Challenging Ageism and Supporting Age-Based Equity through an Intergenerational University Classroom: Proposing a Revised Model of Age-Consciousness

A Thesis Submitted to the Committee of Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of Master of Science in the Faculty of Arts and Science

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Abstract

Challenging ageism and supporting age-based equity through an intergenerational university classroom: Proposing a revised model of age-consciousness

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Ageism is pervasive and harmful, creating an urgent need to understand how ageist attitudes can be improved. Building on the novel age-conscious student concept, this thesis explored the outcomes of a pilot intergenerational classroom, aimed at reducing ageism, that integrated 13 older community participants into a university-based psychology of aging course alongside 60 younger students. Following course completion, 31 individual interviews (13 community participants, 18 students) and one focus group (4 students) were conducted to assess the impact of intergenerational connectivity on ageism and age-consciousness. An iterative collaborative qualitative analysis revealed three major themes regarding participants' experiences with ageism and age-consciousness in the intergenerational classroom: (1) heightened knowledge of ageism, (2) transformed attitudes toward aging and youth, and (3) enhanced personal connection with aging. From these findings, a revised model of age-consciousness is presented, describing three integrative factors that promote positive attitudes toward aging and youth.

Keywords: ageism, ageism intervention, age-conscious student, age-consciousness, intergenerational, qualitative, Canada

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Ageism, or age-based stereotyping, prejudice, or discrimination (Nelson, 2016), is a global crisis, contributing to reduced physical, social, and mental well-being among people of all ages (Chang et al., 2020; Chasteen et al., 2022). Given these detrimental outcomes, it is crucial to understand how ageist attitudes and behaviours directed toward both older and younger people can be reduced. Possible ageism interventions include those that focus on education about aging, intergenerational contact, or a combination of the two (Levy, 2018). Educational interventions have been shown to facilitate the development of age-conscious undergraduate students (i.e., those who have a deeper understanding of the aging process, a reduction in and increased awareness of ageism, and an enhanced personal connection with aging; Russell et al., 2022b), while intergenerational contact interventions have been effective at reducing ageist stereotypes held by younger (Cesnales et al., 2022) and older adults (Sun et al., 2019). Of these, combined interventions (which include both education about aging and intergenerational contact) are most effective, as they promote an increase in knowledge about aging, a reduction in ageist stereotypes, and an improvement in attitudes toward other generations (Andreoletti & Howard, 2018; Apriceno & Levy, 2023; Lytle et al., 2020). Intergenerational classrooms may be one avenue to expand the scope, reach, and sustainability of combined ageism interventions, and exploring the outcomes of intergenerational classrooms can provide insight into the efficacy of institutionally led ageism interventions, particularly in the context of post-secondary educational institutions (i.e.,

universities and colleges). Therefore, the current thesis aims to expand the novel age-conscious student concept (Russell et al., 2022b) by evaluating a pilot intergenerational classroom embedded in a third-year psychology of aging course at Trent University.

Project Overview

The Intergenerational Classroom Project, on which this thesis is based, consisted of two components: (1) the educational component (pilot intergenerational classroom) and (2) the research component (individual interviews and focus group). The educational component refers to the implementation of the pilot intergenerational classroom, which integrated 13 older community participants as active members of the third-year psychology of aging (PSYC 3550H) course at Trent University, alongside 60 younger students. Each week, students and community participants learned about aging-related lecture content and participated in small intergenerational group activities that aimed to reduce ageism among both groups. Detailed information about the educational component can be found in Wells and Russell (2025b). Following course completion and with approval from the Trent University Research Ethics Board (file no. 28785; Appendix A), students and community participants completed the research component of the project, which refers to the scholarly evaluation of the intergenerational classroom through individual interviews and a focus group. Further information about the research component of the project can be found in Wells and Russell (2025a).

Study Aims

This thesis aims to address several gaps in the literature across four fields of scholarship: social psychology, social gerontology, educational gerontology, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. Utilizing an exploratory case study approach, this thesis expands the quantitative results of previous research. This thesis also provides insight into the relationship between intergenerational connectivity, ageism, and age-consciousness as it builds upon the emergent age-conscious student concept.

Most research on ageism interventions employ quantitative approaches, using standardized scales to evaluate their effects (e.g., Andreoletti & Howard, 2018; Yoelin, 2022). Although these methods are beneficial for determining precise measurements and generalizable outcomes (Figgou & Pavlopoulos, 2015), quantitative findings have often demonstrated inconsistent results, showing both decreases in ageism (Andreoletti & Howard, 2018) and insignificant effects (Chien & Tann, 2017). Qualitative methods may provide deeper insight into the varying results of quantitative studies by gathering rich, subjective data on participants' experiences with specific interventions. Despite this, few studies on this topic use qualitative approaches, and those that do tend to limit data collection to written methods, such as open-ended survey questions or written reflection assignments, which may restrict the depth of data and the conclusions made. Therefore, this thesis seeks to address this gap in the literature by providing detailed qualitative evidence regarding the outcomes of the intergenerational classroom as a combined ageism intervention, including the

role of intergenerational connectivity in addressing ageism among university students and older community members.

Furthermore, as an emerging concept, the age-conscious student concept has only so far been explored in the context of an educational ageism intervention (Russell et al., 2022b), and its applicability to intergenerational settings has not yet been examined. By uncovering the connection between intergenerational connectivity and age-consciousness, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of how ageist beliefs may be deconstructed, further informing the development of ageism interventions. This thesis aims to bridge this gap in the literature by assessing the role of intergenerational connectivity on age-conscious student development, ultimately expanding the age-conscious student concept.

The overall goal of this thesis is to explore the outcomes of a pilot intergenerational classroom on ageism and age-conscious student development. The research objectives are:

O1. To explore the outcomes of a pilot intergenerational classroom for students and community participants; and

O2. To investigate the impact of intergenerational connectivity on ageism and age-consciousness in students.

To fulfil these objectives, two specific research questions will be pursued:

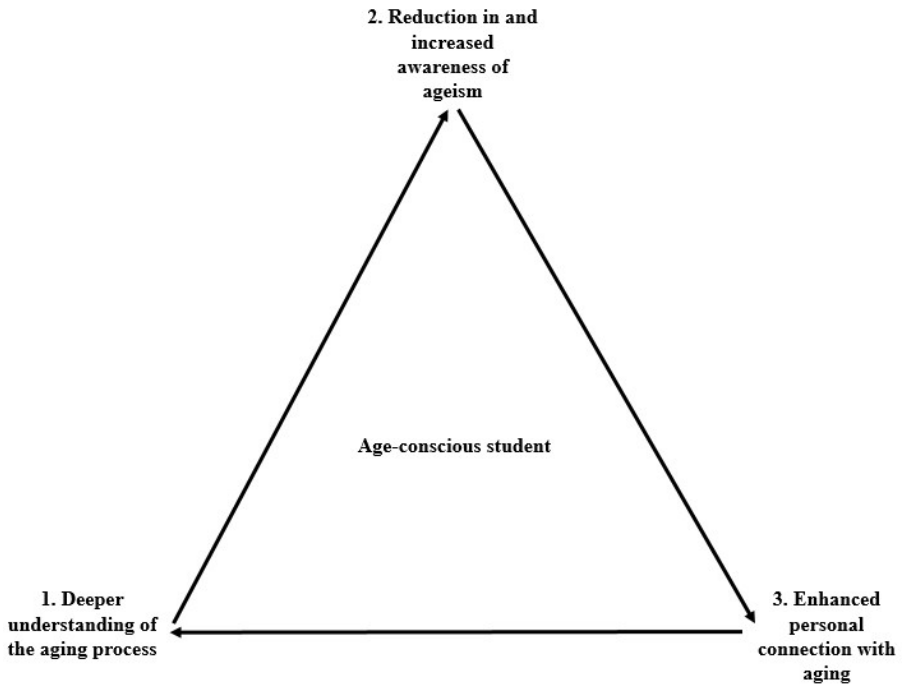
RQ1. What are students' and community participants' overall experiences in the intergenerational classroom?

RQ2. What role does intergenerational connectivity, fostered through the intergenerational classroom, play in the reduction of ageism and development of age-consciousness in students?

Theoretical Framework

In opposition to ageism, Russell et al. (2022b) established the age-conscious student concept to describe students who possess positive attitudes toward older adults and aging. Following a lecture-based undergraduate psychology of aging course, which discussed aging from a balanced, biopsychosocial perspective, interviews with students revealed that they were more knowledgeable about the realities of aging, more aware of ageism and less ageist themselves, and less fearful about their own aging. These findings led to the development of the age-conscious student concept, which includes three components depicted in Figure 1.1: (1) deeper understanding of the aging process, (2) increased awareness of and reduction in ageism, and (3) enhanced personal connection with aging. This emergent concept provides the theoretical foundation for the research objectives and research questions of this thesis. Specifically, as the age-conscious student concept was established in the context of an educational ageism intervention (i.e., education about aging without an intergenerational component), this thesis builds upon this concept to explore its development in the context of a university-based intergenerational learning opportunity.

Figure 1.1 Age-Conscious Student Concept



(Source: Russell et al., 2022b)

Research Approach

This thesis adopts a qualitative case study approach to investigate the role of intergenerational connectivity in the reduction of ageism and development of age-consciousness. Students and community participants shared their unique experiences in the intergenerational classroom through individual interviews and a focus group, providing rich data on their experiences in the classroom (RQ1), the outcomes of the course (O1), and the role of intergenerational connectivity in supporting these outcomes (O2, RQ2). Data were then analyzed using a modified iterative collaborative qualitative analysis (Russell et al., 2022a) to

uncover key themes related to participants' experiences with intergenerational connectivity, ageism, and age-consciousness.

Thesis Organization

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the thesis and presents an overview of the current project, study aims, research objectives, research questions, theoretical framework, and research approach. Chapter 2 situates the goals of the current project within the larger body of literature on social psychology, social gerontology, educational gerontology, and the scholarship of teaching and learning by discussing ageism and its manifestations, impacts of ageism, development of ageism, and ageism interventions. Chapter 3 describes the research design and methodological approach of the thesis, including details about the design of the pilot intergenerational classroom, research participant recruitment, research materials, data collection, data analysis, and ethical considerations. Chapter 4 discusses the key findings of the research and presents a revised model of age-consciousness. Finally, Chapter 5 connects the findings of the thesis to current literature within the fields of scholarship and considers the scholarly contributions of the findings, limitations and future research directions, and conclusions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Ageism, or age-based stereotyping, prejudice, or discrimination (Nelson, 2016) is a widespread and often the most socially accepted form of bias (Age UK, 2011), making it an issue of global concern (World Health Organization [WHO], 2021). Ageism can be harmful to people of all ages and has been linked to depression (Allen et al., 2022), low self-esteem (de la Fuente-Núñez et al., 2021), social exclusion (Chasteen et al., 2022), poor quality of life (Chang et al., 2020), and chronic illness (Allen et al., 2022). These impacts may be amplified among older populations, who can experience particularly damaging effects such as social isolation (Donizzetti & Lagacé, 2022), discrimination in health care settings (Wyman et al., 2018), and ultimately, a shorter lifespan because of ageist policies, practices, and beliefs (Chang et al., 2020). Given these detrimental outcomes, ageism has been referred to as a “worldwide crisis” (Levy et al., 2022), and as population aging continues, these negative outcomes will become even more widespread than they are today.

Post-secondary educational institutions, including universities, can play an important social role in addressing ageism. Russell et al. (2022b) found that a lecture-based undergraduate course on aging encouraged the development of age-conscious students, while post-secondary-based intergenerational initiatives, such as intergenerational service-learning programs, have also been shown to reduce ageism and improve attitudes toward older adults (e.g., Pstross et al., 2017; Golenko et al., 2020). Interventions that incorporate both intergenerational contact and education about aging (i.e., combined interventions) appear to be

most effective (Apriceno & Levy, 2023) and can be implemented in post-secondary settings through intergenerational classrooms.

However, despite their encouraging findings, most studies regarding ageism interventions employ quantitative approaches and often show mixed results (e.g., Andreoletti & Howard, 2018; Chien & Tan, 2017). Furthermore, the role of intergenerational connectivity in age-conscious student development remains widely unexplored, and research that directly assesses the outcomes of ageism interventions in post-secondary education, such as intergenerational classrooms (implemented in any discipline), is limited. Therefore, there is a need to add to the growing body of literature regarding combined (i.e., education about aging and intergenerational contact) ageism interventions, particularly in the university context. Building upon previous ageism interventions and extending the age-conscious student concept, the current thesis aims to address these gaps in the literature by exploring the role of intergenerational connectivity, fostered through a university-based intergenerational classroom, in the reduction of ageism and development of age-consciousness.

This chapter provides an overview of the literature that guides this thesis, including key terms and theories. In discussing ageism and its manifestations, the impacts of ageism, the development of ageism, and ageism interventions, this chapter lays the scholarly foundations for the current study. Additionally, this chapter explores how the research contributes to addressing gaps in four fields of scholarship: social psychology, social gerontology, educational gerontology, and the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Ageism and its Manifestations

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2021), ageism occurs at three distinct yet interrelated levels: institutional, interpersonal, and individual. At the institutional level, ageism is upheld systematically through policies and laws. At the interpersonal level, ageist attitudes and behaviours are aimed at others in the form of stereotyping, prejudice, or discrimination. Finally, at the individual level, ageist beliefs are internalized and directed toward the self. At each level, ageism can be expressed explicitly (i.e., intentionally or consciously) or implicitly (i.e., unintentionally or unconsciously), making it difficult to accurately determine its prevalence. Despite the challenges, researchers estimate that over 80% of older adults experience some form of ageism (Allen et al., 2022), and most Europeans have negative views of younger adults (Ayalon, 2013).

Structural ageism, or institutional ageism, involves the projection and perpetuation of ageist attitudes through policy, laws, and larger cultural narratives (WHO, 2021). Institutional ageism occurs in healthcare, employment, technology, and research settings, where people may be arbitrarily excluded from healthcare services (Chang et al., 2020), employee recruitment (Batinovic et al., 2023), technology development (Rosales et al., 2023), or clinical trials and research (Chang et al., 2020) based on their age. Youth-focused cultures, such as those found in the West, further emphasize and promote institutional ageism, as cultural values shape attitudes and beliefs, which are then seen through structural-level policies and practices (Levy, 2009). For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, older people were often blamed for prolonging the

pandemic and pandemic-related lockdowns, with many believing that COVID-19 only significantly impacted older people (Ayalon, 2020). These attitudes were reinforced at the structural level through the policy and practice of healthcare institutions, as well as popular media (Meisner, 2020), further encouraging ageism at the interpersonal and individual levels. Therefore, ageism at the institutional level is seen as the most influential form of ageism (Levy, 2018).

Structural-level ageism is directly linked to ageism at the interpersonal level, in which ageist thoughts, feelings, or behaviours are directed toward another person. Over 50% of people worldwide hold ageist biases against older adults (WHO, 2021), and research suggests ageism directed toward youth may be even more prevalent (Bratt et al., 2018). Interpersonal ageism may include lack of respect, assumptions about cognitive or physical abilities, and social exclusion (Chasteen et al., 2021). Interpersonal ageism can occur in a variety of settings, such as employment settings, social settings, family interactions, and public spaces (Chasteen et al., 2021), where ageist stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination may be perpetrated by friends, family members, coworkers, service workers, and even strangers. Though the presentation and perpetrators of ageism can vary, there are trends in the experiences of ageism among age groups. In youth-focused societies, such as those found in the West, older adults frequently perceive ageism from younger people in the form of unwanted assistance (Chasteen et al., 2021), elderspeak (Shaw & Gordon, 2021), and negative stereotypes that often label them as unpleasant, mentally and physically ill, incompetent, and helpless (Abrams et al., 2015; WHO, 2021). In contrast,

societies that highly value wisdom, experience, and seniority support unfavourable perceptions of youth (Raymer et al., 2017), and younger populations may be associated with traits like irresponsibility and disobedience (de la Fuente-Núñez et al., 2021).

Regular exposure to ageism at the structural and interpersonal levels can accumulate over the life course, leading to the development of ageism at the individual level (Levy, 2009). Self-directed ageism, or internalized ageism, in which age-based stereotypes are internalized and directed toward the self (Levy, 2009; WHO, 2021), can create fears, worries, or discomfort with one's own aging, presenting as anxiety about aging (Ishikawa, 2023), avoidance of activities such as digital technology use (Köttl et al., 2021) or socialization (Rahn et al., 2021), negative age-based self-talk (Campos et al., 2012), and an implicit disfavour for growing older (Chopik et al., 2016). Internalized ageism is alarmingly common among older adults, with 81% of older people experiencing ageism at this level (Allen et al., 2022). Though internalized ageism has seldom been studied in the context of younger adults directly, younger people are also susceptible to experiencing ageism at this level, as they may experience aging anxiety (Lytle et al., 2020) and a preference for youth due to protective developmental factors, such as age-based categorization and separation (Mendonça et al., 2018). Ageism at the individual level can then contribute to ageism at the interpersonal and even institutional levels, displaying a complex interrelationship between ageism at its three levels.

