

GERONTOLOGY

College of Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies

Program Description

The Gerontology Program provides an applied interdisciplinary approach to studying the human aging process and the challenges encountered by older adults and their families as they interact in contemporary society. The curriculum is anchored in life course and humanistic theory, and concentrates on the needs of both healthy and chronically ill elders.

In order to better understand life's complexities, the program guides students to critically examine and explore the issues, impacts, and interventions for elders and their families from an interdisciplinary framework. Throughout coursework, students are exposed to the bio-psycho-social-cultural and gender contexts that exist individually and in aggregate groups within society. Course content challenges all students to identify and analyze existing generalizations, theories, and concepts about aging in order to develop valid understandings based on current research in the discipline. Throughout the program, students are encouraged to actively advocate concerning elder issues.

The program offers a major and minor in Gerontology. Students are encouraged to blend other disciplines of study with Gerontology in order to facilitate varied career alternatives. They are helped in constructing an individual (elective) program of study within their major that reflects their own interests. Using elective courses to begin to build a minor in this area is highly encouraged. The program also assists students in constructing a special master's degree.

Career opportunities for gerontologists are growing rapidly. Employers are realizing the benefits of employing people who have backgrounds in aging along with abilities to address the needs of their older consumers. Gerontology graduates enter careers in both the public and private sectors with healthy and chronically ill elders. The careers are as varied as the goals of the individual and the needs of the organization. Graduates often work in such positions as counselors, advocates, analysts in state agencies for older adults, social workers, nurses, and information and referral specialists. Others have created their own careers in such areas as dental hygiene, human services, food services, travel, and Web design.

Gerontology graduates also often go on to graduate and professional schools in fields such as sociology, psychology, counseling, nursing, criminal justice, family services, and social work.

Degree Programs

BS in Gerontology (<https://catalog.csus.edu/colleges/social-sciences-interdisciplinary-studies/gerontology/bs-in-gerontology/>)

Minor in Gerontology (<https://catalog.csus.edu/colleges/social-sciences-interdisciplinary-studies/gerontology/minor-in-gerontology/>)

Certificate in Gerontology (Graduate) (<https://catalog.csus.edu/colleges/social-sciences-interdisciplinary-studies/gerontology/certificate-in-gerontology/>)

Accreditation

In addition to California State University, Sacramento's full accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, the Bachelor of

Science in Gerontology is also individually accredited by the Association of Gerontology in Higher Education.

Notice to Students RE: Professional Licensure and Certification

California State University programs for professions that require licensure or certification are intended to prepare the student for California licensure and certification requirements. Admission into programs for professions that require licensure and certification does not guarantee that students will obtain a license or certificate. Licensure and certification requirements are set by agencies that are not controlled by or affiliated with the California State University and licensure and certification requirements can change at any time.

The California State University has not determined whether its programs meet other states' educational or professional requirements for licensure and certification. Students planning to pursue licensure or certification in other states are responsible for determining whether, if they complete a California State University program, they will meet their state's requirements for licensure or certification. This disclosure is made pursuant to 34 CFR §668.43(a)(5)(v)(C).

Special Features

The focus of the curriculum is upon the biological/psychological/social aspects of aging; social policies; services and research in aging; and practice, administration, and program development, implementation and evaluation skills related to aging.

- An integrated interdisciplinary program of courses and field experiences leads to a Bachelor of Science degree with a Major or Minor in Gerontology.
- Multiple major courses include integrated Service Learning to connect theory, practice, and community service.
- Individuals are prepared for careers in varied gerontological practice areas based upon demographic projections of need for personnel in planning, administering, coordinating, and delivering older adult services.
- Gerontological practitioners' awareness of the effects of social policy on aging individuals and families is emphasized.
- The program helps facilitate students' progression from community colleges to the University when acquiring a BS degree in Gerontology.
- Individuals currently working in the community are afforded opportunities to learn advanced skills and acquire professional training in gerontology.
- The strong relationships between the Gerontology Program and Sacramento area agencies and institutions planning or delivering services for older persons, and their families are key components to this program's success.
- The Gerontology Program helps enhance the interest and commitment of diverse faculty and the University while providing a vehicle for collaboration regarding community engagement, interdisciplinary study and research in the field of Gerontology.
- The Program provides comprehensive academic preparation for graduate study in Gerontology or other related fields.

