3. Housing
  - a. Alternatives (for example: public housing, nonprofit programs, congregate housing, foster homes, day care)
  - b. Factors affecting selection
- 4. White House Conferences on Aging: 1961, 1971, 1981
- 5. Private programs (for example: United Way, churches, senior centers)
- 6. Factors affecting service delivery and utilization (for example: awareness, availability, responsiveness, staffing)

#### D. Contemporary policy issues

- 1. Age vs. need
- 2. Intergenerational equity
- 3. Intergenerational linkages
- 4. Public vs. private sector approaches
- 5. Future older adults

## VIII. Death and Dying

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### 5 PERCENT OF EXAM

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#### Hooyman & Kiyak

Ch. 10, Opportunities and Challenges of Informal Caregiving

Ch. 14, Death, Dying, Bereavement, and Widowhood

#### Cox

Ch. 12, Death and Dying

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#### A. Issues concerning death and dying

1. Definitions of death and dying
2. Legal issues
  - a. Patient's right to know
  - b. Options
3. Euthanasia
4. Suicide

#### B. Responses to death and dying

1. Attitudes of older people toward death
2. Responses of the dying (for example: Kübler-Ross)

#### C. Care for the dying

1. Quality of life of the dying
2. Roles and responses of the caregiver (for example: family, clergy, physicians, nurses)
3. Respite services for caregivers
4. Care settings for the dying (for example: hospitals, hospice, home)

#### D. Bereavement

1. Effects of bereavement
  - a. Normal responses
  - b. Abnormal responses
2. Adjustment to bereavement
  - a. Functions of the funeral
  - b. Support networks
3. Sources of variation (for example: individual resources and experiences, nature of death)

## SECTION THREE

# Sample Questions

The sample questions give you an idea of the level of knowledge expected in the exam and how questions are typically phrased. They are not representative of the entire content of the exam and are not intended to serve as a practice test.

Rationales for the questions can be found on pages 22–26 of this guide. In that section, the correct answer is identified and each answer is explained. The number in parentheses at the beginning of each rationale refers to the corresponding section of the content outline. For any questions you answer incorrectly, return to that section of the content outline for further study.

1. Which is the best experimental design for studying the way intelligence varies with age?
  - 1) cross-sectional
  - 2) longitudinal
  - 3) period analysis
  - 4) time series analysis
2. In 1960, a study of parents of children with developmental disabilities was conducted. A gerontological researcher is now planning to study possible personality changes in those parents. What would be an appropriate research methodology for the researcher to employ?
  - 1) cross-sectional design
  - 2) longitudinal design
  - 3) period analysis
  - 4) time series analysis
3. Why is the ratio of males to females in the population over age 65 less than one to one?
  - 1) higher male birthrate
  - 2) higher female birthrate
  - 3) higher male mortality rate
  - 4) higher female mortality rate
4. Which two public systems are facing the greatest pressure from growth in the number and proportion of older people?
  - 1) health care and housing
  - 2) health care and income
  - 3) transportation and housing
  - 4) transportation and education
5. Which variables are used to determine the dependency ratio?
  - 1) older adults and nursing home beds
  - 2) grandparents and grandchildren
  - 3) retirement-age persons and working-age persons
  - 4) old (65+) persons and old-old (85+) persons
6. What do population projections of the baby boom cohort indicate about the future older population?

The older population will most likely be

  - 1) a smaller percentage of the U.S. population.
  - 2) better educated.
  - 3) less politically active.
  - 4) in worse health.

7. What is the primary reason that the search for universal factors associated with senescence is complicated?
  - 1) Aging is variable.
  - 2) Older people die before studies are completed.
  - 3) Funds for research on aging are limited.
  - 4) Gerontologists are unable to agree on a definition of senescence.
  
8. Which is a criterion for differentiating between biological aging and other biological processes, such as disease?
  - 1) Aging will occur in most members of a species.
  - 2) Aging may have both positive and negative effects on physical functioning.
  - 3) A functional change affects older adults more than it affects persons in other age groups.
  - 4) Aging comes from within the body rather than from outside environmental factors.
  
9. Based on the free radical theory of aging, what would be an appropriate behavior that might increase one's life expectancy?
  - 1) Exercise for 45 minutes at least three times a week.
  - 2) Eat foods rich in antioxidants.
  - 3) Eat a low-calorie, high-protein diet.
  - 4) Do nothing. Life expectancy is determined through genetic programming.
  
