

Stephen D. Gresham
Fall 2008
PPAI 1701D

Class Hours: Fridays, 9-11:20am
Class Location: 67 George Street

Aging and Public Policy: The Impact of An Aging Society on Public and Private Sector Organizations

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Course Description and Overview:

A “silver tsunami” is coming. Governmental policy makers and business leaders are scrambling to adapt as the worldwide aging population reshapes the demand for services and products -- and threatens to unravel the social safety net. Only climate change will have more impact on global society over the next 50 years. We will investigate the aging wave, analyze its impact on both private and public sector organizations and consider implications for private sector management and public policy. Emphasis is on “social entrepreneurship” -- practical solutions and their implementation within organizations, as well as opportunities for cooperation among public and private sector players. Students will be asked to identify key issues from assigned readings and prepare both written and oral positions on specific topics. *Learned advocacy* is the central theme of this seminar.

Our work will cover the landscape of “aging”. We start with an introduction to aging as both a social and demographic phenomenon. We then turn to the private sector impact of an aging population. Who will be the organizational “winners” and “losers”? More importantly, why will a company or business thrive – or not? We will investigate and predict “winners” from the perspective of the demographic and learn more about their plans for the future. In addition, the aging wave creates gaps in the workforce pool. How will companies adjust their hiring and employment policies? Public sector implications of aging are solidly against public policy makers grappling with the costs of funding promised benefits to an aging citizenry. National retirement and medical benefits for aging beneficiaries threatens their existence. State and local governments are increasingly isolated from the federal government and will have to make important decisions about how to ease the future burden of their own workforce benefits.

Understanding of the aging wave will be critical knowledge for anyone seeking a role impacted by the general economy and public policy. Specific knowledge of the demographic trends and their implications will benefit any student aspiring to a career in business, whether as an entrepreneur or manager of people. Students seeking roles in public policy will be even more consumed with the issues of an aging population and their impact on government, politics and public finance.

Course Objectives

My goal is to facilitate a seminar in which we:

- Understand of the demographic reality of an aging population
- View aging as a social and personal experience -- not just demographics
- Analyze private and public sector challenges and opportunities created by aging
- Think critically and creatively about aging's complex social, political and economic issues by dissecting the different dimensions and considering their interaction
- Consider solutions to the challenges of aging as well as how to effectively communicate those solutions to affected parties
- Learn how to become both analysts of the aging trend and advocates of effective policies or business opportunities – to know all parties to the issue.

My goal for you is to apply your existing skills to the challenges and opportunities of the aging phenomenon, further testing your powers of:

- Reasoning
- Empathy
- Verbal interaction and critical thinking
- Written and verbal expression of opinion
- Understanding of consensus building and teamwork in formulating solutions to complex issues

Overview of Assignments and Components of Course Grade:

Reading: Readings include texts, analytical reports and survey data, monographs and case studies. Readings are central to class participation.

Writing assignments: Three 2- page “reaction” papers, seeking students’ analysis of key topics covered in reading and class discussion. Emphasis is on your interpretation of data and/or case and your effectiveness in advocating a position or course of action. **20% of overall course grade will be based on these papers.**

Term paper: An individual advocacy position paper, 20 pages minimum, to be delivered to me on the final day of class. You will choose the topic, though it must be approved in advance by me (DATE), based on a two page proposal and outline submitted no later than (DATE). **The term paper will count for 40% of your course grade.**

Advocacy project: an individual or team (to be determined by the class) effort to submit and advocate a specific position with a public or private sector sponsor. **15% of the final course grade will be based on your efforts and effectiveness in this project.**

Class participation: Discussion of weekly topics described in assigned readings; focus will be on formulating reactions to assigned reading and participating in individual and team debate about topics. **25% of the final course grade will be determined by class**

attendance, participation, and contribution to the level of discussion in class. Given the importance of class discussion, attendance is mandatory. Unless *prior* approval is given by me, absences will reflect negatively on your participation grade.

