

York University
Department of Political Science
AS/POLS 4135 3.00 Politics of Aging
Winter 2010

Professor: Thomas Klassen
Seminar: Monday 11:30 -14:30
Location: Ross S104

Office location: S636 Ross Building
Office hours: Tuesday 1:00-2:00 and Friday 2:30-3:30
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Course Description

Aging populations are a feature of most developed nations. At present, one in seven Canadians is 65 and older, but this will increase to three-and-a-half within 25 years.

This course studies the implications of how aging population on politics and policies. The course will focus on impacts – including intergenerational conflicts – in employment as well income security policy, such as pensions. We will focus on how demographic shifts shape the debates, policies, and programs of key components of the welfare state. Throughout the course we might also touch on health and long-term care, housing, or transportation policy.

The course begins with a brief overview and history of the welfare state with regard to older citizens. The course then proceeds to an examination of the key demographic and related trends underway in Canada. The third part of the course analyzes the interaction of rapidly aging populations with specific policies, primarily those related to pensions, and health care. The course includes a comparison to developments in other developed nations, especially the United States, but also East Asia.

The central theme of the course is that demographic conditions must be considered in seeking to understand and account for development in policy and politics. A secondary theme is that the aging of the population impacts not only policies for the elderly, but also policies for younger citizens and ‘working-age’ citizens.

Course Text

A course kit has been prepared and is available for purchase at Keele Copy. Additional readings will be provided electronically.

Recommended Text

Dwyer, J. A. & Klassen, T. R. 2005. *Flourishing in university and beyond*. Toronto: York University Bookstore.

The following resources have been placed on reserve (three day loan) in the Scott Library for this course:

Age, class, politics, and the welfare state

Pampel, Fred C.
HV 37 P28 1989

Ageing and social policy in Australia

Borowski, Allan.
HQ 1064 A88 A39 1997

Age, work, and social security

Atkinson, A. B. (Anthony Barnes)
HQ 1064 E8 A34 1993

Aging and demographic change in Canadian context

Cheal, David J.
HQ 1064 C3 A328 2002

Aging and demographic change in Canadian context [electronic resource]

Cheal, David J.
E-RESERVE

Demography in Canada in the twentieth century

Wargon, Sylvia T.
HB 853 C2 W37 2001

The economic implications of aging societies : the costs of living happily ever after

Nyce, Steven A., 1973-
HB 2583 N93 2005

Fixing the future : how Canada's usually fractious governments worked together to rescue the Canada Pension Plan

Little, Bruce, 1945-
HD 7105.35 C3 L58 2008

Restructuring the welfare state : political institutions and policy change

Rothstein, Bo, 1954-
JC 479 D535 2002

Rethinking the welfare state : the political economy of pension reform
Rein, Martin, 1928-
HD 7091 R414 2004

States, labor markets, and the future of old age policy
Myles, John.
HD 7105.3 S74 1991

Transatlantic policymaking in an age of austerity : diversity and drift
Levin, Martin A.
HN 17.5 T717 2004

The transformation of old age security : class and politics in the American welfare state
Quadagno, Jill S.
HD 7125 Q46 1988

Evaluation

	Date due	Worth (%)
Seminar leadership (one required reading, or your article review)	ongoing	10
Article review	January 25	20
Research essay proposal	February 8	10
Research paper	March 29	50
Participation	ongoing	10

Please note

1. Late assignments will not be accepted. Assignments must be submitted in hard copy during class times.
2. Please keep draft copies (electronic and otherwise) of your work for our course. These may be requested.
3. Plagiarism will result, at the minimum, in a grade of zero.
4. If at any time during the course, you have questions or concerns about any aspect of our course, or are uncertain about how to proceed with an assignment, please speak to me.
5. Feel free to submit drafts of assignments for review and feedback to me prior to the due dates.
6. March 8 is the last date to withdraw from this course without receiving a grade.

Weekly schedule [all readings are in the course kit and are required]

January 4 – Welcome, introduction, course theme, and overview of the course

January 11 – The welfare state and aging

The Economist. 2009. *A slow-burning fuse: A special report of aging populations*, June 27.

