

University of Michigan Graduate Summer Session in Epidemiology

EPIDEMIOLOGY 714: EPIDEMIOLOGY OF AGING  
Robert B. Wallace, MD  
Preventive Medicine and Environmental Health  
and the Cancer Center  
University of Iowa College of Medicine  
July, 1996

STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

This course is intended to introduce students to the application of epidemiologic methods to the study of health and public health problems of older persons. It epidemiologic lore with gerontology, clinical geriatrics, the biology of aging and survey research methods to maximize the ability to pursue research in this area. The textbook is strongly recommended, but not required, as a way of systematically adding to the information that can be communicated in the short period of time available. The coursepack is intended to be a sampler of recently published research studies on the topic that emphasize the current applications in the field. A few of the papers may be discussed in class, and these will announced in advance.

SUBJECT

TEXTBOOK READINGS\*

- Introduction and course logistics
- Ethics and population-based aging research Ch. 4
- Demography of aging/ wealth and assets/ socioeconomic status/ mortality Ch. 18
- Aging and Disease: Ch. 1
  - A. General issues
  - B. Biology of aging relevant to epidemiologic research; Biomarkers of aging
  - C. Genetics and Aging
- Measurement of health status in the elderly
  - A. Overview Ch. 2
  - B. Physical function Ch. 10
  - C. Cognitive function Ch. 9
- Morbidity and co-morbidity

- Conducting household surveys of older populations Ch. 5,8
- Research in nursing homes; general issues Ch. 14
- Analytical issues of data from the elderly Ch. 21-24
  - A. The Medicare database
  - B. Archived databases-NACDA (Dr. Nancy Fultz)
- Clinical trials in the elderly
- Issues in the epidemiologic study of health services for older persons Ch. 11
- Applying epidemiology to clinical prevention in older persons Ch. 3
- Special topics as time permits:
  - A. Cholesterol and heart attack
  - B. Osteoporosis
  - C. Older drivers
  - D. Drug use epidemiology
  - E. Class choice as available

Evaluation of Students:

For students auditing the course, credit will be given based on full attendance and class participation. For those taking the course for credit, the grade will (assuming full attendance) be based half on class participation and half on a take-home evaluation due at the end of class on 19Jul96. The examination is to select any epidemiologic paper involving quantitative health issues in older persons, and write a short evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the scientific methods. There is no need to summarize the report content, but please include a copy of the paper with your report.

\* Textbook readings are in Wallace and Woolson, *The Epidemiologic Study of the Elderly*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1992