



VIU LIVES WINTER SCHOOL Life course and vulnerabilities

**Life Course and Vulnerabilities
March 29 - April 2, 2020
Venice International University
Isola di San Servolo, Venice**

VIU/LIVES Winter School

Life Course and Vulnerabilities

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Venice International University

Scientific coordinators:

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Program

During an intensive one-week program, doctoral students and young researchers will work on various fields of Life Course research through a multidisciplinary approach (Sociology, Psychology, Social Psychology, Life-span Psychology, Social Demography and Social Policies) led by internationally renowned experts.

In particular, the Winter School will focus on training the participants in the drafting of research projects or journal articles as fundamental aspects of the academic career they are approaching. With a “learning-by-doing” approach, participants will go through all stages of these drafting processes.

This is the sixth edition of the LIVES Winter School, the second organized by Venice International University and led by the two VIU member universities:

- University of Lausanne, Switzerland
- University of Padua, Italy

Two Thematic workshops

Life course influences on educational disparities in health behaviours

Research on social health inequalities shows that, like many other health outcomes, health behaviours (physical activity, smoking, diet, alcohol drinking, mammography) are distributed along a social gradient. For example, the influence of educational attainment on health behaviours has been extensively examined. Various mechanisms explaining this association have been proposed, such as the resources hypothesis (“fundamental causes”, Link & Phelan 1995), the psychosocial pathways hypothesis (Marmot 2004, Wilkinson 2005) and the cultural capital hypothesis (Bourdieu 1979, Abel 2008). To move beyond a transversal and individual approach to health behaviours, we propose to study them in late life through a life course perspective.

Over the past two decades, this perspective has emphasised that health differences in adulthood and in old age are partly determined by exposure to biological and social factors at the start of life and at later sensitive periods of life. In particular, life course misfortune has been linked with

health in old age and, by extension, with health behaviours. Adverse life-course factors include experience of misfortune in childhood (growing up in poor socioeconomic circumstances, being exposed to adverse experience, experiencing poor health conditions) and in adulthood (periods of stress, financial hardship, poor health). In addition, the life-course perspective encourages one to consider the role played by contextual factors, such as time and place variations in norms related to behaviours and also in gender norms. Variations across social groups, cohorts and countries could thus also reflect differences in normative contexts.

By the drafting of a research article, students will learn:

- to assess the influence of life course misfortune on the association between educational achievement and health behaviours in old age
- to examine variations in health behaviours in old age across cohorts, cross-national contexts and gender.

Tutors

Claudine Burton-Jeangros, University of Geneva

Stéphane Cullati, University of Geneva & University of Fribourg

Stefan Sieber, University of Geneva

The impact of age-related stereotypes on (cognitive) ageing: myth or reality?

If we consider the elderly as represented in newspapers, television, or simply in our everyday lives, it is clear that current society essentially presents a negative image of ageing and older adults. This phenomenon is by no means new (Ng, Allore, Trentalange, Monin, & Levy, 2015) and is found in different cultures and situational contexts. Along with prejudices and discrimination, negative stereotypes make up an essential aspect of ageism (Iversen, Larsen, & Solem, 2009) and are considered to occur more frequently than positive stereotypes. Older adults are

frequently described as being sick, frail, cognitively impaired, dependent on others, institutionalized, unable to learn, uninterested in their appearance, and scared of change and novelties, among other things.

Compared to research on racism and sexism, age-related stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination (i.e. ageism) have only recently attracted the interest of scientists. The available literature points to an impact of age-related stereotypes on older adults' cognitive and physical health, well-being, and daily functioning, both in the short and the long term. For instance, studies show that priming negative stereotypes among elderly individuals resulted in a decrease in memory performance, life satisfaction, and self-rated health (e.g. Chasteen, Bhattacharyya, Horhota, Tam, & Hasher, 2005; Levy, 2009; Levy, Ashman, & Dror, 2000; Rothermund, 2005), demonstrating the relevance of advancing our understanding on this topic.