10. Which procedure would best minimize the negative effects associated with relocating an older person from one nursing home to another?
  - 1) Involve the person in planning the move.
  - 2) Accomplish the relocation as quickly as possible.
  - 3) Ensure that the new nursing home differs substantially from the old one.
  - 4) Anticipate the person's needs and make decisions accordingly.
  
11. Which finding resulted from research on older people's response time for complex tasks?
 

Older people

  - 1) process stimuli quickly.
  - 2) can no longer perform complex tasks.
  - 3) use trial and error to solve timed complex tasks.
  - 4) use strategies to help them perform complex tasks.
  
12. Erikson's psychosocial stage of ego integrity versus despair most closely corresponds to which of Levinson's developmental stages?
  - 1) early adult transition
  - 2) midlife transition
  - 3) middle adulthood
  - 4) late adulthood
  
13. Which theory suggests that older people who have low levels of social activity have a high degree of life satisfaction?
  - 1) activity
  - 2) age stratification
  - 3) disengagement
  - 4) exchange
  
14. An older person with a chronic mental disorder enters the mental health system. Which type of treatment will the person most likely receive?
  - 1) medication
  - 2) psychotherapy
  - 3) group therapy
  - 4) nutritional modification
  
15. Which term represents the idea that older people from historically underrepresented groups experience discrimination on the basis of age and race?
  - 1) age stratification
  - 2) double jeopardy
  - 3) ethnocentrism
  - 4) new ageism
  
16. Which best explains why people move to retirement communities?
  - 1) development of a major disability
  - 2) desire for low-cost housing
  - 3) easy access to public transportation
  - 4) interest in age-homogeneous settings

17. Which view does the concept of an extended family emphasize?  
Older people
- 1) develop family-like ties with friends and neighbors.
  - 2) live near and interact regularly with family members.
  - 3) seldom see or receive assistance from their children.
  - 4) wish to live with their children during widowhood.
18. Which is most likely to show a decline immediately after retirement?
- 1) community involvement
  - 2) family relationships
  - 3) health
  - 4) income
19. Which is the main function of retirement in the United States?
- 1) reducing the workforce
  - 2) rewarding people for service rendered
  - 3) supporting people too old for employment
  - 4) supporting people physically unable to hold jobs
20. Which pattern of political participation by older people is accurate? Older people
- 1) are less likely to hold opinions on current national issues than their younger counterparts.
  - 2) become politically conservative with age and tend to vote Republican.
  - 3) are underrepresented among those holding political office.
  - 4) are more likely to vote than their younger counterparts.
21. What is the major reason why the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program is underutilized?
- 1) There is too much red tape involved in the income eligibility verification process.
  - 2) SSI eligibility requirements vary from state to state.
  - 3) The older cohort is unwilling to participate in entitlement programs.
  - 4) Many older people are not aware that they are eligible for SSI benefits.
22. Which was the first federal legislation to address the needs of the aged?
- 1) Age Discrimination in Employment Act
  - 2) Older Americans Act
  - 3) Social Security Act
  - 4) Medicare Health Insurance Program
23. Which statement accurately compares the Medicare and Medicaid programs?
- 1) Medicare is the main source of payment for nursing home costs; Medicaid pays for nursing home costs in only a small number of cases.
  - 2) Medicare is an age-based program; Medicaid is a needs-based program.
  - 3) Medicare is financed by general tax revenues; Medicaid is financed by the Social Security trust fund.
  - 4) Medicare does not require the insured to pay a significant amount for co-insurance and deductibles; Medicaid requires the insured to pay.
24. Which of the following federal programs requires a means test?
- 1) Medicare
  - 2) Retired Senior Volunteer Program
  - 3) Social Security
  - 4) Supplemental Security Income
25. In Kübler-Ross's theory of dying, which stage is characterized by a sense of loss?
- 1) anger
  - 2) bargaining
  - 3) denial
  - 4) depression

## SECTION FOUR

# Rationales

### 1.(IE)

- 1) In a cross-sectional design, different age groups are compared at the same time on the variable of interest. A cross-sectional analysis does not account for the numerous period and cohort differences that exist when intelligence is measured in persons of different ages.
- \*2) A longitudinal design is best for studying the way intelligence varies with age. In a longitudinal design, a single cohort is measured periodically over a number of years. This analysis provides information about changes that occur with age.
- 3) In period analysis, there is no way to measure intelligence. Period analysis is used to determine how historical events that took place in a person's life influenced the person.
- 4) In a time series analysis, two or more cross-sectional comparisons are made at different times of testing (See 1).