Class Participation Guidelines:

A colleague provided me with this list of class participation best practices, Consider them and we can discuss in greater detail if you have questions:

- Consistently makes valuable contributions about topics under discussion
- Demonstrates excellent listening skills, responding appropriately to others' comments
- Offers relevant, succinct input to class
- Brings up questions about subjects that need further exploration
- Clarifies points that others may not have understood
- Draws on personal experience or opinion only when relevant to class discussion
- Demonstrates ability to analyze, apply, and synthesize course material
- Demonstrates willingness to take risks (e.g. attempts to answer unpopular or difficult questions)

One more thing – no mobile phones during class.

Class Schedule

See below for each week's assigned readings for that class day. Please note due dates of papers, deadlines for advocacy project and term paper topic selection. Readings are listed at the end of the Class Schedule. There may be changes to this schedule along the way – with ample prior notice.

September 5: The Phenomenon of “Aging”

Introduction of “aging” as a demographic issue, social phenomenon, private sector opportunity, public sector challenge.

Aging questionnaire will be completed by each student.

September 12: Views of “Aging”

Readings:

Dychtwald, Age Power: Introduction, Chapter 1
 Butler, Longevity: Preface, Part I, Part II (through pg. 75)
 Butler, Survive: A Personal Note, Preface, Chapters 1 and 2
 Peterson, Running on Empty: Preface, Chapters 1 and 2
 Bixby, et al. “Taking Back Our Fiscal Future” April 2008

Suggested: Butler, Survive, Chapters 3-7

Class participation:

Contrasting views of “aging” as a public policy issue – identify key issues, determine “victims”, protagonists, champions, factions.

September 19: Aging and Public Policy – Deeper Analysis

Readings:

Age Power, Chapters 3-6
 Butler Longevity, Chapters 7-11

Paper due:

Selected issue of policy TBD, first “reaction” paper articulating an issue and the key elements, “sides” and their concerns.

Class participation:

Present reaction papers in class. Define most intriguing issues. Begin consideration of issues for advocacy project and term papers.

September 26: Aging and the Private Sector -- Opportunity

Readings:

Age Power, Chapter 8
Howe and Strauss, The Next 20 Years
Furlong, Turning Silver Into Gold -- all
Harvard Business School, "Lifeline Systems, Inc."

Suggested: HBS, Leviton Manufacturing Case

Class participation:

Marketing to seniors, changes in business orientation, capture issues

October 3: Private Sector Continued – Workforce Issues

Readings:

HBS, "The Needs and Capabilities of Mature Workers" (Workforce Crisis, Ch 3)
HBS, "The End of Retirement" (Workforce Crisis, Ch 4)
HBS, "Managing Demographic Risk"

Class participation:

Workforce issues, opportunities, policy

Paper due, framing issues and solutions to private sector challenges

October 10: Private Sector Advocacy and Wrap Up

Readings:

HBS Letter, "How to Make Your Case in 30 Seconds or Less"
Butler Longevity: Chapter 15

Class participation:

Present and debate

Select private sector advocacy project subject(s)

October 17: Public Sector – Retirement Security

Entitlement programs, introduction to “retirement crisis”

Readings:

Butler, Longevity: Chapter 14

Peterson, Running on Empty: Chapters 5-7

Jackson, “The Global Retirement Crisis” (all)

Walker, “America’s Fiscal Future and Retirement Security”, GAO report April 2007

AARP Reports re Retirement Preparedness:

- “Preparation and Retirement, The Haves and Have-Nots”
- “Retirement Security Survey Report”, February 2007
- “Retirement Planning Survey Among US Adults Age 40 and Older”

Suggested: Peterson, Chapters 3-4

Class participation:

Review retirement issues, proposals for reform

October 24: Public Sector Continued – Health Care

Retirement/entitlements, focus on health care

Readings:

Butler, Longevity: Chapters 11-13

Butler, Survive: Chapters 8-10

Koren, M., Commonwealth Fund, “Caring for an Aging America”

EBRI reports

- February 2008, Vol. 29, No. 2
- Notes, November 2007, Vol. 28, No. 11

Federal Interagency Forum on Aging, “Older Americans Update 2006”

Class participation:

Select public sector advocacy project subject(s)

Term paper proposals due

October 31: Public Sector Advocacy

Readings:

Miller & Mor, “Out of the Shadows” (all)

Butler, Longevity Revolution: Chapters 16-18

Class participation:

Paper due, framing issues and solutions to entitlement and retirement challenges

Present and debate

November 7: Advocacy Project(s) – Structure and Design

November 14: Advocacy Project – Private Sector

Private sector advocacy

Profile advocates and efforts

November 21: Advocacy Project – Public Sector

Public sector advocacy

Profile advocates and efforts

December 5: Unfinished business and review

December 12: Last day of class

Term paper due by noon

Final presentations

Readings

Butler, R. 2008. The Longevity Revolution. New York: Public Affairs.