Impacts of Ageism

Given the multifaceted nature of ageism, negative psychological, social, physical, and economic consequences may accumulate, leading to adverse impacts on individuals, organizations, and societies. People of all ages may experience reduced well-being (de la Fuente-Núñez et al., 2021), decreased quality of life, and higher mortality rates (Chang et al., 2020) because of ageism. Poor psychological, social, and physical health may further perpetuate the harmful impacts of ageism, creating a cycle of illness and distress. These outcomes, alongside global population aging, emphasize the importance of reducing ageism among people of all ages.

Ageism can be psychologically damaging for those who experience it. Increased ageism, particularly at the individual level, is linked to decreased self-efficacy (Chang et al., 2020), low self-esteem (de la Fuente-Núñez et al., 2021), and depression (Allen et al., 2022). Similarly, ageism has negative ramifications for social well-being, including social isolation (Donizzetti & Lagacé, 2022) and poor interpersonal relationships (Chang et al., 2020). These psychosocial impacts can play a significant role in physical health – for example, those with lower self-esteem and higher levels of self-directed ageism are less likely to engage in health promotion behaviours and may instead participate in risky health behaviours (Chang et al., 2020), further perpetuating negative physical health outcomes and ageism at the individual level (Henry at al., 2023). Chronic stress as a result of the psychological and social outcomes of ageism can also adversely influence physical health (Allen, 2016) and lead to higher levels of

stress biomarkers (Chang et al., 2020), poorer self-reported physical health, and an increased prevalence of chronic illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease, and stroke (Allen et al., 2022). Therefore, researchers estimate that over 17 million cases of chronic illnesses in the United States are related to ageism (Levy et al., 2020).

Denial of healthcare services based on age, exclusion from health research (Chang et al., 2020), and poor treatment in health care settings (Wyman et al., 2018) may also arise because of ageism. Such discrimination has adverse effects on the accuracy of diagnosis and treatment of illnesses (de la Fuente-Núñez et al., 2021), prolonging physical and mental illness among people of all ages and causing excess strain on the healthcare system (Levy et al., 2020). Negative experiences with healthcare may further discourage people experiencing ageism from accessing necessary services and engaging in health promotion behaviours, perpetuating health complications, and ultimately contributing to reduced quality of life and a shorter lifespan (Chang et al., 2020).

Furthermore, ageism has negative implications for organizations and societies, including significant economic consequences. Ageism in the workplace can result in reduced employee performance (Spoelma & Marchiondo, 2024), lower rates of employee retention (Henry et al., 2015), and early retirement (Chang et al., 2020), which can reduce organizational efficiency and economic development (Appelbaum et al., 2016). Additionally, given the impact of ageism on health, including the prevalence of chronic illnesses and the healthcare resources needed to diagnose and treat them, there is a substantial economic

cost to ageism at the individual, interpersonal, and structural levels. In total, Levy et al. (2020) estimate that ageism accounts for over $86 billion CAD of healthcare spending per year. The magnitude of these costs is alarming, and as ageism persists, these consequences will become increasingly harmful, further perpetuating psychological, social, physical, and economic challenges. Therefore, there is an urgent need to understand the developmental trajectory of ageism to inform interventions and reduce ageism among people of all ages.

Development of Ageism

Like other forms of prejudice (e.g., racism and sexism), there is a multifaceted, cyclical interaction between ageism at the institutional, interpersonal, and individual levels, making its developmental trajectory challenging to determine. Theories of social prejudice propose some contributing factors that may extend to the development of ageism and suggest that addressing specific determinants may reduce the likelihood of its development.

Research emphasizes the role of early cognitive and sociocultural influences on the development of ageism, suggesting a strong interconnection between individual and social factors. Age-based categorization can be seen in infants, and by the age of four, can develop into ageist prejudice and socially constructed generational divides (Mendonça et al., 2018). In the past, families in the West often lived intergenerationally, which addressed this early cognitive strategy of separation and contributed to positive societal views of older adults (Connidis & Barnett, 2018). However, due to changing family and social

structures, intergenerational contact both within and beyond the family have become less common (Novak et al., 2018), perpetuating an increasingly age-segregated society and supporting generational divides. In the absence of interpersonal intergenerational relationships, early social separation continues to grow over the lifespan, and individuals' attitudes of others become shaped by common social narratives and stereotypes (de la Fuente-Núñez et al., 2021). This can be particularly harmful, as negative portrayals of older adults are ingrained in Western cultural narratives (Nelson, 2016) and generational stereotypes about younger people are common among older people (Raymer et al., 2017). These ageist attitudes can become deeply entrenched in one's understanding of and attitudes toward aging and youth, further influencing an individual's beliefs about themselves and others (Levy, 2009).

In addition to the internalization of ageism from the structural and interpersonal levels, negative age-based beliefs may be reinforced by personal experiences as recipients of ageism. Low quality intergenerational interactions, such as those that emphasize competition and differences between groups, are linked to increased ageism (Marques et al., 2020). Those who have experienced ageism are also more likely to express negative attitudes toward people of different ages (Shimizu et al 2022; Werner et al., 2022), acting as a potential protective mechanism against further age-based prejudice and discrimination. Moreover, as intergenerational interactions are limited for many people in the West (Novak et al., 2018), negative intergenerational encounters may strengthen

the salience of harmful stereotypes and continue to perpetuate the cycle of ageism at the structural, interpersonal, and individual levels.

Though the exact developmental trajectory of ageism is unclear, research suggests a strong interconnection between individual, social, and cultural factors. Insight into some of these influences may guide the development of ageism interventions; however, solving this intricate social issue requires substantial change at each of the three levels.

Addressing Ageism

Due to its complex development across the lifespan, ageism can be challenging to address. A variety of interventions have been introduced in attempts to reduce ageism, including education about aging, intergenerational contact, and combined interventions (i.e., those that incorporate both intergenerational contact and education about aging). Post-secondary educational institutions, especially those classified as “age-friendly” (such as the Age-Friendly Universities Global Network; Age-Friendly Universities Global Network [AFUGN], n.d.-b), could play an important social role in implementing these interventions, and in turn, encourage the development of age-conscious students. However, each ageism intervention carries with it unique challenges in terms of implementation and sustainability.

Educational Interventions

Research shows that educational interventions are beneficial for reducing ageism and improving attitudes among both younger and older people (Doncel-Garcia et al., 2023). These interventions must offer education *specific to aging*, as it is the increase in knowledge about aging and ageism that provides the desired effects (Levy, 2018). While educational in nature, these interventions are not required to take place in educational settings; instead, they can be implemented through a variety of channels, such as in-person presentations, videos, or social media campaigns. Though educational interventions are successful at addressing ageism to some extent, their effects are not always strong or long-lasting and should be supplemented by other interventions.

Educational ageism interventions have positive outcomes for both younger and older adults. Given that intergenerational interactions may be limited in age-segregated societies such as in the West (Novak et al., 2018), individuals may be restricted in their exposure to realistic, balanced depictions of people of different ages, leading them to draw from stereotypes and cultural beliefs to shape their attitudes about older or younger people (de la Fuente-Núñez et al., 2021). Education about aging can help to bridge this gap by increasing younger people's understanding about older adults and the aging process (e.g., Auais et al., 2023; Chonody, 2015), in turn decreasing aging anxiety (Cooney et al., 2020), improving attitudes toward older adults, and reducing stereotypes (Lytle et al., 2020). Similarly, education about ageism and its outcomes can reduce older adults' negative views of aging (Doncel-Garcia et al., 2023) and address

internalized ageism common among older adults in youth-focused societies (Allen et al., 2022). Though it has not been explored directly, these interventions may also have the potential to improve older adults' views of younger people by addressing stereotypes of youth among older adults.

Canadian universities are increasingly offering lecture-based courses on aging that provide significant opportunities to address ageism among young adults (e.g., Beach et al., 2024; Russell et al., 2022; Wurtele & Maruyama, 2013). However, despite their efficacy in some cases, gerontological curricula are usually implemented in applied health and social courses (e.g., those taken by medical students or nursing students; Hoge et al., 2015) and may reinforce ageism among students given their emphasis on physical and cognitive decline (Fohn et al., 2024). Therefore, careful consideration is necessary when implementing educational ageism interventions through gerontological curricula.

In addition to gerontological curricula, educational interventions may be implemented through short videos or one-off sessions. Educational videos can have positive impacts on young adults' attitudes about aging in as little as seven minutes, though their effects may only be short-term (Lytle et al., 2021). Slightly lengthier interventions are beneficial, with a one-hour educational session on aging and ageism reducing older adults' negative aging stereotypes for at least one month (Doncel-Garcia et al., 2023). Despite these promising findings, the sustained impacts of these interventions are limited, and additional ageism interventions must be considered to maximize their outcomes.

Intergenerational Contact Interventions

Interventions that foster intergenerational contact, such as service-learning and other intergenerational learning opportunities (in which the educational aspect is *not* related to aging) can also reduce ageism and improve attitudes toward other generations. They can be implemented in a variety of settings, such as educational and recreational settings, and differ in terms of intervention length and contact frequency, making them easily adaptable for many purposes and contexts. However, these interventions require a significant number of resources to implement, restricting their reach and efficacy.

Building on Allport's (1954) contact theory, intergenerational contact and collaboration can be effective at reducing ageism (Levy, 2018) and even avoiding its development (Connidis & Barnett, 2018). Though beneficial, people of different ages may have limited interactions with each other due to changing family structures and increased age-segregation in Western society (Novak et al., 2016), leading to reliance on age-based stereotypes during interpersonal interactions (de la Fuente-Núñez et al., 2021). Given this separation, ageism is linked to the frequency of intergenerational contact – for example, consistent, positive intergenerational family interactions (e.g., grandparents interacting with grandchildren) have been associated with lower levels of ageism (Flamion et al., 2019). However, these outcomes are not guaranteed, and the benefits of intergenerational contact heavily depend on the quality of the contact (Hawkley et al., 2019).

Poor quality intergenerational interactions, such as those that highlight generational differences and competition, confirm negative stereotypes and increase ageism (WHO, 2023); therefore, high quality of intergenerational interactions must be emphasized in intergenerational contact interventions. To ensure high quality intergenerational interactions, contact interventions should minimize power dynamics, provide knowledge sharing opportunities for all participants, and foster meaningful connections between groups (Levy, 2018; WHO, 2023). Successful contact interventions must also encourage an environment of cohesion rather than competition, in which people of all ages are treated as equals (Levy, 2018). When done correctly – i.e., by fostering positive intergenerational interactions – contact interventions can be beneficial for both younger and older participants as they can reduce ageist stereotypes and aging anxiety among younger people (Cesnales et al., 2022), improve attitudes toward younger people among older adults (Golenko et al., 2020), and provide opportunities for reciprocal learning and mutual mentorship among people of all ages (Brower et al., 2022; Dauenhauer et al., 2018). In addition to ageism-related outcomes, intergenerational contact interventions have been shown to have positive implications for younger adults' sense of community and self-confidence (Pstross et al., 2017), while older adults may also experience increased well-being (Golenko et al., 2020), social connectivity, and mental stimulation (Pstross et al., 2017). Furthermore, contact interventions that take place in academic settings, including post-secondary institutions, can increase academic motivation

among older adults (Brower et al., 2022) and encourage closer connections between educational institutions and their respective local communities.

Like educational interventions, intergenerational contact interventions are often restricted to medical students, limiting the extent of their impact. This restriction may be due to the considerable number of resources required to implement and sustain service-learning and other similar opportunities, as well as logistical challenges associated with these interventions (Hou & Wilder, 2015). Additionally, given the role of contact quality in shaping the outcomes of intergenerational contact (Hawkley et al., 2019), these interventions have the potential to increase ageism and must be thoughtfully designed, adding an additional workload to the implementation and sustainability of these interventions. Despite their challenges, intergenerational contact interventions can be tremendously beneficial to those who participate, highlighting the value of exploring sustainable yet effective interventions that can be implemented in a variety of settings, including but not limited to post-secondary institutions.

Combined Interventions

Combined interventions, including intergenerational classrooms, can take the positive outcomes of educational and intergenerational contact interventions one step further. By incorporating both education about aging and frequent, high quality intergenerational contact, combined interventions encourage intergenerational connections that may not occur naturally in cultural or personal contexts (de la Fuente-Núñez et al., 2021) and provide a space for participants to

reciprocally learn from and with each other (WHO, 2023). Based on the impacts of short-term educational and contact interventions, semester-long combined interventions such as intergenerational classrooms have the potential to facilitate the development of meaningful intergenerational relationships, break down ageist stereotypes, and encourage a deeper understanding of the aging process (Apriceno & Levy, 2023) through regular intergenerational interactions (e.g., several hours weekly for 12 weeks). They may also improve self-confidence (Pstross et al., 2017), decrease aging anxiety (Cesnales et al., 2022), encourage academic motivation (Brower et al., 2022), enhance social connection (Lytle et al., 2021), bring awareness to ageism, and equip participants with the tools necessary to confidently address ageism outside of the classroom (Russell et al., 2022b). Though combined interventions have positive outcomes, their implementation in post-secondary educational settings is limited. Age-friendly post-secondary institutions, including age-friendly universities, can fill this gap as they facilitate intergenerational educational spaces beyond individual classroom environments and contribute to the development of intergenerational post-secondary institutions more broadly (AFUGN, n.d.-b).

Age-Friendly Universities

Age-friendly post-secondary institutions, including those classified as age-friendly universities (AFUGN, n.d.-b), may encourage the implementation of educational, intergenerational, and combined ageism interventions as they aim to positively contribute to the lives of older adults and enhance connections

between universities and older community members (AFUGN, n.d.-b). Extending the WHO's age-friendly cities framework (WHO, 2007), which emphasizes the role of social participation and accessibility in promoting the well-being of older people, the age-friendly universities framework highlights the importance of intergenerational learning and the inclusion of older people in post-secondary educational institutions and curricula (AFUGN, n.d.-b). Intergenerational classrooms facilitated in university courses and other similar institutionally led ageism interventions support the mandates of age-friendly cities and universities by connecting institutions with their local communities and promoting age-diverse spaces that challenge the norms of age-segregated societies common in the West. Though age-friendly universities align with the Government of Canada's goal to improve the lives of older Canadians through age-friendly initiatives (Government of Canada, n.d.), only nine Canadian universities hold this distinction (AFUGN, n.d.-a). As one of few globally recognized age-friendly universities in Canada, Trent University's strength in interdisciplinary aging research and experiential learning in aging (Trent Centre for Aging & Society, n.d.) supports the implementation of ageism interventions across its campus. Through these efforts, the University reinforces its role as an age-friendly university within the larger age-friendly community of Peterborough, Ontario (City of Peterborough, n.d.).

Study Context

Although there are implied benefits to post-secondary intergenerational classrooms as combined ageism interventions, direct research on

intergenerational classroom models and their implications is scarce and must be further examined to determine the extent of their impact. Therefore, this thesis aims to address this empirical gap by evaluating the experiences and outcomes of a university-based pilot intergenerational classroom. Specifically, this thesis expands upon existing literature regarding the effects of combined ageism interventions in universities. Focusing on the role of intergenerational connectivity in the development of age-consciousness, this thesis provides insight into the impact of such an ageism intervention on both younger students and older community participants.

The Intergenerational Classroom Project, including the pilot intergenerational classroom (educational component; Trent Centre for Aging & Society, 2024a; 2024b; Wells & Russell, 2025b) and research component of the project (Wells & Russell, 2025a), was conducted at Trent University in the City of Peterborough, which is located on the treaty and traditional territory of the Mississauga Anishinaabeg. Peterborough is optimal for intergenerational learning opportunities given its high proportions of older adults (i.e., 23%; Statistics Canada, 2023a) compared to the national average (19%; Statistics Canada, 2023b). In addition to representing Canada's rapidly aging population, Peterborough is in close proximity to Trent University, a designated age-friendly university (Trent University, 2018) with an enrollment of almost 10,000 undergraduate students at the Peterborough campus (Trent University, n.d.), creating an opportune environment for intergenerational initiatives.

