**Module 2 Assessment**

**Sociological Perspective on Aging**

**TOTAL POSSIBLE MARKS: 10**

A sociological perspective on aging highlights the role that social structure plays in shaping the choices and experiences of aging individuals. That is, sociologists recognize that while we are acting, feeling, reasoning beings that attach meaning to our behaviour, there are also important structural forces that influence our choices and experiences. For example, an individual’s choice to dye their greying hair may be influenced by the powerful forces of the media and cultural expectations of aging. Similarly, an older person’s choice to participate in community events may depend on their access to economic resources and transportation. Taking a sociological perspective, then, involves realizing that age-related experiences are more than private, personal issues. Choices and experiences of the elderly also depend on “the ways in which our society is organized at a given history, including its distribution of wealth, political and economic system, cultural patterns, dominant social roles, and power relationships between groups” (Funk, 2016, p.3).

**Learning Objectives:**

* Identify social structures in the social world that may influence aging individuals.
* Discuss how social structures can be used to explain individual choices and experiences of the elderly.

**Instructions:**

Write a **1 – 1 ½ page** response (not including title page and reference page) to the following question:

***How does social structure influence the choices and experiences of aging individuals?***

**You must identify two social structures from the social world and discuss how they may influence choices and experiences of aging individuals.**

Social structures include such concepts as social stratification, inequality, social institutions (such as political, economic, education, health and family systems), cultural patterns, roles and status to name a few.

**Your paper should include the following paragraphs:**

**Introduction**

* **Introduce the social structures you will discuss.**
* **What is the relevance of focusing on how we organize our society to studying the aging population?**

**Body**

* **What is meant by the term social structure?**
* **Identify 2 social structures that shape the lives of older individuals.**
* **Define each of the 2 social structures using sources from course material.**
* **Discuss how the structures influence the choices and experiences of aging.**
* **Provide support for your discussion by referring to textbook and additional course material.**

**Conclusion**

* **Briefly summarize the main points.**
* **What are the implications of explaining age-related issues by looking at social structures?**

To help you respond to the question above, please refer to Required Readings for this module:

1. Textbook Reading: Chapter 1 "Choices and Constraints in Aging: Theoretical Approaches and Sociological Contributions" (Funk, 2016)
2. Social Structures, Social Inequality, and the Life Course: Wister, Andrew V. (2019). *Social structures, Social Inequality, and the Life Course*. In *Aging as a social process: Canada and Beyond, Seventh Edition (p. 166-178)*. Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press. (pdf document on D2L)

**Guidelines:**

* Responses to the question should not exceed 1 ½ pages in length (not including title and reference page).
* APA formatting, citing, and referencing guidelines must be followed.
* Assessments missing a reference list or in-text citations will **not** be graded. All assignments will be checked to ensure academic honesty.