



**THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
GERONTOLOGY PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

MAY 2015

Gerontology

Gerontology is a multi-disciplinary program designed to provide students with a background in the liberal arts and a core of general and specialized courses in gerontology. Candidates for the degree receive fundamental knowledge of aging processes, specialized training in a job-related area of gerontological geriatric service and experiential learning. Disciplines participating in the program include sociology, human sciences, social work, physical education and recreation and nursing. The gerontology block is designed to provide the students with three training components.

1. A general core of gerontology courses that incorporates strong rural and minority elements in all course work (15 semester hours).
2. Electives including geriatric casework and counseling; community health services; program administration and management requires eighteen (27) semester hours.
3. Student in-service training at an agency, for which students receive six (6) hours credit.

Objectives

1. To provide a broad-based, multi-disciplinary academic program for students interested in careers in the field of aging.
2. To prepare students for the realities of the job market by providing experiential learning through practicum and the creation of the creation of job forums and career placement counseling.
3. To train persons employed in service-oriented programs for the elderly.
4. To recruit and train students for careers in gerontology, with an emphasis on minority students and those interested in working with the elderly in rural areas.
5. To maintain a link between training and research that focuses on assisting rural and minority elderly.

Requirements

The Bachelor of Arts degree in gerontology requires a minimum of 120 semester hours, including the general education and institutional requirements, gerontology required courses and gerontology electives. The major in gerontology requires 15 hours of core course work. In addition, gerontology majors must complete 27 hours of elective courses and six hours of field internship.

Courses

Required Core Courses (15 hours):

GRON 2300, Introduction to Gerontology: To understand the process of aging and diversity among older people and to learn an empowerment-oriented approach that encourages active participation of elders in dealing with the personal, interpersonal and political aspects of their lives. *Taught face-to-face and online.*

Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course, the student/candidate will be able to discuss and/or implement the following:

1. Conceptualize the life cycle, developmental approach to aging.
2. Express the situational context of aging in the United States.
3. Cite the variables that contribute to successful aging.
4. Evaluate research findings in the field of gerontology.

GRON 3311, Biology and Psychology of Aging: Consideration of physical aspects of aging facilities; analysis of actual models of existing facilities. New trends in insurance, unionization and licensing. Course concludes with summary of community facilities and services available to prevent premature institutionalization. *Taught face-to-face and online.*

Course Objectives: The overall objective of this course is to increase knowledge of management strategies and tools which can be used to better respond to frailty among elderly tenants. It outlines ways of better serving elderly tenants and highlights the

importance of collaboration among housing managers, social service providers, and health care professionals to more effectively and humanely serve the needs of elderly renters including those with special needs.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Identify adequate types of housing for the aged population.
2. Assess the needs of elderly tenants.
3. Develop and design housing units appropriate for elderly population.
4. Identify housing programs for the elderly (section 202, HUD, Section 8).
5. Identify funding resources for maintenance, rehabilitation, and service-support systems.
6. Develop an understanding of housing managers and care managers.
7. Make referrals for information and assistance for elderly.

GRON 3327, Social Policy and Aging: This course is designed to teach about public policies that have the greatest influence on the lives of older persons and those that have been promulgated especially because of concern for older persons. This class will address the evolution of policies as an outgrowth of developments in our society. The processes by which policies are introduced, debated, and established, and the details of specific policies will be discussed in detail. Finally, this class will allow students to understand that the policy process requires an appreciation of its roots in our unique constitutional form of government and the evolution of its history over the years. This course is simply designed to help illustrate to students how it is possible to contribute to bringing their vision of the role of government in our society closer to a reality. *Taught face-to-face and online.*

Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Define policy.
2. Examine how government evolved and illustrate stages and models of the policy process. Identify the Bill of Rights (articles 1-10, 13, 14, & 15th amendments).

3. Discuss the specific policies on behalf of the elderly designed to represent the needs and interests of older people.
4. Analyze some of the major public policies that immediately affect the elderly population; Social Security and other income maintenance programs, health policies (including Medicare and Medicaid), employment and retirement policies, and housing and social services.
5. Identify the major components of the aging network. Incorporate critical thinking with policy, to appropriately interpret information and apply it in the planning and management of ongoing programs for the elderly.

GRON 3345, Death and Dying: This course is designed to assist students in developing competent knowledge, skills and abilities to cope with death and dying. This class is also designed to discuss material from a perspective that assumes social change. While providing a historical view, the text examines recent modern developments and identifies issues related to death, dying, and grief that our society will be grappling with in the future. Most importantly this course is designed to address the students won emotional reactions to the subject matter.

Taught face-to-face and online.

Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding and acceptance of death as an imminent reality.
2. Demonstrate an understanding and acceptance of death as an abstraction.
3. Identify death as a family event as it occurs within the context of relationships and deep and attachments..
4. Define death, and dying.
5. Identify Kubler-Ross stages of acceptance of death.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of cultural attitudes and beliefs about death starting at childhood and continuing throughout adulthood.
7. Understand the various theoretical concepts appropriate for analyzing and/or assessing various problems encountered by death.
8. Define and explain various aspects of body changes among the aged.

9. Understand the dying trajectory, and demonstrate an understanding of dying with dignity.
10. Write a will, an obituary, and physically construct a tombstone!

GRON 3351, Health Care of the Older Adult: This course deals with the anatomy, physiology and pathophysiology of the human body. We will consider the human structure, how it works, why it may not work, abnormalities and diseases. That old adage, "a picture is worth a thousand words" is certainly applicable to this course. *Taught face-to-face and online.*

Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Understand the aging process in conjunction with health related issues.
2. Have knowledge of the Demographics of Aging
3. Understand normal changes that occur with aging adults
4. Identify chronic and acute Illnesses within the older population
5. Identify preventive measures to increase chances of successful aging.
6. Dispel myths among the aging population

Gerontology Electives (27 hours):

GRON 2310, Case Management and Assessment: The focus of this course is on case management and assessment of the elderly in community-based long-term care. More specifically, this course will focus on case management designed to maintain frail elderly in their own homes rather than on case management designed for post-acute situations (discharge planning). The perspective on assessment will be similarly focused. Although hospital-based (inpatient) clinical assessment and institutional (nursing home) assessment will be addressed, this course will not overly focus on these methods. *Taught face-to-face and online.*

Course Objectives: The overall objective of this course is to examine the concepts of case management and assessment among the aging population. Both topics are especially salient today as the older population is expected to surpass 70 million persons by 2030. Providing services designed to allow this burgeoning population to remain in their homes

is critical for individuals, families, communities, and society.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- 1) Define case management and assessment.
- 2) Understand the role of case manager.
- 3) Develop a descriptive profile of local agencies.
- 4) Identify important factors that influence the quality and quantity of service provision.
5. Develop care plans.
6. Understand the salience of assessment.
7. Understand the methodology of comprehensive assessment.
8. Describe the dimensions of assessment.
9. Connect assessment with case management.

GRON 3309 Housing for the Aged: Consideration of physical aspects of aging facilities; analysis of actual models of existing facilities. New trends in insurance, unionization and licensing. Course concludes with summary of community facilities and services available to prevent premature institutionalization. *Taught face-to-face.*

Course Objectives: The overall objective of this course is to increase knowledge of management strategies and tools which can be used to better respond to frailty among elderly tenants. It outlines ways of better serving elderly tenants and highlights the importance of collaboration among housing managers, social service providers, and health care professionals to more effectively and humanely serve the needs of elderly renters including those with special needs.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Identify adequate types of housing for the aged population.
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4. Identify housing programs for the elderly (section 202, HUD, Section 8).

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6. Develop an understanding of housing managers and care managers.
7. Make referrals for information and assistance for elderly.

GRON 3347, Work, Leisure, and Retirement: An introduction to the sociological aspects and meaning of work, leisure, and retirement in American society. Examines such issues as how we select work, how our life revolves around work, the evaluation or the meaning of work, the use and misuse of leisure time, and the meaning and consequences of retirement. *Taught face-to-face and online.*

Course Objectives: The overall objective of this course is to examine the concepts of work, leisure, and retirement among the aging population, including a historical and a gendered perspective. All three topics are especially salient today as the oldest members of the baby boom generation became eligible for early retirement in 2008, and approximately 10,000 boomers retire each day in the United States.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Define work, leisure, and retirement.
2. Define the baby boom generation and its importance.
3. Develop a descriptive profile of the older workforce.
4. Identify important factors that influence the quality and quantity of labor.
5. Analyze the historical trends in labor force participation.
6. Differentiate the trends of determinants between men and women in the labor force.
7. Identify the overriding motivation for Social Security and other pensions.

GRON 3393, Aging and Rural Life: Analysis of the sociological and psychological factors in the work, health, recreation and retirement of the elderly living within rural areas of the United States. Concentrates on the rural aged of Arkansas. *Taught face-to-face and online.*

Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course students should be able to:

1. Define rural aging.
2. Present research based on information on rural elderly community service provision that is useful to and usable by practitioners, planners, and policy makers.
3. Identify both practice and policy gaps and barriers in rural areas.
4. Identify applied research needs and policy issues in rural gerontology.
5. Identify program ideas and observations that can assist rural service practitioners.
6. Understand how a range of community-based services can best be provided to the rural elderly.
7. Identify rural elders' unique physical and mental health needs.

