Soc230. Introduction of Gerontology  
Connecting With Our Elders: Service-Learning Guidelines

We live in an age-segregated society. To discuss aging in our society in a meaningful way, we have to take steps to overcome this segregation. Doing so will enable us to understand how age stratification and discrimination operate in our society, and to get in touch with our own “ageism.” It will enable us to link age groups and to appreciate how various individuals and groups in our society experience the life course. Finally, through service, we will get in touch with human needs and gain some practical ideas about how the experience of “growing old” can be enhanced. This knowledge develops our capacity to evaluate practices, programs, and policies in the field of gerontology

Everyone in this class must be involved in some way, for one or two hours a week [minimum 12 hours], in some kind of service with the elderly. This can be done in a variety of ways:

• A relationship with your parents or another older relative
• Regular visits with any older person
• Volunteer or internship experience in an organization serving the elderly
• Volunteer work or regular interaction with older adults in a religious group, club, or other voluntary organization
• Paid work that involves some kind of regular interaction with the elderly older adults

You will use your service-learning experience directly to fulfill the service learning and the reflection requirements of this course. You will also probably find this experience useful for your Term Project.

Service-Learning Experience and Hours Log (110 points)
You should have an idea of your experience or placement by the second class. Document your experience in some way, by a log of activities or contacts, or by a letter from your place of volunteer or paid work that confirms your hours. If you are also doing Cooperative Education, you can use those forms. The log of your hours of experience is due on March 13th.

Journal of Reflections (110 points total)
Through a regular weekly journal, record your reflections both on your service-learning experience and on other “aging moments” that highlight age-related issues or that have helped you to understand and appreciate the concepts, themes, and issues we are exploring this term. Your journal entries should be submitted in six entries over the term (starting January 23rd, the third week) worth 15 points each, and a final, summary report worth 20 points, due on March 13th with your log.