Fields of Scholarship

With a focus on interpersonal relationships, social prejudice, social dimensions of aging, and aging education, this thesis exists at the crossroads of social psychology, social gerontology, educational gerontology, and scholarship of teaching and learning. Social psychology emphasizes the role of social interactions in shaping attitudes and behaviours, including interpersonal biases, prejudice, and discrimination (American Psychological Association, 2013). Given its primary focus on ageism, age-consciousness, and perceived generational divides, this thesis is foundationally rooted in social psychology. Specifically, the design of the pilot intergenerational classroom drew on prejudice-reduction techniques commonly discussed in the field, while the research component of this project addressed the efficacy of such interventions. Therefore, this thesis offers meaningful contributions to the field of social psychology, building upon Allport's (1954) contact theory and providing insight into the role of intergenerational connectivity in the reduction of ageism and development of age-consciousness.

This thesis also contributes to the field of social gerontology. This field of scholarship is centred around the social experiences of aging, including the social identities, interactions, and relationships of older adults (Higgs & Nazroo, 2010). At its core, the intergenerational classroom aimed to reduce ageism and foster positive intergenerational interactions; therefore, this project's long-term goal of promoting the social well-being of older adults aligns with the goals of social gerontology. In addition, this thesis explores the outcomes of

intergenerational relationships (fostered through the intergenerational classroom) and provides a deeper understanding of the ways in which intergenerational connectivity may influence the aging experience, thus supporting the further development of this field.

Furthermore, this thesis advances the field of educational gerontology, which is concerned with methods of educating people about aging-related processes and experiences (Formosa, 2022). In addition to prejudice-reduction techniques discussed throughout the social psychology literature, the intergenerational classroom used educational-based techniques to reduce ageism among young adults. Specifically, course content discussed aging from a biopsychosocial perspective, encouraging a balanced and realistic perspective of aging among undergraduate students. In examining the outcomes of such techniques, this thesis provides unique contributions to the educational gerontology literature and supports the development of future post-secondary institutionally led intergenerational classrooms.

Finally, this thesis builds upon the scholarship of teaching and learning, an interdisciplinary field that aims to explore the ways in which educational experiences can be improved (Simmons & Taylor, 2019). The intergenerational classroom provided a unique experiential learning opportunity for students through hands-on learning, collaborative projects, and real-world examples. In uncovering the outcomes of experiential learning in aging through an intergenerational classroom, this thesis provides insight into the impacts of innovative teaching techniques and discusses the role of intergenerational

classrooms in enhancing the positive outcomes of lecture-based courses on aging.

Chapter Summary

As a widespread form of bias, ageism has negative outcomes for people of all ages. Despite its negative impacts on individuals, organizations, and societies, ageism may be challenging to address due to its complex developmental trajectory. Various interventions, such as education about aging, intergenerational contact, and combined interventions, have been introduced to reduce age-based biases in younger and older people. Intergenerational classrooms and other combined interventions may be particularly successful at reducing ageism as they can effectively break down ageist stereotypes and promote cohesion across generations through both education about aging and intergenerational contact. However, combined ageism interventions within the context of post-secondary institutions are limited, and direct research on university-based intergenerational classrooms is scarce. Aiming to provide insight into the outcomes of a university-based intergenerational classroom (O1, RQ1) and the role of intergenerational connectivity in the reduction of ageism and development of age-consciousness (O2, RQ2), this thesis addresses several gaps within the fields of social psychology, social gerontology, educational gerontology, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. This chapter therefore presented the scholarly underpinnings of the thesis which guided the research

design and methodological approach used to address the study objectives and research questions.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

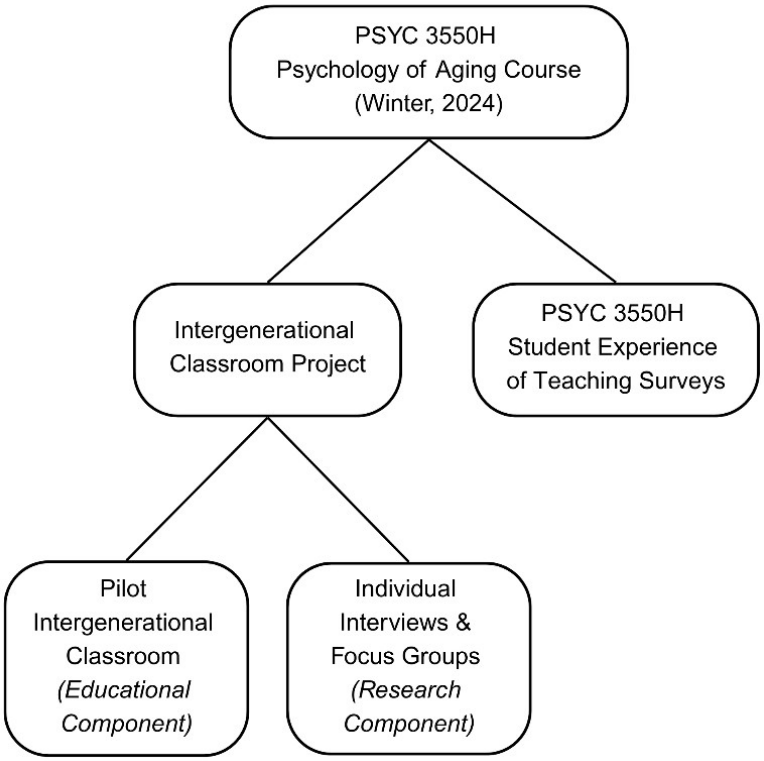
This chapter outlines the methodological design of the current study used to address the research objectives and research questions. It provides context into the design of the educational component (pilot intergenerational classroom) and the research component (individual interviews and focus groups) of the project, including the qualitative case study approach and its relevance given the study goal, research objectives, and research questions. This chapter discusses the participant recruitment strategies, participant pool, data collection procedures, and data analysis process, and reflects on the ethical considerations made throughout the educational and research components, as well as the dissemination phase of the project.

Intergenerational Classroom Project Design

The Intergenerational Classroom Project was embedded within the third-year Psychology of Aging course (PSYC 3550H) offered at Trent University and consisted of two components: (1) the educational component (pilot intergenerational classroom) and (2) the research component (individual interviews and focus group). The educational component (pilot intergenerational classroom) refers to the implementation of the course from January to April 2024. The research component refers to the scholarly evaluation of the intergenerational classroom through individual interviews and a focus group with course participants. The educational and research components of the Intergenerational Classroom Project are distinct from the standard PSYC 3550H

Student Experience of Teaching Surveys, which were administered as normal to assess students' perceptions of the instruction quality of the course. An overview of the project's components is depicted in Figure 3.1. Given the broad scope of the project, this thesis focuses primarily on the research component. Detailed information regarding the educational component of the project can be found in the reports by Trent Centre for Aging & Society (2024a) and Wells and Russell (2025b).

Figure 3.1 **Project Overview**



Community Participant Recruitment Strategy

Community participants were recruited to participate in the pilot intergenerational classroom (educational component) from the City of Peterborough and the Village of Lakefield. Recruitment for community participants was communicated through recruitment posters (Appendix B) that were displayed across four retirement residences and one activity centre in Peterborough. Recruitment posters were also shared via email blasts through the Trent Centre for Aging & Society, Age-Friendly Peterborough, Retired Teachers of Ontario, and Trent Health in Motion. Additionally, I presented the recruitment materials in-person at a Peterborough Public Library Living and Aging Well information session. To be eligible to take part in the course as a community participant, individuals were required to communicate fluently in English and be age 65 or older. Those interested in learning more about participating were directed to contact the researchers by telephone or complete an online sign-up form, providing their name, age, title/pronouns, and contact information.

The project received a substantial amount of community interest in response to our recruitment materials, with 50 people signing up to learn more about participating. To provide more information about the classroom and narrow down our community participant pool, all interested individuals were invited to attend an information session which discussed the goals, expectations, and time commitment of the intergenerational classroom. As my supervisor and I were unable to accommodate all interested individuals into the classroom, we also provided information about additional opportunities to get involved with Trent

University and the Trent Centre for Aging & Society. Alternative opportunities included other intergenerational events, research participation opportunities, and research sharing events. These opportunities were created as alternative ways for potential participants to engage with the University community should they be more interested in these activities or not selected for the intergenerational classroom. At the end of the information session, interested participants were asked to complete another form ranking their top choices for involvement.

Community participants were selected to participate in the intergenerational classroom based on their top choices for involvement, age, career background, connection to Trent University, and overall fit with the program, prioritizing equity, diversity, inclusion, and Indigeneity among community participants. In total, 13 community participants were selected to participate in the intergenerational classroom in addition to the 65 Trent university undergraduate students that were registered in PSYC 3550H. Following the first weeks of the course, five students dropped the course, leading to a final enrolment of 60 students and 13 community participants.

Educational Component

Classroom Design

In 2024, the Intergenerational Classroom Project was embedded within the PSYC 3550H Psychology of Aging course, a third-year undergraduate psychology course taught by Dr. Elizabeth Russell, supervisor of this thesis, in which I was assigned as a Graduate Teaching Assistant. The course was not

restricted to professional programs and was open to students with varying levels of knowledge and interest in older populations. From January to April 2024, students and older community members (herein referred to as “community participants”) attended weekly three-hour lectures that combined formal lecture-based education about aging with informal intergenerational contact. Course materials aimed to encourage a realistic and diverse view of aging and addressed topics such as biological aging processes, healthcare, retirement, and social support in older adulthood. The content followed past lecture-based, non-intergenerational iterations of the PSYC 3550H course taught by the same instructor.

In addition to the lectures, the classroom environment was designed to facilitate positive intergenerational group interactions. Each week, students and community participants broke into small, informal intergenerational groups of approximately five students to one community participant. The groups were not preassigned, and though they fluctuated somewhat from week to week, the individual composition of people remained largely stable throughout the course. Within their groups, students and community participants completed directed activities targeted toward building meaningful connections, such as working together on projects, making art, and informally sharing their experiences related to lecture content. The activities allowed each group to work on a common goal and engage in casual discussions, sometimes (but not always) linked to course content. A complete list of intergenerational group activities completed throughout the semester is presented in Appendix C. To further provide

intergenerational knowledge sharing opportunities, community participants and students were also encouraged to engage with lecture content through large group discussions during lecture time, and students were invited to collaborate with community participants on course assignments. The course syllabus, which is provided in Appendix D with the permission of the course instructor, offers detailed information regarding the course description, learning objectives, content topics, and assignment guidelines.

Research Component

Study Design

An exploratory qualitative case study design was used to address the goal, objectives, and research questions of this thesis. A qualitative approach, which emphasizes subjectivity and individual perspectives (Figgou & Pavlopoulos, 2015), was used to highlight participants' unique experiences in the intergenerational classroom, facilitating O1 and RQ1. An exploratory case study design, described as a comprehensive description of a specific event or program used to guide future research and programming (Yin, 2009), was necessary to gather rich, in-depth data (Harrison et al.,2017) regarding participants' experiences with intergenerational connectivity, ageism, and age-consciousness, addressing O2 and RQ2. Therefore, an exploratory qualitative case study approach was appropriate for evaluating the experiences and outcomes of the pilot intergenerational classroom.

Participant Recruitment

With approval from the Trent University Research Ethics Board (file no. 28785; see Appendix A), students and community participants who participated in the educational component (pilot intergenerational classroom) were recruited to participate in the research component of the project. In March 2024, toward the end of the course, I presented a verbal overview of the study during class, emphasizing the voluntary nature of participation and explaining the dual roles held by the researchers/instructors. Information regarding these dual roles, as well as the ethical considerations made concerning scholarship of teaching and learning research, are discussed later in this chapter.

Following the presentation, I shared a link to an online sign-up form where both students and community participants could book a time to participate in an in-person individual interview discussing their experiences with the intergenerational classroom, intergenerational social engagement, and age-consciousness. Students and community participants were reminded of the opportunity to participate via email reminders and announcements on Blackboard, the learning management system used by Trent University (Appendix E). Beginning March 27, 2024, due to low student participation rates, my supervisor and I decided to provide additional accessible ways to participate in the research, including the option to complete interviews in-person or on Zoom, individually or in pairs, or to participate in an in-person focus group. These alternate participation opportunities followed the same protocol as the originally presented in-person individual interviews, acting only as accessible alternatives

to participation for those who were unable or unwilling to complete the interviews in-person or individually.

Participants

In total, 31 individual interviews (13 community participants, 18 students) and one focus group (4 students) were included in the final analyses (N = 35; n *community participants* = 13, n *students* = 22). Although the focus group was originally conducted with five students, one participant did not sign the letter of information and consent and their responses were omitted from the study. This omission led to a final total of four focus group participants. The ages of community participants ranged from 67 to 83, with a mean of 74, and the ages of student participants ranged from 20 to 27, with a mean of 21. Demographics for community participants are presented in Table 3.1, and demographics for student participants are presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.1 Community Participant Demographic Characteristics

Participant number	Age	Pronouns/ Title	Data collection format (in-person, virtual, or focus group)
CP1	78	Mrs.	In-person
CP2	72	He/him	In-person
CP3	82	Mrs.	In-person
CP4	77	Mr.	In-person
CP5	76	Ms.	In-person
CP6	67	Mrs.	In-person
CP7	69	Mrs., She/her	In-person
CP8	83	Ms.	In-person
CP9	68	Mr.	In-person
CP10	75	Mr.	In-person
CP11	75	Ms.	In-person
CP12	77	Mrs.	In-person
CP13	73	Mrs.	Virtual

Note. CP = community participant.

Table 3.2 Student Participant Demographic Characteristics

Participant number	Age	Pronouns/ Title	Program of study	Year of study	Data collection format (in-person, virtual, or focus group)
SP1	21	Miss	Psychology	4	In-person
SP2	22	She/her	Psychology	3	In-person
SP3	21	Ms., She/her	Psychology	4	In-person
SP4	22	She/her	Psychology	4	In-person
SP5	21	She/her	Psychology	4	In-person
SP6	20	Ms., She/her	Psychology	3	In-person
SP7	21	She/her	Psychology	4	In-person
SP8	21	She/her	Psychology	4	In-person
SP9	20	They/them	Psychology	3	Focus Group
SP10	23	He/him	Business Administration, Psychology	5	Focus Group
SP11	20	She/her	Psychology, Teacher Education	3	Focus Group
SP12	21	She/her	Psychology, Teacher Education	4	Focus Group
SP13	20	He/him	Psychology	3	Virtual
SP14	21	She/her	Nursing	3	Virtual
SP15	24	Mr.	Psychology	5	In-person
SP16	21	She/her	Psychology, Philosophy	4	In-person
SP17	21	She/her	Psychology	4	In-person
SP18	27	He/him	Psychology, Philosophy	3	In-person
SP19	20	She/her	Psychology	3	In-person
SP20	24	She/her	Psychology	4	In-person
SP21	22	Mr.	Psychology	3	In-person
SP22	23	She/her	Psychology	4	In-person

Note. SP = student participant.

Materials

Two semi-structured protocols were utilized to explore participants' subjective experiences in the intergenerational classroom: (1) community participant protocol (Appendix F), which guided all interviews with community participants, and (2) student participant protocol (Appendix G), which guided all student participant interviews and the focus group. Both protocols were developed to align with the study's research questions and objectives and prompted participants to discuss their interactions in the intergenerational classroom, understanding of ageism, and personal connection with aging. The community participant protocol (Appendix F) focused on older community participants' perceptions of youth, while the student protocol (Appendix G) assessed younger student participants' attitudes toward aging. Key questions from the community participant protocol included:

1. Describe the ways you interacted with others in the course throughout the semester, including both students and/or other community participants.
2. How have your perceptions of youth changed or stayed the same since being involved in the classroom?
3. How do you feel about the future now that you know the leaders of tomorrow a bit better?

Key questions from the student participant protocol included:

1. How did you think having older people in the class influenced your learning about course content or course assignments?
2. Thinking back to how you viewed aging before the course started, how

would you describe your previous perceptions of aging? How have your perceptions of aging changed or stayed the same since being involved in the classroom?

3. How has this course impacted the way you view your own aging?

Data Collection

Data were collected between March 2024 and May 2024. Data collection began during the last two weeks of the course and continued for four weeks after the final day of classes. Before signing up to participate in the study, participants were provided with a copy of the Letter of Information and Consent (Appendix H) to review, outlining the purpose of the study, confidentiality and withdrawal procedures, and the contact information for the Trent University Research Ethics Board. At the time of each interview and focus group, participants were asked to sign a physical copy of the Letter of Information and Consent, or in the case of virtual interviews, to provide a written and verbal statement confirming their consent to participate.