Potential Career Possibilities

Counselor · Adult Protective Services · Assessment/Intake Case Worker · California Department of Aging · Case Manager · Consultant · Department of Health Services · Department of Social Services-Older Adult Educator · Guardian/Conservator Staff · Information and Referral Specialist · Legal Aid Assistant · Ombudsman/Advocate · Program Activities Director ·

Program Specialist · Senior Community Outreach · Geriatric Social Worker
· Geriatric Clinical Nurse · Rehabilitation/Job Training Agencies · Senior
Retirement/Adult Day Care Centers · Area Agencies on Aging

Contact Information

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ABAH, TERESA

JENSEN, DONNA

KOSS, CATHERYN

GERO 10. Aging Issues in Contemporary Society. 3 Units

General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Social and Behavioral
Sciences (4-A)

Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer

Introduction to the field of Gerontology and how the discipline addresses society's needs. This course examines current issues in aging using a life-span perspective to gain perspective on how opportunities, choices, and experiences throughout life are driven by gender, race, and class, and how they culminate during aging and impact aging outcomes. Major topics include implications of the demographic changes, common aging changes/conditions, ageism, and how political and social structures impact aging.

Note: This course requires personal protective equipment (PPE).

GERO 11. Older Adult Services and Strategies. 3 Units

Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

This course is an introduction and exploration of the older adult service continuum within the context of changing diverse societal needs, service availability and accessibility, current public policy, and administrative and management issues facing older adults. A multidisciplinary examination of the spectrum of services and programs targeted for older adults and their families. Includes agency information and referral processes, recreational and social options, housing alternatives, in-home, residential and skilled care options, health care eligibility criteria, funding sources, and protective services. Service Learning may be required.

GERO 21. First Year Seminar: Becoming an Educated Person. 3 Units

Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

Introduction to the nature and possible meanings of higher education, and the functions and resources of the University. Designed to help students develop and exercise fundamental academic success strategies and to improve their basic learning skills. Provide students with the opportunity to interact with fellow students and the seminar leader and to build a community of academic and personal support, as well as explore gerontological concepts needed to respond to demographic changes in today's world.

GERO 102. Social Policy for an Aging Society. 3 Units

Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

Explores context and process for policy making by national and California state governments including ethical dimensions. Applications are developed from students' and instructor's areas of interest including K-12 and higher education, land-use policy, and aging issues such as elder advocacy, Social Security, and Medicare/Medicaid. Provides background and skills for entry level positions in public or non-profit organizations. Cross Listed: PPA 100; only one may be counted for credit.

GERO 103. Applied Care Management in Gerontological Practice. 3 Units

Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

Students will analyze issues, services, methods, and interventions related to practice for older adult care, their families, and caregivers. Outcomes include understanding the of unique characteristics/needs of older adults, systems approach to working with older adults, issues affecting service delivery (diversity, gender, ethics, special health, mental health needs), basic practice skills for effective service delivery to older adults and families/caregivers, attitudes and roles when working with older adults, and the business practices of geriatric care management.

GERO 121. Strategies for Optimal Aging. 3 Units

Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

This course is an in-depth, interdisciplinary, and holistic exploration of health promotion and adaptation paradigms that facilitate optimal and productive longevity. Hardiness and self-efficacy theories along with expectations and experiences enhancing quality of life are explored. Interactions among such variables as activity, diet, exercise, work/leisure, attitudes/beliefs, humor, living environments, spirituality, and social networks are investigated within the contexts of gender, economic, and cultural perspectives.

Cross listed: GERO 221

GERO 122. Interprofessional Approaches to Health Care in Older Adults. 3 Units

General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Mathematical Concepts & Quantitative Reasoning (2-A)

Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

This course examines prevalent health issues commonly experienced by older adults. The course utilizes an interprofessional evidence-based approach to address the impact of chronic illness and related issues on older adults, their families, and caregivers. The focus of this course is on health promotion and includes holistic therapies and ethical issues that arise in late-life care. Paired with GERO 222.

GERO 123. Research on Aging & the Life Course. 3 Units

General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Biological Science (5-B)

Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

Analysis, evaluation, and application of existent gerontological research. Hands-on practice carrying out aging-related research projects, including defining the research question, selecting data collection tools, collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data, and presenting results in narrative and visual formats. Special emphasis on connecting gerontological theory, research, and interdisciplinary practice, accommodating participants with sensory, physical, or cognitive limitations, and ethical issues.