### 2.(IE)

- 1) A cross-sectional design studies various groups of people and measures specific parameters of all groups at the same time. There is no measurement taken at a later time.
- \*2) A longitudinal design specifies a group of persons whose parameters are measured repeatedly over a period of time to eliminate the effects caused by such factors as the time when the person grew up or the education they received.
- 3) A period analysis looks at the effects of the historical period on a person when that person was a particular age.
- 4) A time series analysis examines several cross-sectional analyses done at different time periods.

### 3.(IIB1)

- 1) Birthrates are not the deciding factor in the sex ratio.
- 2) See 1).
- \*3) Males have a higher mortality than females at all ages in part for genetic reasons and in part for environmental and societal reasons.
- 4) The mortality rate for females is lower than for males at every age.

### 4.(IIB3)

- 1) Although health care is an area facing great pressure, the number of older people in the United States needing special housing is small. Over 20 million older adults live in their own homes.
- \*2) Health care and income are the public systems facing the greatest pressure from growth in the population of older people. Census data shows that one out of every eight people in the United States is over the age of 65. As people age, their health needs increase at the same time that typical annual income declines by 30 to 50 percent following retirement.
- 3) Although transportation may be a problem for some groups of older people, for most older adults transportation is not an area facing great pressure. Housing is not a great problem since most older people live in their own homes.
- 4) Transportation and education are not areas facing great pressure. Most older adults live in their own homes. Although more older adults are continuing some form of lifelong learning today than ever before, it is still primarily younger groups who are engaged in full-time educational pursuits.

5.(IIA2)

- 1) See 3).
- 2) See 3).
- \*3) The dependency ratio is defined as the number or proportion of retirement-age persons divided by the number or proportion of working-age persons.
- 4) See 3).

6.(IIC)

- 1) The decline in birthrates and death rates will lead to an increase in the number of persons alive.
- \*2) As jobs require more technical training, more people will complete high school.
- 3) Political activity remains high from middle age well into older age.
- 4) The health status of older persons has improved over time, not worsened.

7.(IIIA)

- \*1) Manifestations of aging are the result of an individual's genetics and the environment in which the individual grows and develops. Since there is essentially an infinite number of combinations resulting from this interaction, the outcome of the aging process is highly variable among different persons.
- 2) Older people are living longer and larger numbers are available for studies. As life expectancy continues to increase and greater numbers of people live to older ages, there is likely to be a continued increase in the number of older persons who can be studied.
- 3) Although funding for research is highly competitive, significant amounts of money have been allocated over the years to areas of research on aging, particularly for biomedical research.
- 4) Senescence, or normal aging, refers to the time-related biological processes that affect all persons. There is no general disagreement regarding this definition.

8.(IIIA4)

- 1) The aging process affects all members of a species.
- 2) Aging has a negative effect on an organism, whereas the positive effects are the result of the growth or developmental phase.
- 3) Functional changes affect persons of all ages.
- \*4) Aging is an internally controlled process, not something that is dependent upon some factor in the environment.

9.(IIIC3/IIIH1)

- 1) Free radicals are unstable oxygen molecules that are produced more rapidly with exercise and have the potential to damage the body.
- \*2) Antioxidants will reduce the number and activity of the free radicals and may have an impact on life expectancy.
- 3) A low-calorie, high-protein diet will do nothing to alter the production of free radicals or their effects in the body.
- 4) Life expectancy is determined in part by genetics with a major component that is environmental.

10.(III-I)

- \*1) A person who is involved in the planning is more likely to feel in control and more likely to experience fewer negative effects.
- 2) The speed with which the relocation is accomplished is not important.
- 3) Similarities and differences between the facilities may affect the reaction to the move and can be either positive or negative.
- 4) Even if the person's needs are anticipated and met, the critical issue is the degree of involvement of the older person.

\*correct answer

#### 11.(IVA)

- 1) Stimuli are processed more slowly as the nerve conduction velocity decreases, synaptic delay increases, and muscle contraction time lengthens.
- 2) Complex tasks may be performed differently, but unless there is disease or a disability, the older person can still perform complex tasks.
- 3) Trial and error is a method used by younger persons and typically takes longer to accomplish the complex task.
- \*4) Strategies help the person who is older to shortcut the complex task and perform the task more effectively and efficiently.