Demographic information, including student and community participants' age, pronouns/title, role in the class, and program/year of study (applicable to student participants), was collected through a digital form (Appendix I) prior to the collection of qualitative data. Qualitative data were then gathered using semi-structured interviews and a focus group. Interviews occurred both in-person (n = 28) and virtually (n = 3), and the focus group occurred in person. In total, the final analysis included 31 interviews (*n community participants* = 13; *n students* = 18)

and one focus group (*n students* = 4). Each interview and the focus group were digitally audio-recorded. The focus group lasted 70 minutes, while interviews ranged from 24 minutes to 130 minutes in length, lasting an average of 57 minutes.

Data Analysis

Following data collection, the interviews and the focus group were transcribed using Otter AI's auto-transcription software, creating 32 transcripts. Each of the transcripts were reviewed and edited to ensure accuracy and increase familiarity with the data. The data were then analyzed using a modified iterative collaborative qualitative analysis (ICQA; Russell et al., 2022a) to determine key themes throughout.

First, transcripts were reviewed to identify general concepts that emerged throughout the data. From these general concepts, a preliminary code list was developed. This preliminary code list aimed to concisely encompass the broad, overarching ideas that appeared throughout the data in relation to the project's research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Using the preliminary codes, an initial code list was developed. The initial code list included nine codes: (1) knowledge of aging, (2) ageism, (3) intergenerational connections, (4) peer interactions, (5) humanizing, (6) personal connection, (7) well-being, (8) expansion, and (9) program evaluation.

In collaboration with my supervisor, the initial codes were refined and combined to more succinctly describe the main ideas present throughout the

data. This collaborative discussion resulted in some codes being broadened (e.g., “knowledge of aging”, which included participants’ knowledge of biopsychosocial aging processes, was broadened to “knowledge”, which encompassed knowledge and understanding of the aging process, diverse perspectives of aging, and understanding of others’ experiences with aging) and others being collapsed (e.g., “ageism”, which included on participants’ experiences, understanding, and awareness of ageism, and “personal connection”, which included fear and appreciation of aging, were combined, resulting in the “attitudes” code). The refined code list therefore consisted of seven codes: (1) knowledge, (2) attitudes, (3) intergenerational, (4) peer interactions, (5) humanizing, (6) well-being, and (7) program evaluation. Each code included a detailed code description (i.e., various concepts related to each code) that comprehensively explained all elements of the code. These codes were then tested by coding five random transcripts from both participant groups (i.e., students and community participants). Following this testing phase, the codes and their descriptions were further refined, resulting in a final seven-code manual that is presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Code Manual

Code	Description
Knowledge	knowledge of the aging process, increased understanding of aging process, diverse perspectives of aging, importance of learning about aging, understanding others' experiences with aging, reinforcing course content, bringing course content to life, inspiring course assignments, sharing course content with others
Attitudes	stereotypes, attitudes toward other generations, expectations versus reality of other generations, recognizing ageism, experiencing ageism, shift in attitudes, learning about ageism, awareness of ageism, sharing about ageism, appreciation of aging, fear of aging, excitement for aging, personal connection with aging
Intergenerational	intergenerational interactions inside or outside of class, working on assignments/projects together, formal intergenerational in-class activities, intergenerational group discussions, sharing advice/knowledge intergenerationally, value of intergenerational interactions, prompting intergenerational connections outside of the classroom (e.g., older relatives), mutual mentorship
Humanization	similarities between generations, generational divides, comfort interacting with people of different ages, compassion across generations, understanding people of different ages, seeing from different perspectives, feeling accepted by other generations
Peer interactions	interactions with same-aged peers facilitated by the classroom, meeting new friends, building upon existing peer relationships, value of peer connections
Well-being	positive experiences (e.g., enjoyment, happiness, fun, fulfillment) facilitated by the classroom, meaningful contributions, sense of purpose, feeling welcomed, sense of hope, motivation
Evaluation	expansion of intergenerational classroom/activities, intergenerational campus, participating on campus, auditing courses, encouraging others to participate on campus, other relevant areas of implementing

Code	Description
	intergenerational activities, challenges of the intergenerational classroom, improvements to the intergenerational classroom, suggestions for the intergenerational classroom, ideas for intergenerational activities, activities/components to keep for future iterations of the intergenerational classroom

Once the final code list was approved by the project supervisor, the 32 transcripts were coded in full. Given the scope of this thesis, only data for the "attitudes" code were extracted into a code output document. This code output document formally and comprehensively described the code and included all pieces of data related to that code. This code output document was then reviewed holistically (across interviews and the focus group) to determine key findings related to participants' experiences with ageism and age-consciousness in the intergenerational classroom. Key findings expanded upon the "attitudes" code and were developed in a collaborative meeting with the project supervisor. Supporting quotes were also identified at this time. Finally, the key findings were discussed in collaboration with another researcher with expertise in ICQA to ensure the trustworthiness and dependability of the analysis and research findings. The complete analysis of the findings of this thesis is presented in the next chapter.

Ethical Considerations

Educational Component: Classroom Design

Though approval from the Trent University Research Ethics Board was not required to design or implement the intergenerational classroom (i.e., the

educational component), we made several ethical considerations throughout the classroom design and implementation phases of the project. To begin, my supervisor and I considered community participant recruitment. To emphasize equity, diversity, inclusion, and Indigeneity among community participants, recruitment materials were shared through a variety of channels that we established in the past as effective ways to reach and potentially include a variety of diverse groups of people, including posters, emails, and an in-person announcement at the local public library. The research component of the project was briefly mentioned during the recruitment phase but was not emphasized to reduce the perception of coercion to participate in the research component of the project.

During the implementation phase of the educational component (i.e., during the course), we carefully considered classroom conduct expectations. Students were made aware of the intergenerational nature of the course through the course syllabus (Appendix D), which discussed the relevance of this experiential learning opportunity, as well as the course format, learning outcomes, and expectations. To ensure that students were fully aware of the expectations of the course prior to interacting with community participants, the first class was restricted to students only. During this class, the course professor (who is also the project and thesis supervisor) gave a thorough overview of the syllabus and course expectations. Classroom conduct expectations were discussed at this time, particularly highlighting the intergenerational element. Similarly, community participants attended an orientation session prior to the first

class, which allowed them to connect as a group, clarify the goals and expectations of the class, and highlight course logistics. Students and community participants were encouraged to share as much or as little information as they wished to during the orientation session and the course itself, considering that there is no expectation of privacy within the classroom. Students and community participants were instructed to treat each other as valued members of the class and interact respectfully throughout the duration of the course. They were also welcomed to continue their connections beyond the classroom by engaging in casual interactions or consulting with each other on projects, assignments, and course tasks; however, this was not mandatory or expected. These instructions were purposefully shared to promote positive intergenerational interactions throughout the semester that allowed both students and community participants to build meaningful relationships while also maintaining their autonomy and privacy regarding the nature of these intergenerational interactions.

Research Component

Throughout the entirety of this project, my supervisor and I were extremely cognizant of the ethical considerations of scholarship of teaching and learning research (i.e., power dynamics; Fedoruk, 2017). Specifically, we were highly aware of our dual roles as course teaching staff and project researchers. The project supervisor, Dr. Russell, was the course instructor and principal investigator of the Intergenerational Classroom Project. Therefore, to minimize perceived coercion to participate in the research component of the project given

her role and potential perceived authority as course instructor, she was completely removed from student participant recruitment and data collection. She did not have access to student data and did not know which students participated (or did not participate) until after final grades for the course were submitted to the Registrar's Office. Furthermore, as I was the course teaching assistant and research project coordinator, participant recruitment did not begin until after my portion of course grading was complete and submitted to the course instructor. Students were made aware of these ethical precautions verbally and in writing prior to participant recruitment, were reminded of these procedures throughout the recruitment process, and were given many opportunities to ask any questions or raise any concerns that they may have had. To ensure their awareness of these ethical precautions, all students were provided with a copy of the Letter of Information and Consent outlining these procedures during the participant recruitment phase, and participants who booked an interview slot were required to select a checkbox acknowledging that they read and understood these precautions.

Knowledge Mobilization

Throughout the educational component of the project, we were dedicated to creating a suite of knowledge mobilization outputs that showcased the Intergenerational Classroom Project in accessible and engaging ways. Specifically, we created seven videos – six "sneak peek" videos (Trent Centre for Aging & Society, 2024b) and one capstone video (Trent Centre for Aging &

Society, 2024a) that highlighted the classroom design, project goals, and meaningful connections that occurred during the intergenerational classroom. Given the nature of these knowledge mobilization outputs, students and community participants who engaged in the videos had the potential to be identified in the project's research outputs. Therefore, following Trent University's Communication policies, students and community participants were given the option to opt out of being in photos and videos used for knowledge mobilization purposes. This option was stated multiple times in person and in writing through Blackboard and email announcements and was repeated each time there was photography or videography occurring in the classroom. Allowing students and community participants many opportunities for opting out ensured that consent for photography and videography was an ongoing process in which course participants could decline to be photographed or video recorded before, during, or after a photography/videography session. I discreetly identified those individuals who opted out to photographers and videographers to ensure that they were not captured in photos or videos, and my supervisor and I reviewed and approved all photos and videos prior to release to confirm that those who opted out were not accidentally included in any of the final photos or videos.

Given the potential risk of being identified in the project's research outputs, students and community participants were reminded of the anonymity and confidentiality procedures utilized throughout the research component of the project. During participant recruitment and data analysis, potential research participants were assured that their identifying information would be removed

from all data analysis and research report documents, and that their responses from the research component of the project would not be directly linked to the knowledge mobilization outputs in any way.

Overall, my supervisor and I made diligent efforts to ensure a clear distinction between the educational component, research component, and dissemination phase of the project. Consent was treated as an ongoing process at each stage of the project as we aimed to minimize the perception of coercion among potential participants, reduce conflicts of interest, and ensure participants were informed of the risks, benefits, and ethical procedures implemented throughout the project.

Dissemination of Findings

The findings of this thesis will be shared via email with all research participants (student and community participants) to highlight the importance of their involvement in the study. This thesis will also be shared via email with the project funders (Retired Teachers of Ontario Foundation and Trent University Trent Teaching Commons) to emphasize their contributions to the completion of the Intergenerational Classroom Project. Additional dissemination outputs that have been or will be completed and appropriately shared include academic reports, conference presentations, webinar presentations, publications in peer-reviewed journals, articles in media outlets, and multimedia outputs (i.e., a series of knowledge mobilization videos).

Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the project design and methodological approach of the thesis. Focusing on the research component of the Intergenerational Classroom Project, this thesis utilized an exploratory qualitative case study design to gather insight into participants' experiences with ageism and age-consciousness during the pilot intergenerational classroom. Individual interviews and a focus group were conducted with 13 community participants and 22 student participants to explore their understanding of ageism, perceptions of aging and youth, and personal connection with aging. Interview transcripts were analyzed using an iterative collaborative qualitative analysis, which resulted in seven codes. From these codes, key themes were identified, which led to the findings of this thesis.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the research, organized around three themes that emerged from the data regarding student and community participants' experiences with ageism and age-consciousness during the pilot intergenerational classroom: (1) heightened knowledge of ageism, in which student and community participants felt more informed and aware of ageism and its impacts on older and younger populations, (2) transformed attitudes toward aging and youth, in which both groups of participants experienced a reduction in personal ageist attitudes and a desire to challenge ageism in others, and (3) enhanced personal connection with aging, in which student participants felt a newfound enthusiasm for growing older. These themes directly address the research questions and objectives of the thesis, emphasizing student and community participants' experiences with the outcomes of the intergenerational classroom (O1, RQ1) and the role of intergenerational connectivity in the reduction of ageism and development of age-consciousness (O2, RQ2).

Theme 1: Heightened Knowledge of Ageism

Student and community participants shared that the course prompted a heightened knowledge of ageism. Student participants experienced a deeper conceptual understanding of ageism, while both student and community participants experienced an increased awareness of ageism around them. Following course completion, students felt more knowledgeable about ageism at a theoretical level, including its definition, manifestations, and negative outcomes

for older and younger populations. This did not extend to community participants as many had a broad understanding of ageism prior to participating in the course. However, both students and community participants were more aware of ageism directed toward older adults as well as youth, prompting them to recognize ageism around them, including the ways they may have observed or experienced this form of bias. Therefore, two sub-themes emerged: (1) deeper understanding of ageism and (2) increased awareness of ageism.

Deeper Understanding of Ageism

Reflecting the outcomes of the intergenerational classroom (O1), student participants experienced a deeper understanding of ageism at a conceptual level following completion of the course. Many students shared that they were unfamiliar with the term “ageism” prior to the course – many had never even heard it – and that the intergenerational classroom was their first direct introduction to this concept. After learning about its definition, manifestations, and negative outcomes, students felt that they were more knowledgeable about ageism compared to when they entered the course. This experience was clearly captured by Student Participant 13:

> This course was the first time that I had ever heard that word (ageism), which I think kind of goes to show the progress or the learning that I had made about that and even recognizing that it was a concept.

Students felt that this increased understanding was facilitated through the course’s unique combination of formal course content (i.e., lecture material,

textbook content, and coursework) and informal intergenerational interactions with community participants. The lectures, which focused on all aspects of aging but specifically emphasized themes of ageism throughout, were beneficial in enhancing students' theoretical understanding of this form of bias: "The lectures are definitely eye-opening to issues I already knew existed for older people" (Student Participant 4).

Intergenerational interactions complemented course content on ageism, allowing the course to highlight ageist biases from a variety of perspectives. Students felt that intergenerational connections were particularly advantageous to improving their understanding of ageism, as they brought course content to life, emphasized the role of ageism in shaping the aging experience, and encouraged students to empathize with older adults. For example, Student Participant 21 said: "I think the biggest thing was those in-class interactions, […] having direct access to (the community participants') ideas and thoughts about something that they've already experienced compared to something that we haven't experienced yet." By listening to community participants' personal experiences with ageism, students gained a more realistic understanding of ageism and its real-world implications, specifically within the context of older populations.

Demonstrating the role of intergenerational connectivity in the reduction of ageism and development of age-consciousness (O2), some students believed that the course would not have had the same magnitude of effects if it was strictly

lecture-based given the crucial role of intergenerational interactions in enriching their learning. This is captured by Student Participant 19, who said:

> […] if we didn't have the [community participants] or the classroom design, I feel like we could have had the same output of me breaking down these myths of older people in the class, students breaking down these myths, the ageism. I feel like we could, but in a smaller, less effective way.

This subtheme highlights the role of the intergenerational classroom in prompting an enhanced conceptual understanding of ageism. This subtheme was restricted to students, as many community participants had general knowledge of and experiences with ageism prior to the course. Though community participants were familiar with ageism at a conceptual level (i.e., this first subtheme), the course prompted an increased awareness of ageism against older and younger populations among both groups of participants (students and community participants).

Increased Awareness of Ageism

In understanding ageism at a conceptual level (i.e., age-based bias that is typically directed toward older adults but can be targeted toward people of all ages), student and community participants also experienced an increased awareness of ageism against both older and younger populations, directly addressing the outcomes of the intergenerational classroom (O1, RQ1). Both groups were able to recognize ageism around them, including the ways they may have personally experienced or witnessed this form of bias. Furthermore,

participants acknowledged the pervasive presence of ageism in society, including its prevalence in the media and public services.

Student and community participants discussed an increased awareness of ageism (directed toward older and younger people) as they recalled being recipients of ageism at structural, interpersonal, and individual levels. Though many did not link their experiences to ageism at the time, both groups of participants were able to recognize the biased nature of their interactions when reflecting on these experiences after the course during the interviews. For example, Student Participant 2 discussed her experiences with youth-directed ageism: “Looking back now, I remember the first lecture we were talking about (ageism), I was like, ‘Oh, wow, all those situations I experienced were ageism, but I didn’t even realize it’.” For some students, this increased awareness was a direct result of their enhanced understanding of ageism. However, for many participants, particularly community participants, regular in-class discussions about aging and ageism prompted a heightened attentiveness to such topics. Community Participant 2 said: “It's easy to find examples of ageism because I'm much more sensitive to it now than I ever would have been.”

This increased awareness thus prompted participants to recognize ageism as they encountered it in their daily lives. For instance, some were more cognizant of ageism (against older and/or younger people) held by loved ones, such as family members and friends:

> I think (ageism) kind of comes from my parents. […] It's been interesting to be in this classroom and then you start to notice it a lot more. You wake

> up to it. […] I was thinking like, “wait, this is exactly what my parents say”. (Student Participant 15)

Student and community participants also reflected on their experiences witnessing ageism among others, such as coworkers, strangers, and community organizations. For example, following the course, Community Participant 13 discovered a biased policy in a local organization. She stated that although the organization once welcomed older adults, it now purposefully excludes them, restricting their services to students and younger populations. She reflected on a conversation she had with a representative from this organization:

> I guess I am more aware of ageism. […] I just kind of had to say, “when you think like this, some would call this ageist”. […] I would've never thought of the ageist bit, but now I said, “there is this ageist aspect to it too”.

