PURPOSE

This year-long seminar is designed to develop research competence in applied issues of aging. The seminar is primarily designed for pre- and post-doctoral fellows from the NIA project on Social Research Training on Applied Issues of Aging. Other participants are welcome after prior consultation with one of the instructors.

A major theme of the training program, (2000-2005), is the substantive and theoretical issues involved in examining the social and behavioral influences on health and health care in the following areas: socioeconomic status, extreme old age, racial/ethnic variation, mental health and stress and coping.

During 2002-2003, the primary focus of the seminar will be on substantive and research issues in relation to stress and coping. During the fall term, we will examine a variety of issues related to stress and coping, including: caregiving, social interactions, mental and physical health, and the environmental context. In addition, we will emphasize the skills needed to present research findings at conference presentations and give seminar participants an opportunity to practice their presentations with feedback. During the winter term, participants will have an opportunity to work on a project of their choosing. These projects might include a paper for submission to a journal, a grant proposal or an abstract for submission to a professional conference. This will occur within a seminar structure that provides detailed feedback from colleagues and that is designed to assist all participants in improving their conceptualization and writing of professional materials.

The fall seminar is organized to provide a variety of educational experiences. Class sessions will be led by the course instructors, guest speakers, and seminar participants. The instructors will provide an overview of the substantive foci
related to stress and coping. The seminar participants will present on research they have conducted relevant to the seminar topics and/or critique articles related to the seminar.

**SEMINAR REQUIREMENTS**

1.) All participants are expected to read the materials provided prior to each seminar and to be prepared to discuss them. During selected meetings, seminar participants will critique key articles and may address issues listed in items 4 and 5, below. Two copies of all readings are provided in the marked file drawer located in the main project office, 3807. Feel free to make xerox copies of any of these articles, following instructions about use of the 2nd floor xerox machine that will be provided. If you remove any article from the file drawer to take out of 3807, please do so for only short periods and leave a note about where you are and/or when you will return it in case another fellow needs to use that article in the interim.

2.) Each NIA Post-doc will present on research in which they are engaged that is relevant to stress and coping.

3.) Each NIA Pre-doc will be responsible for preparing a critique of the research articles relevant to a specific topic which may take one of two forms: a) an in-depth critique of a single article from the coursepack on a given topic or b) a discussant-like review of all the articles from the coursepack on a given topic. This should involve a class discussion.

4.) Pre-doctoral students who are enrolled in the seminar to meet doctoral program requirements or MSW requirements are expected to: register for 3 credits; and to prepare a critical review of the literature on an aspect of one of the substantive foci of the seminar and the impact of racial/ethnic minority status on that issue. The goals of the paper are to identify key theoretical and empirical knowledge, identify gaps in theoretical and/or empirical knowledge, identify methodological limitations in available knowledge, and to point toward future directions for research and/or theory development. Discuss the topic for the paper with the appropriate instructor by November 5. The paper should be 20-30 pages double spaced. Submit a copy to each instructor by Dec. 17. The paper’s topic should be related to the specific program requirement the
student is meeting by the seminar

4) **KEY QUESTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED IN SEMINAR MEETINGS**

   a) What are the applied issues that have been explored and that remain to be explored related to stress and coping?

   b) What are the key theories or theoretical concepts of stress and coping?

   c) What are the limitations in the research designs, data collection methods, and statistical methods that have been used in conducting research on particular applied issues related to stress and coping?

   d) What alternate designs and methods might improve the research on particular applied issues relevant to stress and coping?

   e) What are the limits on the generalizability of the findings on particular topics that have been studied in the area of stress and coping?

   f) How might the findings on stress and coping be used to improve health services for the elderly?

5) **KEY ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN EVALUATING RESEARCH ARTICLES**:


**PROBLEM**

1. Clarity of study’s purpose.

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1 The seminar meets distribution requirements in the Doctoral Program in the curriculum area of Research Methods for Practice and Policy and counts toward the five-course requirement. For doctoral students simultaneously enrolled in the MSW program, the seminar may also meet requirements in the curriculum area of Research and Evaluation without special permission. Alternatively, with permission, it may meet MSW requirements in the areas of: Human Behavior and the Social Environment or Fields of Service (Social Welfare Policies and Services for the Aging Practice Area). Fellows desiring to use the seminar to meet either of these requirements should discuss with the instructors early in the semester how the paper should be adapted and get their approval for the form and content of the paper.
2. Adequacy of literature review—are relevant studies cited and described? Are gaps in the literature identified?
3. Clarity of study’s potential contribution to addressing the gaps in the literature.
4. Clarity of statement of research questions and/or hypotheses.
5. Clarity of theoretical foundation for research questions and/or hypotheses.
6. Clarity of specification of independent variables.
7. Clarity of specification of dependent variables.
8. Appropriate specification of confounding variables.