- GERO 124. Perspectives on Death and Dying.** 3 Units
Prerequisite(s): Student's academic level must be Junior of higher to enroll in this class.
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- Examination of the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors associated with death and dying. Topics covered include children's and adult's concepts of dying and death; causes and types of death; self-destructive behavior; grief and mourning in the dying person and their survivors; physicians' aid in dying and other legal and ethical issues; and cross-cultural and historical perspectives on death.
 Cross listed: PSYC 151
- GERO 125. Moving Toward Equity in California Aging Policy and Practice.** 3 Units
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer
- This course examines California's state programs, services, and funding streams that support low-income older adults and persons with disabilities. It is focused on addressing equity, parity, funding and access. Students will be introduced to California's innovative Master Plan for Aging. Through studying past shortfalls and new approaches, this course will inform a new and diverse workforce in order to serve historically underserved communities, including BIPOC, Latinx, API, and LGBTQ+.
- GERO 130. Gerontology Practicum.** 3 Units
Prerequisite(s): 24 Major units including GERO 11, GERO 102, GERO 103, GERO 121, GERO 122 and instructor permission.
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- This course is a supervised practicum experience in a community agency planning for or delivering professional services to older adults. This practicum experience is part of two culminating courses for the major and focuses on application of the interdisciplinary nature of the discipline while affording students direct, hands-on experiences. Includes a field seminar. Seminar discussions focus on the application of gerontological concepts derived from all gerontology courses and are applied to each student's specific practicum area.
 Credit/No Credit
- GERO 131. Gerontology Capstone Practicum.** 3 Units
Prerequisite(s): 36 Major units including GERO 111, GERO 102, GERO 103, GERO 121, GERO 122, GERO 130 and instructor permission. Paired with GERO 295.
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- Supervised internship experience in a community agency planning for or delivering professional services to older adults. This capstone practicum experience builds on the first internship course, is the final culminating course for the major, and focuses on advanced application of the interdisciplinary nature of the discipline while affording students direct, hands on experiences. Includes a field seminar. Seminar discussions focus on the application of gerontologic concepts derived from all gerontology courses and are applied to each student's specific Practicum area.
 Credit/No Credit
- GERO 199. Special Problems.** 1 - 3 Units
Prerequisite(s): Advanced approval of project goal and objectives by program director.
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- Independent research, project, or directed reading.
Note: Open to students who are capable of independent work. A maximum of 3 units may count toward elective major requirements.
- Credit/No Credit
- GERO 200. Adaptation To Age Related Changes, Illnesses and Caregiving.** 3 Units
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- Exposure to and analysis of positive and negative functional consequences arising from age related changes and illnesses in elders. Content elucidates changes and their effects on elders' levels of wellness using interdisciplinary research and holistic, life course frameworks. Screening assessments, interventions, community resources and services, and ethical issues are addressed for each topic. Caregiving issues and solutions are explored within life span and problem solving frameworks.
- GERO 221. Strategies for Optimal Aging.** 3 Units
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- This course is an in-depth, interdisciplinary, and holistic exploration of health promotion and adaptation paradigms that facilitate optimal and productive longevity. Hardiness and self-efficacy theories along with expectations and experiences enhancing quality of life are explored. Interactions among such variables as activity, diet, exercise, work/leisure, attitudes/beliefs, humor, living environments, spirituality, and social networks are investigated within the contexts of gender, economic, and cultural perspectives.
 Cross listed: GERO 121
- GERO 222. Interprofessional Approaches to Health Care in Older Adults.** 3 Units
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- This course examines prevalent health issues commonly experienced by older adults. The course utilizes an interprofessional evidence-based approach to address the impact of chronic illness and related issues on older adults, their families, and caregivers. The focus of this course is on health promotion and includes holistic therapies and ethical issues that arise in late-life care. Paired with GERO 122. Students cannot enroll in this course if they have received credit for GERO 122.
- GERO 225. Moving Toward Equity in California Aging Policy & Practice.** 3 Units
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer
- This course examines California's programs, services, and funding streams that support low-income older adults and persons with disabilities. Students will be introduced to California's innovative Master Plan for Aging with its focus on equity, parity, and access. Using analytical, evaluative and leadership skills, students mentor GERO 125 students to address policy and program needs of vulnerable constituencies. This course will inform a new and diverse workforce prepared to engage underserved communities, including BIPOC, Latinx, API, and LGBTQ+.

GERO 295. Internship/Project. 3 Units

Prerequisite(s): GERO 200, GERO 221, GERO 222.

Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

Supervised fieldwork internship or project that is a culminating experience and applies learned gerontological theories and concepts in a community setting where planning, developing, or delivering services to older adults or their families occurs. Students choose an area of practice and negotiate their learning experiences or project with their faculty advisor and field supervisor. Advanced approval of project goal and objectives by program director are required.

Credit/No Credit

GERO 299. Special Problems. 1 - 3 Units

Prerequisite(s): Instructor permission.

Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

Independent research, project, or directed reading. Open to students who are capable of independent work. A maximum of 3 units may count toward elective major requirements. Advanced approval of project goal and objectives by program director.

Credit/No Credit