Furthermore, participants noted the pervasive presence of ageist stereotypes directed toward older and younger people in Western society. These attitudes were especially apparent in the media, healthcare and employment sectors, and common discourse. Student participants acknowledged popular beliefs about older adults that labelled them as “stubborn”, “frail”, and “mean”, while community participants recognized stereotypes that characterized younger adults as “self-absorbed”, digitally dependent, and hesitant to build meaningful intergenerational relationships. Both groups of participants felt that biased narratives portrayed through the media were particularly to blame for the perpetuation of ageist stereotypes, as they promote skewed perceptions of aging

and youth and perceived generational divides: “I think the media, like movies and even social media, even all types of marketing media, depict the older generation very inaccurately, just because that’s not how they really are” (Student Participant 3).

Overall, this theme encompasses students’ and community participants’ deeper understanding and increased awareness of ageism following the intergenerational classroom. Specifically, students and community participants discussed the role that formal course content and informal intergenerational interactions played in facilitating this enhanced knowledge and awareness. In better understanding and becoming more attentive to ageism around them, many participants reflected on their own attitudes toward people of different ages, including but not limited to older adults, and expressed a desire to challenge ageism in themselves and others.

Theme 2: Transformed Attitudes Toward Aging and Youth

Beyond recognizing ageism around them, student and community participants alike acknowledged their own preconceived notions of other generations, both older and younger. Building on participants’ experiences with the outcomes of the intergenerational classroom (O1, RQ1), many shared that the course opened their eyes to their own “ageist tendencies” (Student Participant 16) and that they did not want to contribute to an ageist society as they had been previously. Through critical reflection prompted by course content and intergenerational interactions, student and community participants

experienced a transformation in their own ageism. Furthermore, some participants had a desire to challenge ageism in others, signifying a desire for prompting social change more broadly.

In addition to becoming more aware of ageism in Wester society (i.e., the first theme, “Heightened Knowledge of Ageism”), student and community participants began to recognize their own ageist beliefs and behaviours. Prior to the course, student participants shared that they held negative perceptions of older generations’ cognitive and physical abilities, used discriminatory and exclusionary language, and participated in compassionate ageism. As well, community participants held negative attitudes reflective of common stereotypes of youth. Students often associated older adulthood with physical and mental decline, loneliness, and dependence, while community participants often viewed younger people as isolated, unfriendly, and disengaged. Though participants shared that they were previously unaware of the biased nature of these thoughts and behaviours, they now acknowledge their ageist roots. For example, Student Participant 2 stated: “Honestly, I didn’t realize a lot of the ageist beliefs I maybe carried a little bit […] I think you never even realize the little things.” Several student participants even explicitly described themselves as having been ageist before participating in the course, indicating significant awareness of one’s own ageism: “I used to be really ageist before (the class)” (Student Participant 3).

In recognizing the ways in which they may have perpetuated ageism, as well as having a deeper understanding of the impacts of ageism, many participants shared that they wanted to stop contributing to an ageist society

through both conscious and unconscious means. This was captured by Student Participant 4, who said: “Now that I’m aware (of ageism), I don’t want to contribute in those little ways that maybe I was before.” As such, both student and community participants felt that the intergenerational classroom prompted them to confront their biases through critical reflection and facilitated a transformation of one’s own ageism. Student 19 shared:

> I still reflect on the stuff that I've learned, especially with ageism. Oh, yeah, it's a whole lot. And I see the world in a different light. […] It's like, “nope, hold on - I learned this in this class. Let me go back. Let me reflect”.

As such, student participants experienced a reduction in ageism against older adults following course completion and were more patient, considerate, and accepting of older people in their lives. By interacting with community participants who were kind, independent, and active in the community, students felt that their pre-existing attitudes were contradicted, highlighting the role of intergenerational connectivity in the reduction of ageism (O2, RQ2). They no longer viewed older adults as a heterogeneous group of “frail” (Student Participant 16), “grumpy” (Student Participant 18), and dependent individuals. Instead, students shared an appreciation for the heterogeneity and autonomy of people of all ages. For example, Student Participant 22 said:

> I was a little ageist before, assuming that a lot of older people go into homes or making social assumptions. […] Even just interacting with (name of a community participant). She lives alone and everything. She has a dog. She's very not what I pictured an 80-something-year-old living.

Similarly, yet unexpectedly, some community participants experienced a reduction in ageism against youth. Contrary to their previous beliefs that younger generations were lonely, unpleasant, and closed off, they now perceived them as "friendly" (Community Participant 1), "smart" (Community Participant 8), and "engaged" (Community Participant 2). In addition to countering previous stereotypes of youth, watching students actively connect with course material, eagerly participate in intergenerational activities, and meaningfully contribute to in-class discussions supported feelings of optimism and hope for the future among community participants:

> I'm not so worried that these are the folks that are going to look after us when we're old now. […] This despairing that the younger generation is going to run off and not look after us very well, I don't think that's going to happen. (Community Participant 5)

Furthermore, hearing about the challenges that students faced encouraged community participants to be more compassionate toward students. For example, Community Participant 7 reflected on conversations she had with students about housing and financial difficulties: "I think I have more empathy for students."

Positive attitudes and intergenerational interactions also prompted a deconstruction of perceived generational divides among both student and community participants. In creating positive intergenerational relationships throughout the course, both groups shared that they felt more comfortable forming meaningful relationships with other generations than they did prior to the

course. Furthermore, they now valued the benefits of intergenerational connections. This was captured by Student Participant 2:

> I kind of thought it was weird before to be super good buddies with an older person. […] It's cool to see that that's not weird, and that's actually a very cool thing. Every generation is contributing, and they *can* contribute.

Directly addressing RQ2, both student and community participants highlighted the crucial role of the intergenerational component of the course in challenging negative out-group attitudes and reducing perceived generational divides. Participants linked their previous biases and perceived generational divides to an age-segregated society and lack of intergenerational contact. Many participants shared that they had minimal interactions with other generations before participating in the course, and the few intergenerational interactions they had were generally restricted to family or work environments. For instance, Community Participant 10 stated: “I only have my kids and their friends as reference, and they’re in their late 30s.” Student participants shared similar experiences, as many had limited to no interaction with older people prior to the course:

> I don’t have any more grandparents. After my grandfather passed, and aside from a grandmother I don’t have a relationship with, I don’t have any more grandparents […]. I just can’t just call home and be like, “hey, do you experience life like that?” And I think that has also fed into the ageism that I had because I didn’t have anyone that taught me any different. (Student Participant 19)

Without having personal interactions to act as a basis for formulating their attitudes toward other generations, participants internalized popular (negative) social narratives which shaped their opinions of aging and youth. However, positive connections with people of different ages countered these narratives, facilitated a balanced view of aging, and prompted a reduction in ageism. This was captured by Student Participant 4: “I was living in a bubble where I didn't have to realize the ignorance I had […]. Being in the classroom and learning about (aging and ageism) with (the community participants) definitely reinforced the actual realities.”

In addition to deconstructing their own ageist attitudes and perceived generational divides, student participants felt motivated to challenge ageist attitudes and behaviours when experienced or observed. For some, this was restricted to internalized critical reflections of ageist messages. Student Participant 18 said: “I haven’t said anything those couple times (I recognized ageism), but I think to myself, ‘well, they’re not all like that’”. Others felt that the course provided them with the tools necessary to challenge ageism in others, prompting a sense of confidence in confronting friends, family members, and local organizations that displayed ageist biases. For instance, Student Participant 4 approached a peer about their ageist remarks:

> My roommate was saying something [negative] that had an older person in the story, and I sort of pointed out that, like, “you’re being kind of [ageist] because they’re older…”. […] Pointing out those things in the same way that I would if someone were making stereotypes or comments

> that were sexist or homophobic or something like that. I'll now make those comments and point those things out too, things that are ageist that I wouldn't have before because I either didn't even realize or kind of agreed.

However, despite increasingly positive attitudes and an overall reduction in interpersonal ageism, some negative attitudes remained. Specifically, two community participants continued to hold the belief that younger adults are isolated and technologically dependent: "(I was surprised by) how plugged in kids are, but also how isolated some of them seem to be" (Community Participant 10). Similarly, one student expressed the enduring belief that older adults are conservative in their political views, which she viewed negatively: "One ageist perspective that I have is that majority of older adults have conservative views on politics/society – mainly men. This view has been persistent during my time at (local organization) and now" (Student Participant 5). Though some ageist attitudes remained, participants expressed a general decrease in ageism because of their experiences in the intergenerational classroom.

This theme highlights an overall reduction in ageism among both student and community participants. While student participants developed increasingly positive attitudes toward older adults, community participants experienced a reduction in ageism against youth. In deconstructing their preconceived notions of aging, students in particular felt less worried about their own aging and began to see themselves growing older, leading to an enhanced personal connection with aging.

Theme 3: Enhanced Personal Connection with Aging

Expanding on the impacts of the intergenerational classroom (O1, RQ1), students who participated in the course reported an enhanced personal connection with aging. This was seen through a decrease in anxiety about their own aging and a desire to envision themselves growing older. As they became less fearful of aging and recognized the realities of older adulthood, students experienced a newfound enthusiasm for growing older, highlighting the variety of positive experiences associated with aging such as grandparenting, self-exploration, and community. This theme was found among student participants, who felt that aging was less distant, scary, and unknown than previously thought; however, this finding did not extend to community participants, as they were currently experiencing the joys and challenges of older adulthood first-hand.

Student participants shared that before participating in the course, they did not consider their own aging and felt disconnected from the idea of the aging self. For some, thinking about their own aging did not seem “relevant” (Student Participant 8), while others actively avoided it due to worries about their aging futures: “I honestly don't really think I thought much about (myself aging) before” (Student Participant 17). For those who did consider the aging self, perceptions were generally negative and included fears about physical dependence, cognitive decline, and isolation in later life. This was captured by Student Participant 19:

> I've been taught by the media, by the advertising companies, by folktales and stories, Disney movies, that aging is something that is deteriorating, that is bad for your sense of self, that makes you ugly and makes you less

> attuned with yourself and [less] attuned with your community, all those bad things. And those have reflected on me, and I was scared. I was scared of aging.

However, following the course, students felt that their fears about aging were deconstructed, and they began to think more positively about their own aging. As they learned about aging from diverse perspectives and interacted with community participants from a variety of backgrounds, students emphasized the joyous aspects of growing older rather than focusing solely on the potential for decline. In recognizing that older adulthood is not inherently related to illness, ugliness, sadness, and loneliness as they had once believed, student participants felt more hopeful about their own aging:

> I think I was scared because I had this notion that aging means decline, and it doesn't. I think that is one huge thing that changed the way I feel about it. That fear of aging is gone. […] I can see these positive aspects of aging, and I'm just like, "that sounds kind of awesome." (Student Participant 14)

Intergenerational interactions with community participants played a key role in strengthening these beliefs, emphasizing the role of intergenerational connectivity in shaping the outcomes of the course (O2, RQ2). Students found it comforting to hear community participants' experiences with hobbies, traveling, education, and community, as they reassured students that older adulthood can be fulfilling, exciting, and enjoyable: "It's cool to see that life doesn't stop, learning doesn't stop" (Student Participant 4). These attitudes also extended to

student participants' views of aging loved ones – several students expressed previous fears regarding aging parents and grandparents, assuming that they would be subject to severe mental or physical decline as a part of the "normal" aging process. However, gaining a deeper understanding of the aging process and experiencing positive interactions with older community participants helped to challenge these beliefs and reduce these concerns. For example, Student Participant 3 stated:

> (My parents) are getting older and I get scared a lot of the time – like, "Oh, no, they're going to change as people because they're getting older." But that's not true. That's not what actually happens, which I learned in the class.

Furthermore, a reduction in aging anxiety and increased awareness of the realities of aging prompted student participants to envision their own aging lives – a thought that was once seen as distant, irrelevant, or terrifying. Now that students understood the diversity of the aging experience, they were able to imagine themselves as older adults and consider the ways that they wished to grow older. They contemplated things like retirement, housing, grandparenthood, and community involvement for the first time. Student Participant 22 shared:

> I kind of pushed (the idea of aging) to the side. But now, I'm kind of like, "Oh, it'd be good to age like this or good to age like this", or "This is kind of what I want to do when I'm older."

In thinking about the positives associated with aging and the multitude of ways that aging may be experienced, student participants felt increasingly excited for

their own aging. Since aging was seen now as rewarding and fulfilling, many looked forward to growing older and experiencing life at its different stages. This was a stark contrast to the fear of aging most students experienced prior to participating in the intergenerational classroom. For example, Student Participant 16 said: “Honestly, (getting older) sounds like it’s a great time. I’m kind of excited about it […]. There’s all these different opportunities and things for you to do, so I’m kind of looking forward to it.” Hearing community participants’ stories of resilience and strength further supported these views, reassuring them that “maybe everything is going to be fine” (Student Participant 2). To illustrate this, Student 6 said:

> A lot of the (community participants) would share their life experiences and talk about the struggles that they face. They're super resilient, and that kind of helped me understand that while there are the struggles and the negatives, there are so many other positives.

Although participants experienced a reduction in aging anxiety and some increased enthusiasm for growing older, some worries remained as students considered the realities of aging in an ageist society. Students feared the possibility of experiencing ageism, specifically in healthcare and housing, and felt that they may not be able to experience aging in the ways that they would like to due to these biases. Challenges with aging in place, such as financial and physical barriers, and the state of long-term care, including long wait times and low quality of care, were discussed at length in the course and were particularly alarming to younger participants. Though these realities were frightening,

students felt that learning about the current state of gerontological systems in Canada was beneficial, and they felt more prepared to make educated decisions regarding aging-related services and policies in the future:

> It kind of feels like doom and gloom learning about (aging) because it's hearing about how horrible it has been for people – but at the same time, I'm kind of like, at least now I know and I can make more informed decisions on certain things for myself or other people or when voting or things like that. (Student Participant 4)

This third theme, “Enhanced Personal Connection with Aging”, indicates an overall reduction in aging anxiety and enthusiasm for growing older. Students considered the realities of their own aging, including both positive and negative experiences associated with older adulthood. Students also recognized some of the challenges they may anticipate as future older people, contributing to a balanced view of their own aging.

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the findings of the research and the ways in which they address the study objectives and research questions. Three themes emerged, providing insight into the participants’ experiences in the intergenerational classroom (RQ1), outcomes of the course (O1), and the role of intergenerational connectivity in reducing ageism and promoting age-consciousness (O2, RQ2): (1) heightened knowledge of ageism, (2) transformed attitudes toward aging and youth, and (3) enhanced personal connection with

aging. Together, these findings contribute to the scholarly understanding of the outcomes of a university-led intergenerational classroom.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter discusses the link between the findings of this thesis and the existing literature. It includes a summary of the research findings, objectives, and questions, and situates the current study within the context of the larger body of literature in four fields of scholarship: social psychology, social gerontology, educational gerontology, and scholarship of teaching and learning. By integrating the findings of this thesis with previous literature, this chapter presents a revised model of age-consciousness and considers the study's conceptual, empirical, and community contributions.

Summary of Findings

The findings of this thesis research demonstrate positive impacts of a pilot intergenerational classroom, facilitating the study objectives and addressing the research questions. Following completion of the course, younger students and older community participants experienced (1) a heightened knowledge of ageism and (2) transformed attitudes toward aging and youth, and student participants experienced (3) an enhanced personal connection with aging. These findings provide insight into the outcomes of the course (O1, RQ1) and the role of intergenerational connectivity, fostered through the intergenerational classroom, the reduction of ageism and development of age-consciousness (O2, RQ2). The findings contribute to the development of a revised model of age-consciousness that extends the age-conscious student concept (Russell et al., 2022b) and describes three integrative factors that promote positive attitudes toward aging

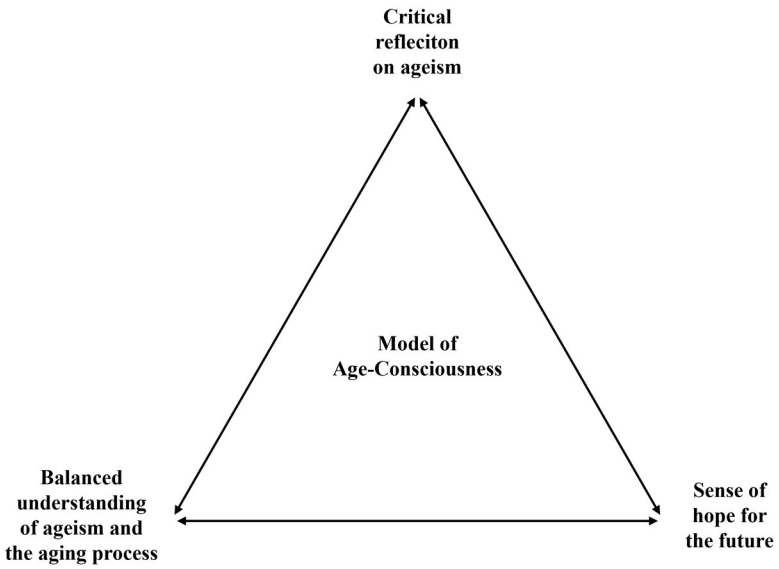
and youth: (1) balanced understanding of ageism and the aging process, (2) critical reflection on ageism, and (3) sense of hope for the future.