Seabrook, Jeremy. 2003. *A world growing old*. Toronto: Between the Lines. Introduction pp. 1-13.

Binstock, Robert H. 2005. *The Contemporary Politics of Old Age Policies*. In R. B. Hudson (ed.), *The New Politics of Old Age Policy*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. pp. 265-293.

January 18 – Demographic trends in Canada and the nature of old age

McDaniel, Susan A. 2003. "Toward disentangling policy implications of economic and demographic changes in Canada's aging population." *Canadian Public Policy*. 29.4: 491-510.

Denton, Frank and Byron G. Spencer. 2002. "Some demographic consequences of revising the definition of 'old age' to reflect future changes in life table probabilities." *Canadian Journal on Aging*. 2.3: 349-356.

Robson, William B. P. and Yvan Guillemette 2006. *No elixir of youth: Immigration cannot keep Canada young*. Toronto: C.D. Howe Institute.

January 25 – International perspectives

Schulz, James H. and Robert H. Binstock. 2006. *Aging nation: The economics and politics of growing older in America*. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger. Chapter 9 and 10, pp. 201-235.

Aspalter, Christian. 2006. "The East Asian welfare model." *International Journal of Social Welfare*. 15; 290-301.

Article review is due

February 1 – Income security in Canada

Pierson, Paul. 2003. "The politics of pension reform." In Keith Banting and Robin Broadway (eds.). 2003. *Reform of retirement income policy: A comparative view*. Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press. pp. 273-293.

Béland, Daniel, and John Myles. 2005. "Stasis amidst change: Canadian pension reform in an age of retrenchment." In *Aging and pension reform around the world*, G. Bonoli and T. Shinkawa, eds. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar. Chapter 12: 252-273.

February 8 - Income security in a comparative context

Gillin, C. T. and Thomas R. Klassen. 1995. "Age discrimination and mandatory retirement policies: A comparison of labor market regulation in Canada and the United States," *Journal of Aging and Social Policy*, 7.1: 85-102.

Research proposal is due

Note: No class on February 15 as this is Reading Week

February 22 – Employment and retirement in Canada

LaSelva, Samuel V. 1987. "Mandatory retirement: Intergenerational justice and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms." *Canadian Journal of Political Science*. 20.1: 149-162.

Klassen, Thomas R. and C. T. Gillin. 2005. "Legalized age discrimination," *Journal of Law and Social Policy*. 30: 35-51.

Gillin, C. T., David MacGregor and Thomas R. Klassen, eds. 2005. *Time's up: Mandatory retirement in Canada*. Toronto: James Lorimer. Chapter 1 and 2: 11-44.

Hering, Martin, and Thomas R. Klassen. 2009. "Strengthening fairness and funding in the Canada pension plan: Is raising the retirement age and option?" in press

March 1 – Employment and retirement in a comparative context

Choi, Young-Jun. 2006. Transformations in Economic Security during Old Age in Korea: The Implications for Public-Pension Reform. *Ageing & Society*, 26.4: 549-565.

March 8 – The future of retirement

Townson, Monica. 2006. *Growing older, working longer: The new face of retirement*. Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Chapter 1, pp. 10-36.

Munnell, Alicia H. and Steven A. Sass. 2008. *Working Longer: The Solution to the Retirement Income Challenge*. Washington: Brookings Institution Press. Chapters 6 and 7: pp. 117-148.

March 15 – Health care in Canada

Evans, Robert G. 1987. “Hang together, or hang separately: the viability of a universal health care system in an aging society.” *Canadian Public Policy*. 13: 165-180.

Denton, Frank T. and Bryon G. Spencer. 1995. “Demographic change and the cost of publicly funded health care.” *Canadian Journal on Aging*. 14: 174-192

March 22 – Health care in a comparative context

Quadagno, Jill. 2004. “Why the United States Has No National Health Insurance: Stakeholder Mobilization Against the Welfare State, 1945-1996.” *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. 45 (Extra Issue): 25-44.

Kim, Shinyoung. 2004. The Theoretical Relevance of Western, Welfare-State Models in Third World Nations: The Case of Korean Health and Pension Programs. *Asian Perspective*, 28.2: 205-232.