#### 12.(IVB3)

- 1) In early adult transition, Erikson would suggest, the main issue is the development of intimacy versus isolation.
- 2) During midlife transition, the person is preparing for the generativity versus stagnation issues that Erikson identified.
- 3) During middle adulthood transition, the issue for Erikson is generativity versus stagnation; generativity is the ability to support others, especially persons who are older as well as making a contribution to the larger world.
- \*4) In late adulthood, the issue for Erikson is ego integrity versus despair, that is, when one sees one's life as having meaning or not.

#### 13.(IVC2)

- 1) Activity theory suggests that people who maintain high levels of activity have a high degree of satisfaction with their lives.
- 2) In age stratification theory, the population is divided into age-based categories (for example, youth, adulthood, middle age, and old age). This theory does not offer suggestions on any aspect of life satisfaction in aging.

- \*3) Disengagement theory suggests that it is natural for people who are older to gradually withdraw from society and for society to withdraw from people who are older. Since this is an expectation on both sides, the person whose life activities decrease perceives this as a normal and a positive situation, and therefore, experiences a high degree of satisfaction.
- 4) Exchange theory suggests that people try to maximize rewards and minimize costs in their interactions with other people.

#### 14.(IVD3)

- \*1) Medication is often seen as the only means one has of dealing with this issue in an older person.
- 2) Psychotherapy may be effective but is not often considered because it is long term.
- 3) Group therapy is not necessarily going to be effective for a chronic mental disorder.
- 4) Nutritional modification has very little impact on a chronic mental disorder.

#### 15.(VB3)

- 1) Age stratification is the division of the population into age-based categories (for example, youth, adulthood, middle age, and old age).
- \*2) Double jeopardy refers to the limitations imposed upon individuals by being a member of a historically underrepresented group and by being old. Race and ethnicity are powerful determinants of the quality of life in old age.
- 3) Ethnocentrism is an anthropological concept suggesting that one cultural or ethnic group is inherently better than another.
- 4) New ageism is a term that stereotypes older people as needing assistance.

\*correct answer

#### 16.(VC)

- 1) Disabilities may have an impact on whether a person continues to work but do not contribute to a move to a retirement community.
- 2) Retirement communities are not necessarily low-cost housing. If they have services attached, they may be more expensive than stand-alone housing.
- 3) Public transportation is generally not an issue.
- \*4) Retirement communities tend to be homogeneous and for many persons, this is a very attractive feature that few other housing options offer.

#### 17.(VD4)

- 1) An extended family does not include friends or neighbors.
- \*2) In an extended family, family members over several generations or with several different levels of relationship (aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, etc.) interact with each other and provide reciprocal services as needed. The interactions are mutually beneficial and take place on a frequent basis because the members of the family live near each other.
- 3) Just the opposite is true. Older people enjoy their frequent interactions with adult children and may play a significant role in the lives of their grandchildren. It is also true that older people may provide just as much support to their adult children as they receive.
- 4) The overwhelming preference of older adults is to live in their own homes. Living independently, even in widowhood, is extremely important.

#### 18.(VID5)

- 1) Community involvement is something that is a part of the person's life history. For some, involvement may rise with retirement when there is more time to be involved.
- 2) Family relationships may be enhanced with the additional time.
- 3) Health does not fail in those who retire in good health.
- \*4) Income generally drops 40% or more for all but the most wealthy of persons who retire.

#### 19.(VID2)

- \*1) Retirement was designed to reduce the number of older workers in the workforce during the Depression. It is still used as a way to reduce workforce participant numbers.
- 2) General retirement programs are established to move persons out of the workforce regardless of whether or not they did a good job.
- 3) Persons who retire are not too old to work. Many persons resume working after retiring.
- 4) Disability insurance, not retirement programs covers persons who can no longer work due to physical disorders.

#### 20.(VIA)

- 1) Studies suggest that persons who are older are slightly more likely to hold an opinion about a current policy issue than are persons who are younger.
- 2) There does not appear to be a shift from one party to another as persons age, nor is there necessarily a move toward becoming more conservative.
- 3) With more time and more experience, persons who are older may be a larger percentage of the persons holding office, not a smaller percentage.
- \*4) Persons who are older do vote more regularly than do persons who are younger.