Revised Model of Age-Consciousness

The findings of this thesis expand upon the emerging age-conscious student concept and contribute to the establishment of a revised model of age-consciousness. Building upon the three components of the age-conscious student concept (i.e., deeper understanding of the aging process, reduction in and increased awareness of aging, and enhanced personal connection with aging), the revised model of age-consciousness (depicted in Figure 4.1) includes three elements: (1) balanced understanding of ageism and the aging process (which includes a realistic and accurate knowledge of ageism and older adulthood), (2) critical reflection on ageism (which encompasses awareness of ageism and low levels of ageism), and (3) sense of hope for the future (which includes positive feelings about the aging self and optimism about future generations). Bidirectional arrows in the model represent the relationships between the distinct elements, highlighting the complex interplay of the three components of the model. Though each of these outcomes can be achieved through education about aging alone, as displayed in the original Russell et al. (2022b) study, the findings of this thesis show that intergenerational interactions can enhance the magnitude of their impact. Together, these distinct yet interrelated factors contribute to the development of positive attitudes toward

aging and youth in the context of educational (i.e., lecture-based) and combined (i.e., education and intergenerational contact-based) ageism interventions.

Figure 5.1 **Revised Model of Age-Consciousness**



Balanced Understanding of Ageism and the Aging Process. The revised model of age-consciousness includes an extension of the first component of the age-conscious student concept, “deeper understanding of the aging process”. In addition to understanding the aging process from a balanced perspective, which includes acknowledging both positive and negative age-related changes and experiences, this component of the model has been expanded to include knowledge about ageism. The findings of this thesis demonstrate that knowledge about ageism was a precursor to participants’ awareness of and reduction in ageism, highlighting the importance of a clear understanding of ageism in the development of age-consciousness. Specifically,

age-conscious individuals are familiar with ageism at a conceptual level, including its definition, manifestations, prevalence, and implications. Therefore, the revised model of age-consciousness incorporates knowledge about both aging and ageism as necessary components.

Critical Reflection on Ageism. In line with the age-conscious student concept, the revised model of age-consciousness includes critical reflection on ageism, which encompasses awareness and low levels of ageism. Those who are age-conscious can recognize ageism around them, such as biased narratives in common discourse and cultural perceptions of aging and youth. They are critical of common ageist discourse and may question the truth, origin, and goals of ageist narratives. Beyond critically evaluating ageism in others, age-conscious individuals possess low levels of ageism, challenging their own ageist thoughts, attitudes, and behaviours. They are self-aware of their own age-based biases and aim to minimize such beliefs through corrective action. The findings of this thesis suggest that a critical reflection on ageism is largely influenced by the first component of the model (i.e., balanced understanding of ageism and the aging process), as those who have a deeper understanding of ageism and its outcomes may be more critically aware of ageism and thus, less ageist themselves.

Sense of Hope for the Future. Most notably, the revised model of age-consciousness includes an extension of the third component of the age-

conscious student concept, “enhanced personal connection with aging”. In addition to low levels of aging anxiety, as conceptualized in the age-conscious student concept, “sense of hope for the future” comprises of positive feelings about the aging self and optimism about future generations. While some older adults may experience anxiety about their own aging, the findings of this thesis suggest that they may experience more concerns regarding the future of the planet, society, and youth than about their own future selves. Therefore, this component aims to expand the generalizability of the third component of the age-conscious student concept to older populations.

Heightened Understanding of Ageism

In addition to contributing to a revised model of age-consciousness, the findings of this thesis align with previous research within the fields of social psychology, social gerontology, and educational gerontology, supporting and expanding on Russell et al.’s (2022b) age-conscious student concept, Levy’s (2009) stereotype embodiment theory, and Allport’s (1954) contact theory. Following course completion, student participants experienced a deeper understanding of ageism, while both student and community participants were more aware of ageism around them, directly addressing participants’ experiences in the intergenerational classroom and the outcomes of the course (O1, RQ1). Student participants shared that prior to participating in the course, they were unaware of the term “ageism”. Similarly, though community participants had basic knowledge of ageism before participating in the course, the

intergenerational classroom prompted an increased awareness of ageism. Conceptual understanding and awareness of biases are crucial to reducing stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination, especially in the case of implicit biases (Devine et al., 2012; Lee, 2017). Given common narratives of aging and youth that perpetuate and normalize ageist thoughts, attitudes, and behaviours (Nelson, 2016; Raymer et al., 2017), ageism may become deeply engrained and reflected in an individual's unconscious age attitudes (Levy, 2009). Despite its prevalence and social acceptance in Western culture, knowledge and awareness of ageism is limited among both older and younger adults (Brina & Zlata, 2024). With limited knowledge about ageism, as well as the often unconscious nature of biased attitudes, people of all ages may find it challenging to recognize ageism around them and the ways in which they themselves may perpetuate age-based biases (Devine et al., 2012; Levy, 2001), therefore reinforcing the cyclical nature of ageism at individual, interpersonal, and institutional levels.

However, following the intergenerational classroom, students and community participants experienced an improved understanding and increased awareness of ageism. Facilitated by both course content and intergenerational interactions, students had a deeper conceptual understanding of ageism, including its definition, manifestations, and outcomes. Similarly, students and community participants were more aware of ageism around them, including its pervasive role in Western society, following course completion. Research supports the role of increased knowledge and awareness of ageism in reducing age-based biases (Beach et al., 2025; Schuttengruber et al., 2021) and suggests

that understanding ageism at a conceptual level may encourage individuals to assess their own attitudes and beliefs (Devine et al., 2012). In line with the age-conscious student concept (Russell et al., 2022b), which states that increased awareness of ageism (fostered through education about aging) can reduce age-based biases among younger people, the findings of this thesis demonstrate that a conceptual understanding ageism (fostered through both intergenerational connections and education about aging) may be beneficial in addressing ageism among both younger and older adults.

Transformed Attitudes Toward Aging and Youth

In addition to enhancing knowledge and awareness of age-based biases, the intergenerational classroom transformed participants' ageist attitudes. Prior to participating in the course, student participants felt negatively about aging and community participants held stereotypes about youth. Older people were often seen as incapable, dependent, and lonely, while younger people were viewed as unpleasant, digitally dependent, and unwilling to develop relationships. These attitudes are not uncommon, with at least 50% of people holding ageist beliefs to some extent (Bratt et al., 2018; WHO, 2021). Consistent with stereotype embodiment theory (Levy, 2009), which identifies ageism as the product of internalized cultural narratives, student and community participants felt that their ageist beliefs were strongly influenced by common stereotypes. For many, the media (including social media and other forms of media) was particularly influential in reinforcing these stereotypes. Combined with lower levels of

knowledge about aging and limited high quality intergenerational contact, age-segregation in Western society may encourage a reliance on age-based stereotypes, perpetuating the cycle of ageism at institutional, interpersonal, and individual levels (de la Fuente-Núñez et al., 2021).

Following the intergenerational classroom, student participants felt more positively about older adults and community participants felt more positively about youth. Participants attributed their shift in attitudes to both the educational and intergenerational components of the course. Previous research shows positive outcomes of educational interventions on aging, including addressing ageist stereotypes and misconceptions (Lytle et al., 2020), promoting a balanced and diverse view of older adulthood (Russell et al., 2022b), reducing ageism (Schuttengruber et al., 2021), and prompting the development of age-consciousness (Russell et al., 2022b). Furthermore, the role of intergenerational contact in reducing ageist stereotypes and prejudice, captured in Allport's (1954) contact theory, is fundamental within the social psychology and social gerontology literature (e.g., Golenko et al., 2019; Kwong et al., 2023). Therefore, ageism interventions that combine education about aging and intergenerational contact in a single setting, such as the intergenerational Psychology of Aging classroom, continue to yield the most substantial outcomes on reducing ageism (Levy, 2009).

Enhanced Personal Connection with Aging

Consistent with the age-conscious student concept, the intergenerational classroom facilitated an enhanced personal connection with aging among

student participants. This was seen through a reduction in fear of one's own aging and a newfound enthusiasm for growing older. Though people of all ages can experience aging anxiety (Sargent-Cox et al., 2014), young adults are particularly at risk (Costa, 2025) as they may be likely to experience high levels of death anxiety (Barnett & Adams, 2018) and negative perceptions of aging (Ramírez et al., 2019). Russell et al. (2022b) demonstrated that course-based education about aging can reduce age-related anxiety among young adults by providing them with a realistic perspective on older adulthood and emphasizing the role of personal action (rather than predetermined trajectories of aging) in shaping one's aging future. Furthermore, intergenerational contact has been found to contribute to a decrease in aging anxiety (Davis & Graf, 2024), as it can counter common ageist stereotypes and further highlight the realities of older adulthood.

In line with previous research showing that older adults have lower levels of aging anxiety than younger adults (Abdelkader et al., 2024), this finding was restricted to younger student participants, and older community participants did not experience a decrease in aging anxiety. As aging anxiety may be related to ageist stereotypes and skewed perceptions of older adulthood (Ramírez et al., 2019), it is possible that community participants felt less fearful as they were experiencing this stage of life first-hand. Thus, an enhanced personal connection with aging may present differently across age groups, and further research is required to explore how this concept may manifest in older adults.

Contributions

This thesis contributes to the development of the fields of social psychology, social gerontology, educational gerontology, and scholarship of teaching and learning. Drawing from the emerging age-conscious student concept proposed by Russell et al (2022b), this thesis contributed to a revised model of age-consciousness. Additionally, by assessing the outcomes of the intergenerational classroom, the current study provides significant empirical contributions to the fields of scholarship, establishing qualitative evidence for the outcomes of an intergenerational classroom as an experiential learning opportunity. Finally, the findings of this thesis have implications for the community as we support the development of other institutionally led intergenerational classrooms and intergenerational initiatives in a variety of settings, including but not limited to post-secondary institutions.

Conceptual

This thesis expands upon the emerging age-conscious student concept. Although some components of the age-conscious student concept may be extended to broader populations, including older adults, the concept originally emerged from research on younger adults, and its generalizability had not yet been examined. This thesis built upon the age-conscious student concept by exploring its applicability to older adults and the role of intergenerational connectivity in its development among both older and younger people. From the findings of the current study, a revised model of age-consciousness that

describes the factors that contribute to the development of positive attitudes toward aging and youth was established. In better understanding age-consciousness, researchers can determine more effective ways of promoting such outcomes in younger and older populations, leading to the development of more equitable, diverse, and inclusive spaces, and ultimately, a less ageist society.

Empirical

In addition to its conceptual contributions, this thesis expands upon the social psychology, social gerontology, and educational gerontology literature by exploring the specific impacts of an intergenerational psychology of aging course. Though research suggests positive outcomes of intergenerational classrooms through education about aging and intergenerational contact, direct research on the effects of intergenerational classrooms is limited. Combined ageism interventions often include intergenerational interactions outside of the institution – for example, in community centres (Pstross et al., 2017), assisted living facilities (Andreoletti & Howard, 2018), or online (Lytle et al., 2020) – which may influence the quality and outcomes of such interventions. Therefore, this thesis provides insight into the impacts of a university-based intergenerational classroom embedded within the university campus space and classroom environment.

Furthermore, most research regarding combined ageism interventions adopts a quantitative approach. Although quantitative methods are appropriate

for exploring the generalizability of the outcomes of these interventions, they may not capture the depth or magnitude of the impacts of unique intergenerational learning opportunities, such as our pilot intergenerational classroom. Furthermore, as direct research on intergenerational classrooms is scarce, especially within the context of post-secondary institutions, an exploratory approach was valuable for uncovering the outcomes of this innovative experiential learning opportunity. Therefore, this thesis expands upon the literature by providing rich, descriptive, qualitative evidence on an understudied topic.

Community

Beyond its conceptual and empirical contributions, this thesis provides insight into the outcomes of post-secondary institutionally led intergenerational classrooms for both younger and older participants. As participants in the intergenerational classroom began to recognize the realities of the aging process, the prevalence of ageism, and the ways in which people of all ages contribute to the further development of our communities and societies, our findings suggest that educational and community-based intergenerational initiatives may contribute to the success of age-friendly cities (WHO, 2007) and universities (AFUGN, n.d.-b). With an emphasis on social participation, social inclusion, intergenerational connections, and accessible education, the goals of age-friendly cities (WHO, 2007) and age-friendly universities (AFUGN, n.d.-b) align with the outcomes of our pilot intergenerational classroom, suggesting that

institutionally led intergenerational learning opportunities can support the expansion of such communities. Therefore, we promote the development of other institutionally led (educational and community-based) intergenerational initiatives.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study comes with several limitations. First, the researchers played dual roles as both researchers and course teaching staff, which may have increased the likelihood of social desirability bias during the data collection phase of the project. Specifically, my project supervisor was the course instructor and principal investigator, and I was the graduate teaching assistant and research project coordinator. To mitigate the possibility of these biases, my supervisor was not involved in the study recruitment process and did not have access to student participant information or data until the final grades for the course were formally submitted to the Registrar's Office (i.e., when the course was completely over). Additionally, as the course teaching assistant, I was completely removed from grading prior to participant recruitment, which began three quarters of the way through the course. This process was clearly stated throughout the recruitment process (i.e., through in-person and online announcements, participation sign-up form, and Letter of Information and Consent) to reduce the student-instructor power imbalance and any perception of coercion during the recruitment and data collection phases. Still, social desirability bias should be considered when interpreting the study's findings, as participants may have felt the need to

respond favourably to the researchers given their direct involvement in both the pilot intergenerational classroom and the research component of the project.

Though there is the potential for social desirability bias, the dual roles held by the researchers may have been beneficial to the research. As student and community participants were familiar with me (as the teaching assistant and project coordinator) and my supervisor (as the course instructor and project supervisor), pre-existing rapport may have increased their comfort and willingness to participate in the research component of the project. Such pre-existing rapport may have increased participants' trust in us as researchers, enabling them to share their insights more openly and authentically. Therefore, future research should aim to minimize the possibility of social desirability bias while also ensuring rapport between the researchers and participants. This may be done by including someone who is not involved in the academic element of the course but has some pre-established rapport with potential participants (e.g., research project coordinator) in the participant recruitment and data collection processes.

Second, the study did not directly assess participants' attitudes, frequency of intergenerational contact, or quality of intergenerational contact prior to the pilot intergenerational classroom, limiting the conclusions of the findings. In reflecting on their attitudes and experiences prior to participating in the course, participants expressed varying views of other generations, frequency of intergenerational contact, and quality of intergenerational contact. Given the role of previous intergenerational interactions in shaping attitudes, it is possible that

these incoming beliefs and experiences may have played a role in participants' receptiveness to intergenerational interactions within the classroom and their attitudes following the course. Though this may impact the conclusions of this thesis, such a variety of experiences with intergenerational contact contributed positively to the diversity of perspectives presented within the data, allowing for a representative sample of younger and older participant attitudes. Therefore, future research should aim to assess participants' initial attitudes prior to evaluating the outcomes of an ageism intervention to further validate and expand upon the findings of this thesis.

Finally, the findings presented are based on a single ageism intervention implemented over one semester; therefore, external validity is limited. Future research should aim to expand the findings of the current study, as well as the model of age-consciousness, by exploring the outcomes of post-secondary-based intergenerational initiatives across multiple cohorts. Future research should also explore the impacts of formal and informal community-based intergenerational programs, such as those hosted through public libraries, recreation centres, and other community organizations.