March 29 – The Future of Aging Politics and Policies

Final paper is due

ARTICLE REVIEW GUIDELINES

Select an article, which is directly focussed on aging in Canada, published between 2006 and the present that is at least 10 pages in length in a Canadian academic journal. Possible journals include, the journal *Canadian Public Policy*, *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, *Canadian Journal on Aging*, as well as others, and write a five-page (double spaced) review. Please include a hardcopy of the article with your review. Please check with me in advance to confirm the selection of your article.

The review is not summary of the article, just as a movie review is not a mere summary of a film.

The review should include most the following (in whatever order you think is best):

1. A summary of the content of the article that is being reviewed, which should be no longer than one page.
2. What, in your own words, is the author of trying to demonstrate, achieve or explain in the work?
3. A brief discussion of how the work fits into the larger literature. For example, does the article seek to challenge previous findings or approaches?
4. Possibly a discussion of the research methods of the article: What are these? Do they seem reasonable to you in order to answer the question(s) of the author?
5. A discussion of the flaws of the article: Are the conclusions reasonable? Are you convinced by the conclusions? Why or why not? What would you like to have seen added (or deleted) from the work? What would you have done differently?
6. What was the most interesting part of the article for you, and why?
7. Why did you select this particular article?

Attention should be paid to the manner in which the review is structured especially the order in which material is presented. The review should be coherently organized, and concisely written without grammatical and spelling errors. Try to avoid too many headings.

RESEARCH ESSAY PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

The proposal may be conceived as a map that provides direction for the research and writing of the research essay. The more detailed and developed the map, the less difficult it should be to write the essay.

You may select any topic of interest related to policy development and analysis, although logically it might be closely linked to our course and to your previous article review. The readings for our course may also provide you with suggestions or ideas, as well as sources. Aim to have a focussed topic, problem, issue, controversy, debate or dilemma that is central to your proposal. Avoid vague and general topics. For your proposal you should also indicate why what you have selected to explore is interesting and important.

The proposal will require library and web-based research and you must include bibliography that includes the works consulted so far. It will not be acceptable to have only on-line documents in your bibliography.

There is no one format that will be most appropriate for the proposal. The length of the proposal should be no less than five pages, in addition to the bibliography.

RESEARCH ESSAY GUIDELINES

The research essay must be professional in all aspects. As such, it must have a cover page, title, table of contents, five or six sections (such as introduction, etc.), bibliography and, if you wish, appendices. You are encouraged to use a few visual aids – graphs, charts, photos, diagrams and tables – that must be clearly labelled and referenced. The essay should be a holistic work that demonstrates considerable research and reflection, as well as strong writing skills.

The essay must be at least 16 pages in length using double-spacing and 12 point font. Grades will be deducted for grammatical errors. You must have the paper read (edited) by others before submitting it. Please attach your proposal to the essay.

At least 50% of your citations must be from academic sources (books and articles) and no more than 75% of your sources can web-available. You will need to obtain material from the Scott Library, and/or other libraries that you may have access to.

WEB BASED RESOURCES – POLS 4135 – Winter 2010

Considerable information on public policy related to aging available from web-based sources. Below is a small sample of hot-linked sites that might be of interest for our course.

[Index to Federal Royal Commissions](#): materials associated with the more than 200 federal Royal Commissions that have taken place since Confederation from the National Library of Canada

[Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire](#): access to the House of Commons, Senate and the Library of Parliament, including debates, committee proceedings, and status of legislation

Statistics Canada is the best source for data. Be sure to enter the Stats Can site from York Libraries' e-resources.

There are also many web sites primarily related to public policy that might be useful. A small sample is hot-linked below. The last two are especially helpful.

[Caledon Institute of Social Policy](#)

[Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives](#)

[Canadian Policy Research Networks \(CPRN\)](#)

[CD Howe Institute](#)

[Conference Board of Canada](#)

[Fraser Institute](#)

[International Labour Organization](#)

[Institute for Research on Public Policy \(IRPP\)](#)

[Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation \(OECD\)](#)

[Policy Research Initiative \(PRI\)](#) (look under 'publications')