\*correct answer

#### 21.(VIIC1)

- 1) Red tape, although an issue, is not a major problem for most persons who receive SSI benefits.
- 2) The income level is set at the federal level, so there is no state-to-state variation.
- 3) Although there is a reluctance to accept help in any form, this is not the major reason for fewer people applying for SSI than are entitled to receive it.
- \*4) SSI is not well publicized and many people do not know it exists or that it is something for which they might be eligible.

#### 22.(VIIC1a)

- 1) The Age Discrimination in Employment Act was passed in 1967.
- 2) The Older Americans Act was passed in 1965.
- \*3) The Social Security Act was passed in 1935.
- 4) The Medicare Health Insurance Program was passed as an amendment to Social Security in 1965.

#### 23.(VIIC2)

- 1) Medicaid pays for far more nursing home care than does Medicare. Medicare has a severe limit on payments for this form of extended care.
- \*2) Medicare begins at 65 while Medicaid is available to persons who meet various income guidelines regardless of their age.
- 3) The Social Security Trust Fund finances the Medicare program; Medicaid is paid for from general tax revenues.
- 4) Medicaid requires no co-payment; Medicare does require a co-payment.

#### 24.(VIID1)

- 1) Medicare is an entitlement program that is based only on the age of the individual.
- 2) Senior Nutrition Program provides nutritious low-cost meals for senior citizens. The program also provides companionship when done in a congregate setting. No set price is charged; a voluntary donation is requested. The only requirement is to be 60 or over, or have a spouse over 60.
- 3) Social Security is an entitlement program. People must work and pay taxes into Social Security to get benefits. Most people need 10 years of work to qualify for Social Security benefits.
- \*4) Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a federal program of public assistance to older people. All SSI applicants have to demonstrate that their income from other sources falls below the prescribed minimum in order to qualify. This is a means test.

#### 25.(VIIB2)

- 1) Anger is the second stage in Kübler-Ross's theory in which the dying person recognizes that denial can no longer be maintained. The issue now becomes "Why me?" and anger, resentment, and rage may be expressed directly.
- 2) Bargaining is the third stage in which the person hopes that death can be postponed or delayed. The person negotiates, often with God, to try to delay death for some period of time.
- 3) Denial is the first stage in which the person is completely unwilling to accept that he or she is going to die. The person's reaction is, "It simply is not going to happen. Someone has made a mistake."
- \*4) Depression is part of the fourth stage in which the person mourns her or his death and feels a sense of loss. This period of depression helps the person who is dying to accept the certainty of death.

\*correct answer

## SECTION FIVE

# Taking the Exam

## Registering for Your Exam

### Register Online

[www.excelsior.edu/examregistration](http://www.excelsior.edu/examregistration)

Follow the instructions and pay by Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover Card.

### Examination Administration

Pearson Testing Centers serve as the administrator for all Excelsior College computer-delivered exams.

### Accessibility Services

Excelsior College is committed to the principle that every individual should have an equal opportunity to enroll in an Excelsior College degree program, to register for courses or examinations in order to demonstrate their knowledge and skills under appropriate conditions, and to complete a degree.

The Accessibility Services Office at Excelsior College is responsible for considering requests for reasonable accommodations for individuals with verifiable, documented disabilities. If you are requesting an accommodation due to a disability/condition, complete a [Request for Accommodation form](#).

### Computer-Delivered Testing

The UExcel exams are delivered by computer. You can take this exam either in a [Pearson VUE testing center](#) or at your home or office with an online proctor. If you are interested in remote proctoring, visit [PearsonVUE OnVUE online proctoring](#).

The system is designed to be as user-friendly as possible, even for those with little or no computer experience. On-screen instructions are similar to those you would see in a paper examination booklet. You will use either the keyboard or the mouse to submit your answers, depending upon the type of question.

Before taking your exam, we strongly encourage you to go on a virtual tour of the testing center. To access this tour, click the What to Expect in a Pearson VUE test center at the following link: [home.pearsonvue.com/test-taker/security.aspx](http://home.pearsonvue.com/test-taker/security.aspx)

You also will receive a small, erasable whiteboard if you need one.

### Breaks

Breaks are only permitted for exams taken at Pearson VUE Testing Centers, and are not permitted during exams delivered via online proctoring.

### Online Proctoring

As of spring 2021, Excelsior is offering an [online delivery option](#) for UExcel exams, using OnVUE, Pearson VUE's online delivery and proctoring service.

You must use a personal (vs. an employer's) computer if you want to take the exam online and not in a testing center, so the exam can be effectively delivered to you.