Conclusion

Ageism is a worldwide crisis with negative outcomes for people of all ages. Post-secondary educational institutions can play an important social role in reducing ageism by promoting the development of age-conscious students (Russell et al., 2022b). This thesis sought to expand upon the novel age-

conscious student concept and present qualitative evidence regarding the outcomes of a university-based intergenerational classroom (O1, RQ1) and the role of intergenerational connectivity (fostered through the intergenerational classroom) in the reduction of ageism and development of age-consciousness (O2, RQ2). Following course completion, student and community participants experienced (1) an increased conceptual understanding of ageism and (2) a transformation of attitudes toward aging and youth, while student participants experienced (3) an enhanced personal connection with aging. These findings were amplified by positive intergenerational interactions facilitated by the intergenerational classroom, demonstrating that the course was a transformational way to reduce ageism and improve attitudes among younger and older adults. From these findings, a revised model of age-consciousness that expands upon the age-conscious student concept is presented. Specifically, the revised model describes three interrelated factors contributing to the development of positive attitudes toward aging and youth: (1) balanced understanding of ageism and the aging process, (2) critical reflection on ageism, and (3) sense of hope for the future. Given these positive implications, the findings of this thesis support the development of other institutionally led intergenerational initiatives that benefit our communities and work toward addressing ageism as a global social issue.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Trent University Research Ethics Board Approval

December 18, 2023

File #: 28785
Title: Ageism, intergenerational learning, and age-conscious development

Dear Dr. Russell,

The Research Ethics Board (REB) has given approval to your proposal entitled "Ageism, intergenerational learning, and age-conscious development".

When a project is approved by the REB, it is an Institutional approval. It is not to be used in place of any other ethics process.

To maintain its compliance with this approval, the REB must receive via ROMEO:

An Annual Update for each calendar year research is active;

A Study Renewal should the research extend beyond its approved end date of March 01, 2028;

A Study Closure Form at the end of active research.

This project has the following reporting milestones set:

Annual progress report-2027/12/31
Annual progress report-2026/12/31
Annual progress report-2025/12/31
Annual progress report-2024/12/31
Renewal Due-2028/03/01

To complete these milestones, click the Events tab in your ROMEO protocol to locate and submit the relevant form.

If an amendments to the protocol is required, you must submit an Amendment Form, available in the Events tab in your ROMEO protocol, for approval by the REB prior to implementation.

Any questions regarding the submission of reports or Event forms in ROMEO can be directed to Anna Kisiala, Coordinator, Research Conduct and Reporting, at

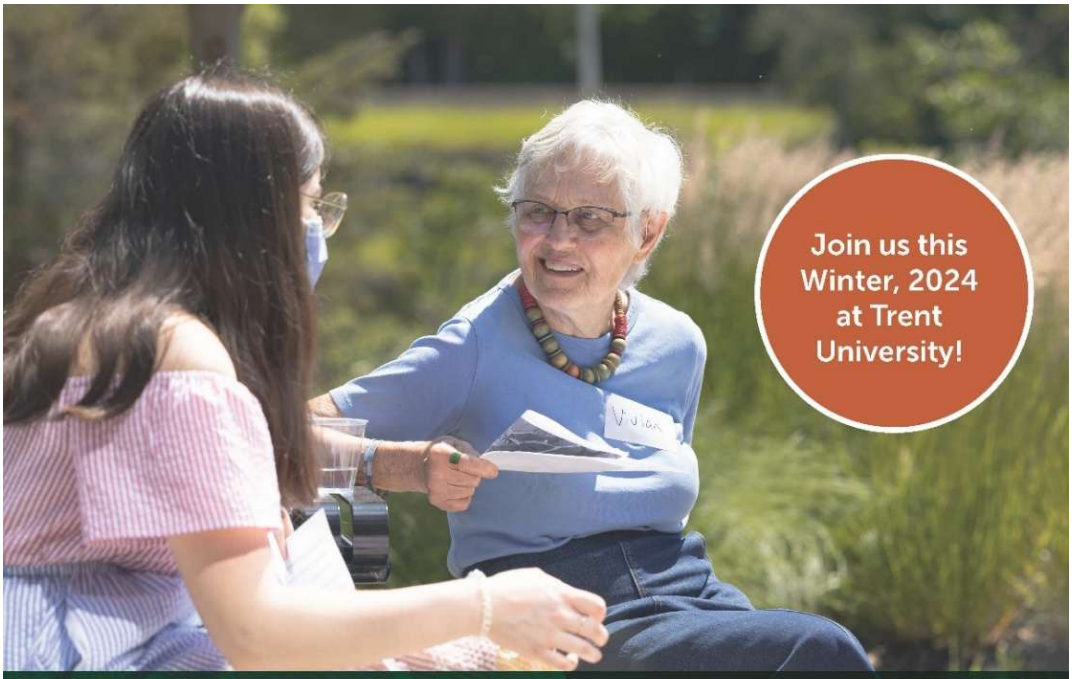
On behalf of the Trent Research Ethics Board, I wish you success with your research.

Best Wishes,

Dr. Liana Brown
REB Chair
Phone: (705) 748-1011 ext 7238
Email:

c.c.:Anna Kisiala
Coordinator, Research Conduct and Reporting

Appendix B: Community Participant Recruitment Poster



Intergenerational Classroom at Trent University is Seeking Older Volunteers!

BETWEEN JANUARY AND APRIL, 2024, Trent psychology professor Dr. Elizabeth Russell is inviting older people from the area to join us weekly, as classroom volunteers, in a ground-breaking intergenerational classroom embedded within her Psychology of Aging course!

Students and classroom volunteers will experience a unique opportunity to build meaningful intergenerational connections while learning and sharing about aging-related lecture content.

Eligible classroom volunteers must be:

- Age 65+
- Available to join us in person on Tuesdays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. weekly from January 9 until April 2, 2024, at the Trent University Symons Campus

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS PROJECT, please visit **www.trentu.ca/aging/research** and complete the sign-up form, leave a voicemail on 705-748-1011 ext. 7867, or email elizabethrussell@trentu.ca.

Elizabeth Russell, Ph.D.
Director, Trent Centre for Aging & Society
Associate Professor, Psychology

Tabytha Wells,
M.Sc. Candidate, Psychology
Research Coordinator,
Trent Centre for Aging & Society

TRENT UNIVERSITY — TRENT CENTRE FOR AGING & SOCIETY
CENTRE FOR TEACHING & LEARNING
TRENT UNIVERSITY — PSYCHOLOGY
RTO ERO Foundation Fondation
TRENT UNIVERSITY — OFFICE OF RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Appendix C: List of Intergenerational Group Activities

Week 1: Students only; no intergenerational contact

Week 2: Speed interviewing – icebreaker

Week 3: Brainstorming ideas for student papers

Week 4: Collaborative art-making activity

Week 5: Discussing student paper topics

Week 6: Show and tell

Week 7: Midterm exam; no formal activities

Week 8: Discussing creative projects

Week 9: Scavenger hunt

Week 10: Magazine critique

Week 11: Speed interviewing – getting to know other people in the class

Week 12: Creative project fair; no formal group activity but many informal interactions occurred

Appendix D: PSYC 3550H Course Syllabus

PSYC-3550H-A: Adult Development and Aging 2024WI - Peterborough Campus

Instructor:

Instructor: Elizabeth Russell
Email Address:
Phone Number: 705-748-1011 x7867
Office: DNA LHS C115 (Psychology faculty hallway) OR BL 404 (Trent Centre for Aging & Society)
- ask me where I will be when you set up a meeting with me!
Office Hours: by appointment - just email me! I am here for you BUT set office hours tend not to fit everyone's schedule: elizabethrussell@trentu.ca

Meeting Times:

One 3-hour lecture weekly
Tuesdays, 11:00 am - 1:50 pm
TSC 2.02 (Student Centre upstairs classroom)
For up-to-date classroom locations: then navigate to Academics>Courses>Academic Timetable

Department:

Academic Administrative Assistant: Robyn Calvert
Email Address:
Phone Number: 705-748-1011 x7535
Office: Life and Health Sciences, DNA C104

Description:

Welcome to the Department of Psychology's First Intergenerational Course! This very exciting course will continue, as always, as an academic course, with the same outcomes, lecture content, and assignments as in the past/other typical courses, however we also have a very exciting experiential learning component that ties in directly with course curriculum. Specifically, we will also be welcoming a number of older adults - Classroom Volunteers - weekly into our classroom. They will be invited, as valued members of the classroom space, to share their experiences with aging (beyond what I can do in lecture), to connect with you informally throughout group activities in class, and to simply share more actual insight as to their experiences of aging in our Peterborough community! We are very excited about this new, very special, intergenerational

class!

Academic course description: Drawing on an interactive, experiential learning approach, this course will examine the theory and research on aging, exclusively focusing on the 65+ life stage. Topics to be covered include Indigenous aging, aging today, aging and health, biological aging processes, how aging affects our body, the aging brain, Indigenous aging, how the COVID- 19 pandemic affected older people, healthcare, mental health and personality, money/retirement/work, and family and social support. Perspectives will include our rapidly aging population in Canada and around the world, and how communities can support older people who are increasingly aging in place, in their own homes or communities, rather than in institutions.

Learning Outcomes:

Students successfully completing this course will:

1. Feel more connected to older adults in our community.
2. Understand the biological, psychological, and social changes associated with aging.
3. Describe the experiences of aging in Canada, specifically, in relation to our healthcare system and our population demographics.
4. Develop an understanding of the impact of ageism on the health and well-being of older people.
5. Critically articulate and evaluate aging research, verbally and in writing.
6. Create knowledge mobilization outputs to creatively share and discuss student-chosen topics focused on aging.

Texts:

1. Novak, M., Campbell, L., & Northcott, H. C. (2018). Aging and society: Canadian perspectives (8th ed.). Nelson. ***Note: 7th ed. is fine***
2. Dr. Russell's "Assignment Guide" (the Assignment Guide is available on Blackboard)
3. APA (2020). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. **OR** refer to the condensed online APA guide, which is linked online here: .
4. Academic integrity is linked here:
5. Trent Academic Skills Online Guides (specifically Essays, Referencing, Grammar, Study Skills, and Exam Prep):

Assessments, Assignments and Tests:

Most assessments will be submitted through a dropbox on Blackboard (except

creative projects which can be physically brought in, as needed).

If you wish, the creative assignment and the essay (+essay outline) can be completed in pairs or small groups (except exams). I will discuss this at length in class, but you must chat with me first about this.

1. **Participation (10%)**
    - **Due weekly, Weeks 1-12**. Getting full attendance marks requires that students attend and participate in scheduled classes. Each week there will be a small in-class activity (oral or written, individual or group) based on the assigned material or the assignments currently underway. These activities will be conducted and submitted **in class** (e.g., you MUST be present physically ***in the room*** to receive your 1%). Activities must be completed either as a physical pen and paper copy, submitted at the end of class to the TA (please bring paper/pen/pencil each week). Sometimes, the 1% will be attendance-based, and other times an in-class activity will be required. There will be one (1) participation activity worth 1% (pass/fail) each and every week (12 total). Only 10 activities are needed for full marks (you cannot get 12/10 for participating in each class), meaning you can opt out of any 2 of your choosing and still get 10/10. After that, you will receive 9/10, 8/10, etc., regardless of reason as there is the two free missed classes that everyone can take advantage of. **Given this, no additional opportunities for participation will be given.**
2. **Creative assignment (20%)**
    - **Due April 2, 2024**. Due and informally presented during the final class, you are given a very open and welcome invitation to do a creative project of your choosing - and, we hope you take advantage of the intergenerational classroom component for this assignment. You can do this project, too, in pairs or small groups (all participants will receive the same grade). The creative assignment should be able to be presented to the class in one way or another - we will have a celebratory presentation day during the last week - so **no extensions are possible** - please be sure you plan to be present and are able to share your work informally (we are not grading your presentation but we do want to hear you share your work briefly). Ideas include but are not limited to: a video related to aging (that could include older adults in your life - do not just film an interview with an older person as I do not want to feel like I'm grading your interviewee! But I have lots of great examples of videos created for this project, viewable here), a family tree (including explanation and writing, simply handing in a family tree from Ancestry will not cut it), a creative art project that somehow represents aging for you, a (very comprehensive) social media output (example here:), a research poster related to a specific topic

in aging, a health or wellness intervention or program related to aging, a dramatic play (must be brief)... really anything at all that you come up with - as long as it can somehow be presented to the class. What I am NOT looking for is a boring PowerPoint presentation. You can, however, USE PowerPoint to display fun or creative outputs that might be difficult to bring into the room. We will discuss this a lot in class, and you can workshop your ideas with me and with your classmates and classroom volunteers in the weeks prior during our small group discussions. These formats are only a few ideas - you likely will come up with something else really exciting (so please take the time to plan early)!

3. **Essay (broken into 2 parts, 30% total)**
    - Students will write a short essay on a topic of their choosing, that relates to the psychology of aging. If you like, this may be combined with an interview with an older adult - consider interviewing our classroom volunteers, or, working with them to help refine or develop your interview or regular research paper topic idea! This includes 2 parts: an outline **(due the class before midterm break, February 13, 2024)**, and the actual essay **(due March 19, 2024)**.
    - **Essay outline (5%)**: Due at the start of the last class before midterm break (**February 13, 2024**), topics and essay organization will be approved through an essay outline. It should be a detailed outline of your paper (~2 pages of content, excluding title page and references), including a thesis statement, headers and subheaders, and preliminary research under each of the headers (minimum of 3 recent articles, usually 1 article per header for a total of 3 headers). If you are choosing the interview option (see option B below), you must also include basic methodological details, including your specific formal interview questions, of your interview in your essay outline. You will be marked on topic development, clarity and writing, and APA. Please refer to my Assignment Guide (on Blackboard) which fully describes the Essay Outline assignment. Remember, if you are doing this project in a group or in a pair, your essay outline must be done together as well, and you will all receive the same grade.
    - **Essay (25%)**: Due Mid-March (**March 19, 2024**, which is 5 weeks after your essay outline is due), an essay is a great way to apply course content to a topic of your own interest and choosing. **There are two options**: A full literature review (**Option A**), or you may also interview an older adult in your life or a classroom volunteer (!) on the topic (**Option B**) - details on each essay options are below.
    - Minimum of 6 pages/maximum of 8 pages (excluding title page and references) - penalties will be incurred for those essays more than ½ page over or under the page requirements; Minimum 10 references, mostly current (~10 years old or less, ~5 years or newer is better, but some 20-30+ foundational articles are good too

- use your critical judgement you've accrued over years of writing psychology papers and learning about how science develops!).
- Use APA style (take note of changes in the 7th edition!), and please note the university policy on academic integrity - do not use AI to write your paper or other projects please (did you know it makes up references and facts that are noticeable?). Please refer to my Assignment Guide for detailed information on the essay. Remember, if you are doing this project in a group or in a pair, you will all receive the same grade. We hope you will take advantage of our Classroom Volunteers for this assignment - you could interview them, ask them to help you refine your interview or just help you come up with/develop your regular literature review topic!
- **For this essay, you have two options:**
    - **Option A: Full literature review** on a topic of your choice within the context of aging (examples provided in class), **or**
    - **Option B: Conducting and summarizing an interview with an older adult** (or a person in your life who regularly interacts with an older adult, for example a parent or a friend who works in the field, or a parent or a friend who is a caregiver to an older adult, just as two examples) on a topic of your choosing *related to aging*, which you will then connect with a literature review you conduct on the same topic. If you are choosing the interview option, you must also include (just) basic methodological details of the interview in the essay outline. More to come, in class!
    - To be clear, you choose one option of the two above - you do not HAVE to interview someone.
    - The page minimums/maximums for both assignments are the same (see above), although if you chose Option B (the interview option), the lit review component needs only to be **half the # of pages and half the # of references**, but it be graded with the same rigour. I will discuss both options extensively in class. You may **not** conduct your interview until it has been approved through your essay outline.

4. **Midterm exam (20%)**
    - Held in the first two hours of **February 27, 2024**, the week we return from midterm break, this test will include lecture and text material from the beginning of the course specific content/coverage will be shared with you in class and on Blackboard. The test will combine multiple-choice and short answer (NOT essay) questions. For the short answer questions, you will always have some choice. **Lecture will resume in the last hour of class.**
    - If you have an accommodation for an extended time to write your exam, please be sure to register to begin your exam **earlier** with the CAT, so that you have time to write within your specific accommodation time allotment, and walk across campus to be

settled in for Hour 3 of the lecture. It is imperative that you do this adjustment when you book the test, not after the booking. They are used to this ask for my courses at the CAT - you just have to be sure to request an earlier time when you book, and mention my name and that it is for a course where lectures resume after the test.

5. **Final exam (20%)**
    - The final exam will include only material from the second half of the course - specific content/coverage will be shared with you in class and on Blackboard. It will be scheduled during the University's exam period. The test will consist mostly or exclusively of multiple-choice questions. The exam will be 3 hours long but will be designed so it could reasonably be completed in 2 hours.