GRON 4322, Seminar: The purpose of this seminar is to provide a means through which the student can effectively reflect integration of academic content with performance in an agency setting. The knowledge, skills, and values developed in the classroom should be professionally demonstrated in actual practice. Beyond this demonstration, the student should have a conscious awareness of how these are being reflected in his/her own performance. *Taught face-to-face.*

Course Objectives: The student will be able to:

1. Apply theories and other material learned in class to the field experience.
2. Discuss the purpose of the placement agency as well as its mission statement.
3. List the organizational structure of the placement agency.
4. List the functions of the supervisor in the placement agency and describe how he/she performs those functions. Through this, the student should gain a perspective on the structure and functioning of various community services and the roles assumed by agency personnel.
5. Describe how the agency addresses the psychosocial needs of the older population they serve.
6. Critically examine gaps in service, dysfunctional agency procedures, and value conflicts which may affect both gerontological practitioners and clients.

7. Show awareness of personal strengths and demonstrate how these are used effectively in gerontological practice.
8. Show awareness of his/her practice areas needing work and develop a strategy for how these are to be strengthened.
9. Demonstrate knowledge of what the term professionalism means both generally and personally, and knowledge of how the agency placement aided or hindered the development of the professional self.
10. Identify and discuss ethical questions/issues the agency must address while serving the aging population.

GRON 4344, Gerontology Community Services: Explains the case management techniques used in state/federal aging programs and in congregate housing facilities for the elderly. Specifically, this course will provide a thorough updated consensus of targeted aging populations dealing with important components of multiple programs. These programs include income maintenance, transportation, nutrition, housing, in-home services, adult daycare, and long-term care institutions. Emphasis will be placed on the relationship between federal legislation and program funding at the state and local levels. *Taught face-to-face and online.*

Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Focus on the present status of older Americans and the general thrust of programs and services in aging.
2. Identify the federal legislation authorizing programs and services for the aged.
3. Examine the major emphasis on the provisions of the Older Americans Act.
4. Distinguish between the private pension programs and the major public programs such as Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, Medicare, and Medicaid.
5. Identify major programs in aging, ranging from information and referral efforts to crime prevention programs throughout the United States.

6. Develop an understanding of the service delivery systems for the elderly, including senior centers, the growing in-home services, and adult daycare centers and nursing homes.

GRON 4355, Business of Gerontology: The focus of this course is on the business aspects in the field of gerontology. Specifically, this course focuses on general administration in long-term care facilities, including general administration procedures, standards of environmental health and safety, local health and safety, and departmental organization and management. *Taught online.*

Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Describe the philosophy, organization, relationship, and system in long-term care facilities such as nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and so forth.
2. Identify the roles and functions of the administrator: personnel management, planning, organizing, directing, and controlling.
3. Acquire functional knowledge of business and management.
4. Analyze the federal, state and local laws and regulations governing adult care facilities.
5. Identify the standards affecting the environmental health of the facility.
6. Identify the importance of the physical aspects of the facility.
7. Analyze elements of safety within the facility.
8. Review the local safety regulations and disaster planning.
9. Understand the roles and functions of each department.

GRON 4660, Field Internship: An internship is a professionally-oriented experience in your field. Internships are for approved jobs and must be arranged through the Field Internship Coordinator. Internships provide “a once in a lifetime” opportunity for students to experience the working world while receiving guidance, feedback, and prodding from their academic advocates. Very often an internship experience is the differentiating factor in a student’s favor when applying for jobs upon graduation. *Taught face-to-face only.*

Course Objectives:

1. Work with the Field Supervisor to plan activities in a selected setting to explore professional goals in Gerontology.
2. Practice selected professional roles in gerontological settings
3. Explore perceptions of aging and society in the context of the placement.
4. Develop an awareness of the linkages among social, educational, and health care institutions in relation to aging and intergenerational relationships and policies.
5. Examine the application of theory to practice in selected settings.
6. Take a leadership role in coordination of activities; implementation of a research or evaluation project; or administration of programs related to Gerontology (Examples: grant proposal writing, case management, patient navigation),
7. Submit a final report on the internship experience during the last week of classes.

Gerontology Faculty**Full-time Faculty Members****LaKisha M. Johnson, ABD, Instructor*****Contact Information:*****Email: johnsonlm@uapb.edu**

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Education:

ABD in Applied Gerontology: University of North Texas, Denton, TX

M. A. in Gerontology (2005): University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Little Rock, AR

B. A. in Sociology (2002): University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Little Rock, AR

Courses Taught: Health Care and the Older Adult, Gerontology Community Services, Minority Aging, Intro to Gerontology, Death and Dying, Introduction to Social Science, Biology and Psychology of Aging, Case Management and Assessment, The Business of Gerontology, Introduction of Gerontology, Social Policy and Aging, Intro to Sociology, Sex Roles and Field Internship.

Research Interests: Ms. Johnson's research interests are spirituality and health care compliance, Alzheimer disease in minority populations, cultural competency and health care. She is also interested in the correlation to community programs and sustainable living within an older population.