In this workshop, we will address a number of questions to better understand these issues, including: Are these stereotype-based beliefs valid in the real world? Do these stereotypes really impact ageing trajectories as well as cognitive capacities and performances? What are the mechanisms underlying these effects? Can we limit the impact of age-related stereotypes on older adults' quality of life? How can we measure this potential impact of age-related stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination? Through the exploration of these research topics, we will guide the participants in acquiring basic practical skills that will help them to plan, navigate, and conduct a research project.

To this end, we aim to provide the participants with a theoretical background on the topics associated with age-related stereotypes, ageism, life-span, and cognitive ageing – and related aspects such as metacognitive factors (i.e. knowledge, perceptions, and implicit beliefs about one's own cognitive functioning) and emotional-motivational factors – but at the same time, offer them the opportunity to practically prepare a research project on these topics.

Collaborating in subgroups, the participants will be given the challenge to go through the main steps of research project preparation, ranging from the choice of the theoretical background, the formulation of the research questions and the related hypotheses, the selection of the variables to explore, the adequate statistical analyses, and the development of the measures.

Tutors

Christian Maggiori; HES-SO – University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland - School of Social work Fribourg

Erika Borella; School of Psychology, University of Padova

Learning outcomes for the participants

- learn the manifold know-how associated with writing an article or a research project on a topic linked to the workshops' themes
- work on concepts, taking into account the perspectives of different disciplines
- extend their academic network

Level of students and suitable fields of study

The School first targets PhD students, but postdoc researchers can also apply. Disciplines involved are Psychology, Sociology, Social Psychology, Life-span Psychology, Social Demography and Social Policy, Statistics and Socioeconomics, depending on the tutors and the workshop contents. The common topic of the workshops is vulnerability across the life course.

Application procedure and cost

The Program will admit up to 20 participants.

Fees:

Students of VIU member universities:
€ 400,00.

Students of LIVES Doctoral Program and its affiliated member universities:

€ 600,00.

Students of other universities

€ 800,00.

VIU Alumni are eligible for a reduced fee.

The fees will cover tuition, course materials, accommodation in single rooms at the VIU

campus, breakfasts, some lunches and dinners, and social events.

Participants will be responsible for covering their own travel expenses to and from Venice and local transportation.

Scholarships may be available to cover partially or fully the costs of the tuition fee and accommodation on campus. Please indicate in the application form if you would like to apply for a scholarship.

PhD Students in EU universities may be eligible for Erasmus+ funding. Refer to international offices in home universities or contact VIU Erasmus office: erasmus@univiu.org.

On-line application

Available from **November 18 to January 6, 2019** on the **VIU website**.

Applicants must submit via application form: a letter of motivation (max. 2 pages), a CV including publications and academic/research experience (max. 3 pages), a proposal of the current project - e.g. MA thesis, upcoming publication or PhD thesis- (max. 5 pages) and a photo.

Admitted candidates will be notified by **January 13, 2020**.

Admitted candidates should pay the fee by **January 20, 2020**.

Credits

ECTS credits equivalence: 2.

A certificate of attendance will be issued at the end of the course.

Co-organizers

Venice International University

University of Lausanne & University of Geneva - Swiss National Center of Competence in Research LIVES

University of Padova - Department of Philosophy, Sociology, Education and Applied Psychology

KU Leuven, Faculty of Social Sciences

Affiliated institutions

Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS), University of Bremen & Jacobs University (D)

Hallie Ford Center for Healthy Children & Families, Oregon State University (USA)

Centre for Population, Aging and Health, Western University (CA)

Ageing and Living Conditions Programme (ALC), Umeå University (SE)

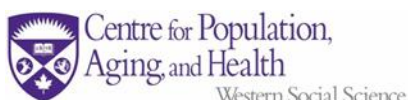
Venice International University is a consortium of 18 universities, representing 13 countries throughout the world.

The mission of VIU is to foster cooperation among VIU member institutions while facilitating the exchange of knowledge and ideas, by developing, promoting and organizing joint academic, research and training/capacity-building program. Students from non-member universities may participate in selected academic programs. The academic programs at VIU are distinguished by a markedly interdisciplinary approach to the topics, and by the international perspectives that the participants contribute to the discussions. The VIU campus is on the island of San Servolo in Venice, Italy.

Location



Hallie E. Ford Center
College of Public Health
and Human Sciences



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