Grading:

1. Participation: 10%, 1% in class each week (12 weeks; max of 10/10)
2. Essay outline: 5%, February 13, 2024 (week before reading week)
3. Midterm exam: 20%, February 27, 2024 (week after reading week)
4. Creative project: 20%, April 2, 2023 (last week of class)
5. Essay: 25%, March 19, 2024 (5 weeks after your essay outline is due)
6. Final exam: 20%, TBD by Trent University

It your responsibility to read, accept, and put into your schedules the due dates outlined on the syllabus. Please plan ahead for deadlines that may conflict with your other courses and personal life!

Grade Total by Withdrawal Date:

30%+ returned by March 8, 2024

Schedule:

Scheduling notes: We do not have specified weekly textbook readings as lecture may ebb and flow across weeks a bit, however the text chapters directly align with the lecture topics. I will very clearly communicate to you, in advance, what content falls on each exam (note that the final exam is NOT cumulative). So, those are the chapters to keep pace with.

ALL chapters in the textbook are covered on either the midterm or the final exam. Only ONE chapter is self-study (no corresponding lecture content) which is the very last chapter (death and dying).

Also please note: Indigenous aging: This important topic is a component of the

course, but will be shared through this excellent video (here:), viewed on your own time. This will be included in final exam content (not the midterm). There is NO corresponding text content - this video is it and it will be on the final so please don't forget to view it (I will remind you in class!).

Jan 9 / Week 1: Introducing the course; introducing the intergenerational classroom. First 1% activity. Introductory lecture content (Lecture 1 will begin).

January 16 / Week 2: Lecture 1: Aging today. **Meeting our classroom volunteers!**

January 23 / Week 3: Lecture 2: Aging and health

January 30 / Week 4: Biological aging processes

February 6 / Week 5: How aging affects our body systems

February 13 / Week 6: The aging brain **(essay outline due!)**

Reading week - February 19-23

February 27 / Week 7: **Midterm (Hours 1 and 2)**, Begin second half of the course during Hour 3: Aging and the COVID-19 pandemic

March 5 / Week 8: Healthcare

March 12 / Week 9: Mental health and personality

March 19 / Week 10: Money, retirement, and work **(essay due!)**

March 26 / Week 11: Family and social support

April 2 / Week 12: Concluding our intergenerational classroom and **submitting & sharing your creative projects! (last day of the course)**

Final exams: April 8-21

Course Guidelines:

Email/ Blackboard: I use the blackboard post + email function to communicate all the time with my class. Please check your Trent email dailyl If you do not check your email and come to class, you will lose track of this course.

Assignments: The above assignment descriptions are only basic. We will talk about assignments all the time in class, and even spend some time working on them.

Assignment guide: I have a major document, available on Blackboard, that I have created to support you in your assignments, especially in your writing assignments, your presentations, and your planning. This is generic and can be applied to all academic writing. Please review it on Blackboard. Most of your questions will be answered there, however the specific details such as length, # of references, etc., is outlined here in this syllabus.

Due dates: Assignments are always due **at the start of class**, through a dropbox on Blackboard or in person, depending on the nature of the assignment.

Extensions: I will not permit individual extensions without extenuating, unplanned, and last- minute circumstances (please email me). These must be significant - many assignments due at the same time, and student stress, while relevant, is not a significant and unplanned event. If you need assistance planning your assignments, please check out my planner (in the Assignment Guide) that will help you with this!

This course is designed around scaffolding your learning, and so extensions push our ability to provide feedback, often needed for another assignment, too close to that next step. If you have accommodations for extensions through SAS, please note that these must be pre negotiated with the instructor - a minimum of **Five Days in Advance of the Due Date**. If you need extra time and you are not within that five-day window, just take the late penalty, explained below, of minus 5% per day. A late assignment does not mean a zero. Emails received in the night, the night before an assignment is due, explaining that you are stressed, only serve to make me feel guilty, and put me in a difficult position with regard to fairness to your classmates.

Please note I have a family and cannot check or respond to email outside of work hours (9-5, Monday to Friday). I will, however, respond to you in a very timely manner within the regular work hours of Trent University.

Directly quoted text from the SAS website regarding extensions for those with approved SAS extensions: 'The impact of a disability may mean you need additional time to complete an assignment. Your accommodation letter will indicate this and provide your instructors with information needed to approve **up to a** five-day extension on an assignment. Students are encouraged to have a general conversation with their instructor regarding their accommodation of assignment extensions at the beginning of the semester. **EXTENSIONS MUST BE REQUESTED IN ADVANCE OF A DUE DATE.** All disability-related extension requests require approval from your instructors. We recommend asking for an extension **one week prior to the original due date** with as much advance notification as possible."
Source to the above text:

Late assignments: Late assignments (e.g., those submitted after the class begins) will be penalized 5% per day for each day (24 hours) past the due date, including weekends. No assignment will be accepted more than one week (7 days) after the due date, without the prearranged permission of the instructor. Submitting an assignment late doesn't mean you will get a zero or fail. It simply means you will lose 5% per day. Please accept this as a consequence of planning, and do not request an extension except in extreme situations (described above, including SAS accommodation).

Course policy on attendance in class: Class attendance will be recorded (1% per class can be obtained) and will account for 10% of the course grade. Note that there are more than ten classes, so there is room to miss two classes - meaning there will be no opportunity to make your 10% up. Attendance is more than just showing up - your 1% will be given based on completion of small assignments completed in class or brought to class and workshopped in class.

In-class materials: Please be prepared, in all classes, with pens/pencils and paper, laptop, etc., to enable you to participate fully in the in-class assignments and groupwork.

In-class work: We will workshop your assignments (individual and group) during class time. Please be prepared by always bringing your in-progress work to class.

Style: All submissions must be written in complete APA 7th edition style (e.g., title page, reference section, in text citations where relevant, Times New Roman Size 12 font, double spaced, proper APA headers where relevant, etc.). I am very particular about APA style; you will lose marks if you divert from APA style.

Meeting with me: I have cancelled in person office to help provide more personalized meeting times with you that work around your busy schedule. I can meet with you in person or on zoom if you give me a day or two's notice (within the M-F 9-5 work hours laid out by Trent University), and I will be very happy to chat with you about course assignments, career plans, really anything at all. I would far prefer to get to know you this way, then via email, when I largely have no way to connect your name in the email to your face in the class, or often, to respond effectively to your question. **Please do not ask me to review an in-progress assignment over email - this must be done during class or in a meeting**. It is much easier, in person or on zoom, to discuss your issue and to talk more broadly about other relevant things that come up. I also am available to chat after class for a little bit, if your question doesn't require a long explanation (please remember that after 3 hours of class, I like you, need a snack and a little break!). But I am happy to quickly chat, too.

Appendix E: Study Recruitment Reminder Emails

Subject: REMINDER: Opportunity to Participate in Research about the Intergenerational Classroom

Message: Hi everyone,

This is a reminder that as students in the Intergenerational Psychology of Aging course, you are invited to participate in research about the intergenerational classroom!

Your participation is completely voluntary and will include a 60-minute in-person interview (on campus or elsewhere) about your experiences in the classroom. To compensate you for your time, participants will have a chance to win one of two $25 prizes. We recognize that this is many people's last semester at Trent, so compensation now includes the option of $25 in Trent Cash or **a gift card to a place of your choosing**.

We really value your contributions to the course so far and would love to hear from as many of you as possible! If you are interested in participating, please **click here** to book an interview slot.

Thanks for considering, and thank you to everyone who has signed up/participated so far!!

Appendix F: Community Participant Interview Protocol

1. Using three words, describe your overall experiences in the intergenerational classroom.
2. What did you enjoy most about the intergenerational classroom? Feel free to share one or a few things. Examples: Lecture, discussion from class during lecture, intergenerational groupwork, informal time at break and after class.
3. Describe the ways you interacted with others in the course throughout the semester, including both students and/or other classroom volunteers (e.g., in-class activities, collaboration on a project, casual interactions outside of class time, etc.).
4. How do you think having other generations in the class influenced your experience learning about the processes of aging?
5. How have your perceptions of youth changed or stayed the same since being involved in the classroom? How do you feel about the future, now that you know the leaders of tomorrow a little better?
6. We heard from many people that the intergenerational classroom helped break down generational divides, revealing similarities between people of all ages. What was your experience?
7. You took this course on aging at a time in your life where the topic matter is personal. How has this course impacted the way you view your own aging?
8. In what ways do you feel your level of knowledge about the science of aging has changed?
9. What were some challenges you faced when it came to the intergenerational

classroom? Examples: Logistics – parking, accessibility; noise; connecting with others, etc.

10. How would you improve the intergenerational classroom? Feel free to share one or a few things. Consider course format, logistics, lecture and activity structure, etc.
11. Do you think that Trent University should work toward creating more intergenerational classrooms or other intergenerational activities? Why or why not?
12. What is one special moment that will stay with you from the intergenerational classroom?

Appendix G: Student Participant Interview and Focus Group Protocol

1. Using three words, describe your overall experiences in the intergenerational classroom.
2. What did you enjoy most about the intergenerational classroom? Feel free to share one or a few things. Examples: Lecture, discussion from class during lecture, intergenerational groupwork, informal time at break and after class
3. Describe the ways you interacted with others in the course throughout the semester, including both other students and/or classroom volunteers (e.g., in-class activities, collaboration on a project, casual interactions outside of class time, etc.).
4. How did you like connecting with other generations in a formal academic setting?
5. How do you think having older people in the class influenced your learning about course content/tests, or perhaps inspired course assignments?
6. Thinking back to how you viewed aging before the course started – perhaps how you conceptualized it in your week 1 in-class independent art activity – how would you describe your previous perceptions of aging? How have your perceptions on aging changed or stayed the same since being involved in the classroom?
7. Ageism against older adults is a big thing we talked about in the course. How might your ageism or perspectives on ageism have changed? If so, how might have the lectures/intergenerational classroom supported that?
8. Have you noticed examples of ageism inside or outside of the classroom?

How did you feel or respond?

9. We heard from many people that the intergenerational classroom helped break down generational divides, revealing similarities between people of all ages. What was your experience?
10. In what ways do you feel your level of knowledge has changed about aging?
11. How has this course impacted the way you view your own aging? What about population aging?
12. How would you improve the intergenerational classroom? Feel free to share one or a few things. Consider course format, logistics, lecture, and activity structure, etc. *Note that we are not looking for a course evaluation.*
13. Do you think that Trent University should work toward creating more intergenerational classrooms or other intergenerational activities? Why or why not?
14. What is one special moment that will stay with you from the intergenerational classroom?

Appendix H: Letter of Information and Consent

You are being invited to participate in a research study based out of Trent University. Please review and complete this Letter of Information and Consent so you understand what your participation will involve. Before you provide written consent to participate, please ask any questions to be sure you fully understand the nature of the project and your participation.

Project Title: Ageism, Intergenerational Learning, and Age-Conscious Development

Investigators: This research study is being conducted by the Principal Investigator, Dr. Elizabeth Russell (Course Instructor and Associate Professor, Psychology) and the Research Project Coordinator, Tabytha Wells (Research Project Coordinator, Course Teaching Assistant, and M.Sc. Candidate, Psychology).

Note that **student interviews** will be conducted by the Research Project Coordinator and course Teaching Assistant, Tabytha Wells (M.Sc. Candidate, Psychology). At this point in the semester, Tabytha's portion of the grading has been completed and submitted to the Course Instructor (Dr. Elizabeth Russell, Principal Investigator), and she will not be involved in further grading for the course. The Course Instructor (Dr. Elizabeth Russell) will not have access to any student data, including the names of students who indicated interest in

participating or who participated, until the course's final grades have been submitted to the Registrar's Office.

Purpose of this Study: This study aims to: (1) explore students' and classroom volunteers' experiences in the intergenerational classroom and (2) evaluate the impacts of intergenerational connectivity on ageism and age-conscious development.

What Participation Means: We are interested in arranging an interview with you to discuss your personal experiences with intergenerational connectivity, ageism, and age-consciousness in the intergenerational classroom pilot. We would also like to hear your feedback regarding the intergenerational classroom (e.g., what you liked, did not like, and suggestions for future iterations). The interview will take approximately 60 minutes.

Your participation in this research study is entirely voluntary. If you were involved in the intergenerational classroom, there is **no** requirement for you to participate in this research.

Data from this project will be used to inform research outputs (e.g., master's thesis, academic publications, educational toolkits), multimedia outputs, etc.

Risks of Participating: This study is considered minimal risk and may include

psychological risks, such as feeling embarrassed, worried, or upset discussing your own or your peers' attitudes toward youth, aging, and/or the intergenerational classroom. Given these risks, we would like to remind you that your participation in this study is completely voluntary, you are free to withdraw from the study without consequence, and you are welcome to share as much or as little information as you feel comfortable.

Benefits to Participating: Benefits include having the opportunity to reflect on course material, learn about the processes of research in psychology, and inform knowledge on intergenerational classrooms and their benefit towards the reduction of youth ageism.

Confidentiality: Your name and identifying information will be kept confidential within the research team. At this point in the course (as of March 8, 2024), the Teaching Assistant's (Tabytha Wells, M.Sc. Candidate, Psychology) portion of the grading has been completed and submitted to the Course Instructor (Dr. Elizabeth Russell, Principal Investigator), and she will not be further involved in grading for the course. The Course Instructor (Dr. Elizabeth Russell) will not have access to any student data, including access to the names of students who indicated interest in participating or who participated, until after final grades have been submitted to the Registrar's Office. You will remain anonymous in all analyses and reporting documents, and the research team will be the only individuals with access to the interview data. You are free to share as much or

as little information as you feel comfortable with, and you may accept or decline to answer questions as you see fit.

Withdrawal: You may end your participation in the study without consequences. If you choose to withdraw, please contact Tabytha Wells (Research Project Coordinator and M.Sc. Candidate, Psychology) by leaving a voicemail at 705-748-1011 ext. 7867 or emailing twells@trentu.ca within 14 days of the interview. After 14 days, all remaining data will be included in final analyses and documents. If you decide to withdraw within 14 days of the interview, you may choose to have your interview answers omitted from the study. If you wish for your answers to be omitted, your demographic data and interview data will be destroyed, including recordings and transcripts. When notifying the Research Project Coordinator of your withdrawal, please confirm whether you would like to have your responses omitted.

Compensation: Classroom volunteers who engage in the research component will be entered into a draw to win one of two $25 gift cards as compensation for their participation.

Student participants will be entered into a draw to win one of two $25 Trent Cash prizes for their participation in the research. Students will not be offered academic incentives or compensation to engage with the research.

Questions about the study: If you have any questions about the research, please contact Tabytha Wells, Research Project Coordinator and M.Sc. Candidate, Psychology (leave a voicemail at 705-748-1011 ext. 7867 or email twells@trentu.ca).

This study has been approved by Trent University's Research Ethics Board (File no. 28785). If you have questions or concerns regarding your rights as a participant or the ethical conduct of this project, please contact Anna Kisiala, Coordinator of Research Conduct and Reporting (705-748-1011 ext. 7866 or researchintegrity@trentu.ca).

As a participant in the above project, I understand and agree with the following:

1. This study has been approved by the Trent University Research Ethics Board;
2. I have been fully informed about the nature and extent of my participation in the study;
3. My participation in the study is entirely voluntary;
4. My Teaching Assistant, Tabytha Wells (Research Project Coordinator and M.Sc. Candidate, Psychology), will not have access to student data until her portion of the grades has been submitted to the Course Instructor (which is now complete);
5. The Course Instructor, Dr. Elizabeth Russell (Principal Investigator and

Associate Professor, Psychology), will not have access to any student data until final grades have been submitted to the Registrar's Office;

6. There will be no academic compensation for my involvement in this study;
7. I may withdraw my participation from the study without penalty;
8. I have 14 days after the interview to withdraw my participation;
9. The information supplied in the interview will remain confidential;
10. My identity will remain anonymous in all analyses and reports and will only be known to the research team;
11. The interview will be digitally recorded;
12. The information gained from this study will be stored responsibly by the research team;
13. I have been provided with a copy of the Letter of Information and Consent Form for my own records;
14. All my questions regarding my participation in the research project and consent process have been answered to my satisfaction.

Your Name: _____

Your Role (circle one): Student Classroom Volunteer

Your Contact Information (email &/or phone):

_____

Your Signature:

_____

Date of Interview: _____

Are you interested in receiving a final copy of our reports? If so, how would you like to receive them? (E.g., email address other than that provided above, home address, other) _____

_____

Appendix I: Demographic Form

First and Last Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone Number (Optional): _____

Age: _____

Title/Pronouns (e.g., Mr., Mrs., Ms., Miss, Mx., Dr., She/Her, He/Him,

They/Them): _____

Role in the class (select an option): Student OR Classroom Volunteer

Program of Study/Major (if you are a classroom volunteer, please write "N/A"):

_____

Year of Study (if you are a classroom volunteer, please write "N/A"):

_____