Butler, R. 1975. Why Survive? Being Old in America. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Dychtwald, K. 1999. Age Power: How the 21st Century Will Be Ruled By The New Old. New York: Tarcher/Putnam.

Cole, T. 1992. The Journey of Life: A Cultural History of Aging in America. New York. Cambridge University Press.

Evercare and National Alliance for Caregiving. 2007, November. *Family Caregivers – What They Spend, What They Sacrifice: The Personal Financial Toll of Caring for a Loved One*. Minnetonka, MN. Evercare.

Peterson, P. 2004. Running on Empty. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Aging and the Private Sector

Dychtwald, Erickson, Morison. 2007. *The Needs and Capabilities of Mature Workers*, Boston. Harvard Business Press. (excerpted chapter 3 of *Workforce Crisis: How to Beat the Coming Shortage of Skills and Talent*). Boston. Harvard Business Press.

Dychtwald, Erickson, Morison. 2007. *The End of Retirement: How to Optimize the Services of Mature Workers*. Boston. Harvard Business Press. (excerpted chapter 4 of *Workforce Crisis: How to Beat the Coming Shortage of Skills and Talent*). Boston. Harvard Business Press.

Employee Benefit Research Institute. 2007. *The Future of Employment-Based Health Benefits: Will Employers Reach a Tipping Point?* Washington, D.C. EBRI.

Furlong, M. 2007. Turning Silver into Gold. New Jersey. Financial Times Press.

Harvard Business School. 2000. "Lifeline Systems, Inc." 9-600-099. Boston. Harvard Business Press.

Howe and Straus. 2007. *The Next 20 Years: How Customer and Workforce Attitudes Will Evolve*. Boston. Harvard Business Press.

Stack, Baier and Fahlander. 2008. *Managing Demographic Risk*. Boston. Harvard Business Press.

Aging and the Public Sector

AARP. 2007. *Preparation for Retirement: The Haves and the Have-Nots*. Washington, D.C.: AARP.

Casey, B., H. Oxley, E. Whitehouse, P. Antolin, R. Duval, and W. Leibfritz, 2003, November 20. *Policies for an Aging Society: Recent Measures and Areas for Further Reform*, Economics Department Working Papers No. 369. Paris, France: OECD.

Employee Benefit Research Institute. 2007. *Health Confidence Survey: Rising Health Care Costs are Changing the Ways Americans Use the Health Care System*. Washington, D.C. EBRI.

Federal Interagency Forum on Aging Related Statistics. 2006. *Older Americans Update 2006: Key Indicators of Well-Being*. Washington, D.C. National Center for Health Statistics.

Glover Park Group, 2007. *Voters Speak Out on Long-Term Care*. Washington, D.C.: National Commission for Quality Long-Term Care.

Jackson, R. 2002, April. *The Global Retirement Crisis: The Threat to World Stability and What to do About It*. Washington, DC. Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Koren, M.J. 2007, February. *Caring for An Aging America: Invited Testimony, House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies*. New York: The Commonwealth Fund.

Miller, E.A. and V. Mor. *Out of the Shadows: Envisioning a Brighter Future for Long-Term Care in America*. Providence, RI: Brown University.

National Center for Health Statistics. 2007. *Health United States, 2007*. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.

O'Brien, E. 2005, November. *Long-Term Care: Understanding Medicaid's Role for the Elderly and Disabled*. Washington, D.C.: Kaiser Family Foundation.

Peterson, P. 2004. Running on Empty: How the Democratic and Republican Parties are Bankrupting Our Future and What Americans Can Do About It. New York. Farrar, Strauss and Giroux.

VanDerhei, J., and C. Copeland. 2003, November. *Can America Afford Tomorrow's Retirees: Results from the EBRI-ERF Retirement Security Projection Model*. Washington, D.C. Employee Benefit Research Institute.