

Gerontology

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Program Information

The Gerontology Education Program was established in 1980 through the cooperative efforts of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences and the Comprehensive Center for Healthy Aging. Since that time, the program has expanded considerably and offers diverse academic opportunities. Students have access to a number of faculty members from multiple disciplines who bring research and academic expertise to the study of aging and the aged.

The Gerontology Education Program offers multidisciplinary academic courses in gerontology leading to a graduate certificate. The study of gerontology at these levels is designed to provide people educated in various disciplines with the background needed to work in programs related to aging and the aged. The main goals are to provide students with a thorough background in existing theory and research in gerontology, and a supplement to their existing backgrounds and professional disciplines. We have designed the program to prepare students for leadership roles in this field of growing importance for both the private and public sectors. Our program's curriculum integrates research, theory, and practice. Its multidisciplinary approach reflects the urban mission of UAB.

The program office is located at the UAB Comprehensive Center for Healthy Aging. This academic program is administered by the Director of the Gerontology Education Program, who also serves as Chair of the Guidance Committee on Graduate and Undergraduate Education in Gerontology. This committee is made up of representatives of academic departments and schools throughout the UAB campus active in the study of aging and the aged. The multidisciplinary gerontology program is offered to all UAB students in good standing with the sponsorship and support of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences, the School of Health Related Professions, and the Comprehensive Center for Healthy Aging.

Student Admissions and Advisement

Although general advisement is handled through UAB student advising and parent departments, student advisement in gerontology is handled formally by the Director of the Gerontology Education Program. The director facilitates student advisement with other members of the Committee on Graduate and Undergraduate Education in Gerontology. A graduate specialty is offered to students who want a special emphasis in gerontology or geriatrics. The major objective of this specialization is to provide a strong academic background for professional careers in academic and aging-related settings. There are two avenues for undertaking the graduate gerontology certificate requirements. Students in good standing in the graduate school can specialize in gerontology through their primary department. Letters of application also are accepted from students who have already completed requirements for an advanced or professional degree.

Students not currently enrolled in a graduate program at UAB may petition the university for non-degree admission status. Once accepted,

the student can undertake a course of study to receive a graduate certificate upon completion of the required sequence of classes.

A careful review of proposed curriculum is recommended before the student enrolls for gerontology study. This will give students an opportunity to receive initial advisement while reviewing available study plans and course schedules.

Requirements

Students must complete at least 15 credit hours of graduate-level work in gerontology or geriatrics, achieving a grade of B or better in each course. The curriculum consists of a required multidisciplinary course offered through the graduate school (GRD 600) or the completion of an aging course from each of the following departments: biology, psychology and sociology, and gerontology electives chosen from a roster of courses approved by the Committee on Graduate and Undergraduate Education in Gerontology, and a required research project or a relevant internship. To ensure a multidisciplinary perspective, courses must represent at least two departments.

Additional Information

For detailed information, contact Dr. Patricia L. Sawyer, Director, UAB Gerontology Education Program, Center for Aging, Room 201-E1, 933 19th Street South, Birmingham, AL 35294-2041.
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Courses

GER 540. Biology of Aging. 3 Hours.

GER 590. Seminar in Sociological Substantive Areas. 1-3 Hour.

GER 593. Educational Gerontology. 3 Hours.

GER 595. Independent Study in Longterm Care. 1-3 Hour.

GER 603. Politics of Aging. 3 Hours.

Analysis of the role of aging in the political process. Focus on political demands made by elderly, role of aging in political decision making, and policy outputs relevant to older population.

GER 610. Health and Economics of Aging. 3 Hours.

Overview of economic aspects of aging focusing on the role of health and health care in the United States. The financing of health care for the aged will be the primary topic of the course. The economic factors influencing formal and informal sources of long term care also will be addressed. A final topic will be the role of health in retirement decisions and pension policies.

GER 611. Managed Care. 3 Hours.

Examination of factors that influence future direction of managed care. Changing relationships among major stakeholders. Broad areas of discussion including marketing dynamics, product characteristics, reimbursement methodologies, contracting issues, management information systems, government initiatives, legal and ethical issues, and future trends. 3.000 Credit Hours.

GER 638. Gerontology and Geriatrics Multidisciplinary Core. 3 Hours.

The curriculum consists of lectures and discussions sessions on the multidisciplinary treatment of health and aging.

GER 643. Long-Term Care Administration. 3 Hours.

Seminar analysis of effect of chronic conditions and aging on delivery of health services, nursing homes and alternatives, mental health facilities and agencies, and rehabilitation facilities and services. Field trips and individual research projects. 3.000 Credit Hours.

GER 655. Minority Aging. 3 Hours.

GER 665. Geriatric Rehabilitation for the Health Profession. 3 Hours.

Rehabilitation of the elderly person from the perspective of age-related changes, the impact of selected functional problems, psychosocial aspects of decreasing function, personal and environmental adaptations, and the continuing autonomy of the individual.

GER 680. Health Promotion for the Aged. 2 Hours.

Problems and public health solutions for older Americans examined. Sub-areas of aging are explored; biological, social, behavioral, and economic aspects of aging.

GER 690. Independent Study in Gerontological Nursing. 1-3 Hour.

GER 691. Seminar in Gerontological Substantive Areas. 1-3 Hour.

Seminar in Gerontological Substantive Areas.

GER 734. International Medical Sociology. 3 Hours.

Cross-cultural, comparative analysis of health and health care delivery systems in both industrialized and developing countries.

GER 738. Gerontology and Geriatrics Multidisciplinary Core. 3 Hours.

Gerontology and geriatrics multidisciplinary core.

GER 755. Race and Ethnic Relations. 3 Hours.

Income inequality, school and residential segregation, intermarriage, and interracial crimes.

GER 759. Social Gerontology. 3 Hours.

Structural and behavioral implications of older adulthood. Relationships of aged to political, economic, educational, medical, religious, and other structures in society.

GER 760. Sociology of Death and Dying. 3 Hours.

Sociological, social psychological and existential perspectives on death and dying; recent trends in definition, distribution, and practices surrounding death and dying.

GER 769. Sociology of the Life Cycle. 3 Hours.

Theories of life; social construction of age categories, aging and family life, work, careers, and aging; men, women, and life cycle.

GER 777. Demography of Health and Aging. 3 Hours.

Focus on demographic processes, such as mortality, morbidity, migration, and fertility; how each influences number and proportion of elderly; how such processes shape age/sex structure; other demographic characteristics of older people.

GER 780. Medical Sociology. 3 Hours.

Theory and research in medical sociology; systematic overview of relevant literature.

GER 781. Sociology of Health. 3 Hours.

Subjective experience of illness; predictions of health behavior; social networks and health.

GER 785. Psychology of Aging. 3 Hours.

Age differences in perception, memory, intelligence, personality, adjustment, and psychopathology.

GER 786. Aging Seminar. 1 Hour.

Contemporary topics in aging, including basic science, clinical, and psycho-social issues.

GER 788. Social Medicine. 3 Hours.

Socioenvironmental factors in etiology of disease; social movements and health policy; medical ethics and broad ethical issues; place of social science in medical care.

GER 789. Social Medicine Seminar. 3 Hours.

GER 790. Independent Study in Gerontological Nursing. 1-3 Hour.

GER 791. Seminar in Gerontological Substantive Areas. 3 Hours.

Seminar in Gerontological Substantive Areas.

GER 796. Research Seminar in Health and Aging. 3 Hours.