Breaks are not allowed during an exam taken online from home. You may not leave your seat during an online-proctored exam, so be prepared to sit for two or three hours. If you need extra time, the exam will have to be taken at a PearsonVUE Testing Center, and an accommodation formally requested.

NOTE: English Composition, Spanish, Music, and College Writing will NOT be available for online proctoring.

# On the Day of Your Exam

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## Important Reminders

On the day of your exam, remember to:

- dress comfortably: the computer will not mind that you're wearing your favorite relaxation outfit
- arrive at the test site rested and prepared to concentrate for an extended period
- allow sufficient time to travel, park, and locate the test center
- be prepared for possible variations in temperature at the test center due to weather changes or energy conservation measures
- bring your ID, but otherwise, don't weigh yourself down with belongings that will have to be kept in a locker during the test.

## Academic Integrity Nondisclosure Statement

- All examinees must agree to the terms of the Excelsior College Academic Integrity Policy before taking an examination. The agreement will be presented on screen at the Pearson VUE Testing Center before the start of your exam.
- Once the examinee agrees to the terms of the Academic Integrity Nondisclosure Agreement (NDA), the exam will begin.

If you choose not to accept the terms of the agreement

- your exam will be terminated
- you will be required to leave the testing center
- you will not be eligible for a refund. For more information, review the Student Policy Handbook at [www.excelsior.edu/studentpolicyhandbook](http://www.excelsior.edu/studentpolicyhandbook).

Student behavior is monitored during and after the exam. Electronic measures are used to monitor the security of test items and scan for illegal use of intellectual property. This monitoring includes surveillance of Internet chat rooms, websites, and other public forums.

## UExcel Grade Report

After you complete the exam, you will be issued a UExcel Grade Report for Examinations. See the [sample UExcel Grade Report](#) in this content guide.

## Grade Appeals

If you believe that your score grade is incorrect, you may appeal your grade to [examcredit@excelsior.edu](mailto:examcredit@excelsior.edu). Details about the appeals process are in the [Student Handbook](#).

## What If I Miss My Appointment?

If you don't cancel or reschedule your testing appointment 24 hours before your test appointment, you will have to pay the full fee of the exam, even if you don't show up.

## Late Arrivals

You will also forfeit the exam fee if you arrive to the test center more than 15 minutes late.

## Information About UExcel Exams for Colleges and Universities

A committee of teaching faculty and practicing professionals determines the learning outcomes to be tested on each exam. Excelsior College Center for Educational Measurement staff oversee the technical aspects of test construction in accordance with current professional standards. To promote fairness in testing, we take special care to ensure that the language used in the exams and related materials is consistent, professional, and user friendly. Editorial staff perform systematic quantitative and qualitative reviews to ensure accuracy, clarity, and compliance with conventions of bias-free language usage.

Excelsior College, the test developer, recommends granting three (3) semester hours of upper-level undergraduate credit to students who receive a letter grade of C or higher on this examination. Other colleges and universities also recognize this exam as a basis for granting credit or advanced standing. Individual institutions set their own policies for the amount of credit awarded and the minimum acceptable score.

# Foundations of Gerontology Exam Development Committee

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# Sample Grade Report

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Excelsior College  
GRADE REPORT FOR EXAMINATIONS

Contact ID:

Test Date: 11/21/2020

Letter Grade: C

Examination Code and Title: 210 Statistics

Recommended Credit:  
3 Lower Level

Your examination results are expressed as a Letter Grade of A, B, C, or F. Your results are automatically verified when they are received at Excelsior College. If an error is detected, you will be notified immediately.

**Recommended Credit** is the number of semester hours credit that Excelsior College awards and recommends for your grade. Excelsior College awards and recommends credit for letter grades of C or better.

**If you plan to take another examination**, you may download free content guides and the User's Guide by visiting our website at [www.excelsior.edu/exams/content-guides/](http://www.excelsior.edu/exams/content-guides/).

**If you need an Excelsior College Official Examinations Transcript** to document the credit you have earned for this examination for another institution, the request can be made online by accessing the Excelsior College website ([www.excelsior.edu](http://www.excelsior.edu)), logging into your MyExcelsior account, and scrolling down to the For Exams Takers box and clicking on the Request transcripts link. If you do not already have a MyExcelsior username and password, you can obtain one at no cost by accessing the Excelsior College website, clicking the Log In to MyExcelsior button, and then clicking the link "Create a MyExcelsior User Account."





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