METHODS

1. Clarity about how data were collected.
2. Adequacy of sample—size and representativeness.
3. Clarity of statement of research design.
4. Adequacy of the research design given the purposes of the study.
5. Clarity of the operational definition of measures.
6. Appropriateness of measures in relation to the purposes of the study.
7. Degree of validity of the measures.
8. Degree of reliability of the measures.

FINDINGS

1. Appropriateness of statistical procedures.
2. Clarity in presentation of specific findings.
3. Extent to which authors’ conclusions about hypotheses or answers to research questions are consistent with the data.
4. Degree to which alternative explanations of the data were dealt with.

DISCUSSION

1. Appropriateness of summary of results.
2. Adequacy of relating findings to previous literature.
3. Adequacy of relating findings to theoretical issues.
4. Appropriate attention to generalizability of the study findings.
5. Extent to which the primary study purpose was achieved.

A more detailed analysis is in the original article.

GRADING

Participants enrolled to meet program requirements will receive regular letter grades upon completion of seminar
requirements. Other enrolled participants will receive a grade of Satisfactory, based upon their participation in the seminar.

REGISTRATION FOR NIA PRE-DOCTORAL FELLOWS

Because of limited tuition funds available from NIA, Pre-doctoral fellows should register for the fall seminar only under the following circumstances; if none of the following conditions apply, please do not register for SW835 for the fall term.

a. You are taking the seminar to meet a MSW or PHD program requirement, in which case you should register for 3 credits.

b. You need to maintain a certain level of credit enrollment because of external requirements such as holding off the payment of student loans, in which case you should register for 1-3 credits, depending on your circumstances.

d. Candidate-level Pre-doctoral fellows who need to enroll as a Candidate for the Fall term should enroll for Augmented Candidacy and elect SW835 as their “free” course for 1 credit. If Candidate-level pre-Doctoral fellows wish to elect an alternate course as their “free” one, consult with the instructors prior to registration. PLEASE NOTE: Most Candidates do not need to enroll to maintain library or computer privileges so those fellows should not enroll at all, for Candidacy or for SW835. If you are in doubt about whether you need to enroll, please contact the Doctoral Office and/or the instructors. Please see Award Letter for details of your registration.

REGISTRATION FOR POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

Post-Doctoral fellows have available to them tuition only for enrollment in TWO summer workshop/courses offered through ICPSR or SRC programs in survey research and statistical methods. Regular university courses can be informally audited with permission of the instructor. Do not enroll for SW835. Please see Award Letter for details.

ACKNOWLEDGING NIA FUNDING

When fellows submit to conferences or publish journal articles, they should acknowledge the support of NIA. Please use the following text to acknowledge this support: “Preparation of this paper was supported by a grant from NIA (AG00117).”
FALL NIA SEMINAR SCHEDULE

SEPT 3 Introduction to Course

SEPT 12 Stress and Coping Overview (Ruth Dunkle)

SEPT 17 Coping with the Stress of Multiple Roles: Employment and Caregiving (Berit Ingersoll-Dayton)

    Predoc Analysis: Jung-hwa Ha

SEPT 24 Conference on Applied Issues in Aging at Hannan House

OCT 1 Caregiving and Grief (Rosemary Ziemba)

    Predoc Analysis: Amy Schiller

OCT 8 Positive and Negative Social Interactions: Using Cutoffs as a Way of Coping (Lauren Ungar)

    Predoc Analysis: Abbie Lawrence

OCT 15 Fall Break: No Class

OCT 22 Coping with Daily Interpersonal Tensions (Kira Birditt)

    Predoc Analysis: Deborah Bey

OCT 29 Environmental Stress and Coping with Dementia Patients (Donna Algase, Professor, School of Nursing, University of Michigan)

    Predoc Analysis: Naomi Kuramoto

NOV 5 Presenting at Professional Conferences: Coping with Stress (Berit Ingersoll-Dayton & Ruth Dunkle)
NOV 12 Sibling Caregiving (Sarah Matthews, Professor of Sociology, Cleveland State University)

Predoc Analysis: Tam Perry

NOV 19 Practice Session for the Gerontological Society of America

NOV 26 Annual Meeting of Gerontological Society of America: No class

DEC 3 Stress Related to Physical Health: Aids and Aging in Thailand (John Knodel, Professor, Population Studies Center, University of Michigan & Chanpen Saengtienchai, Researcher Population Studies Center, Chulalongkorn University)

Predoc Analysis: Hae Sook Jeon

DEC 10 Stress and Behavioral Coping Related to Mental Illness Stigma (Sang Kahng)

Predoc Analysis: Alex Crampton

DEC 17 Summary and Planning for Winter Term