

# AGHEXCHANGE

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February/March 2022: Volume 45, Issue #2

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## Greetings from the *AGHExchange* Editor



I hope your semesters are moving along comfortably and that you are all looking forward to a healthy spring break (during which you are able to take an actual break!). In this edition of the *AGHExchange*, we offer some important reminders and new announcements. Be sure to consider supporting a colleague or student for one of our AGHE spring awards and think about any new children's books you've encountered that you might want to nominate for the biennial Children's Literature on Aging book award. All of these award nominations are due by March 31. Also, remember to check out the terrific collection of resources on the GSA Website for Careers in Aging Week, taking place from April 17-23 this year. Also in this issue are announcements about the newly-updated AGHE Standards and Guidelines, a brand new website covering movies about aging, as well as two books about assisted living administration. Finally, we wrap up with two wonderful pieces – one about teaching research methods from a gerontological perspective as well as a student profile of Brianna Morgan from the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing.

Please keep in mind that, if you have an article about gerontology education, an announcement, or other related research or program news you would like to share with your AGHE colleagues

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via this newsletter, please reach out to me ([borrerol@uindy.edu](mailto:borrerol@uindy.edu)) and/or Aaron Guest ([Aaron.Guest@asu.edu](mailto:Aaron.Guest@asu.edu)) with your ideas and any questions you may have.

Warmly,  
Lisa

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## Set Your Sights on *Careers in Aging Week*



Careers in Aging Week is just around the corner! Held this year from April 17-23, this special week is designed to raise awareness about the diverse careers available in the field of aging.

Have you planned to host activities for your campus during the week or thought about relevant resources to share with your students and faculty? Remember that GSA can help! The [Careers in Aging web page](#) is full of excellent resources to help you plan for this week on your campus, regardless of how robust your offerings. Visit the page for tip sheets about such topics as teaching, mentoring, and writing a CV. Explore video vignettes as well as various online resources, including information about the GSA Emerging Scholar and Professional Organization (ESPO), work resources from APA and AHCA/NCAL, and the [brand new AGHE Bibliography Brief](#) offering resources for gerontology and geriatrics educators. The site is sure to have just what you need to get started!

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## Nominate a Colleague or Student for an AGHE Award!

The nomination period for AGHE's spring awards closes on **March 31**. Don't miss this opportunity to recognize one of your dedicated colleagues or students! We hope you will take a look at [all of the wonderful opportunities](#) to honor your colleagues and students and get those nominations in



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for consideration! The awards for this season include the Clark Tibbitts, Hiram J. Friedsam Mentorship, Distinguished Faculty, Rising Star, and Student Leadership awards.

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## Time for AGHE's Biennial Book Award for Best Children's Literature on Aging

Every two years, AGHE appoints a panel to review recent children's literature to honor those titles that best address concepts surrounding aging. Have you read any books to a child recently that you believed represented aging or older adults particularly well? If so, consider nominating one of them for this award. Books nominated must have been published within the last two years and address aging concepts in a meaningful way. Two awards will be presented – one for primary readers (PreK – 2) and one for elementary readers (3 – 5 grade). Nominations are due by March 31. Please see [the book award web page](#) for more information and a link to nominate.

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## Updated AGHE Standards and Guidelines Now Available!

The 7th edition of the AGHE *Gerontology and Geriatrics Curricular Standards and Guidelines in Higher Education* is [now available for purchase](#). All chapters in this edition have been comprehensively rewritten to include the standards and guidelines for competency-based education (CBE). This publication offers tools to identify and implement CBE in programs and to develop students' skills and abilities needed in our workforce. The curricular standards and guidelines also serve to guide existing programs through academic or institutional reviews for Program of Merit (POM), providing matrices for mapping health professions and gerontology competency-based education and documentation. Ultimately, this document provides an integral resource for colleges and universities implementing and revising programs in liberal arts, the sciences, and health professions education. Purchase your copy today at the member price!



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## Two Books Released on Assisted Living Administration

Two books were recently released by AGHE colleagues, centering on effective practices in assisted living administration. Please see below for details.

Yee-Melichar, D., Flores, C. and Boyle, A.R. (December 2021). [Assisted Living Administration and Management Review: Practice Questions for RC/AL Administrator Certification/Licensure](#). Springer Publishing Company.

*Description:* Assisted Living Administration and Management Review is the first practical question-based study guide for anyone preparing for certification or licensure exams in residential care and assisted living (RC/AL) administration. Organized according to the original five domains of practice established by the National Association of Long-Term Care Administrator Boards (NAB) and used in Assisted Living Administration and Management: Effective Practices and Model Programs in Elder Care, Second Edition, the book reflects the type of questions seen on the state and national exams. Answers and brief rationales have been provided in a final chapter organized according to the five domains of practice or knowledge areas of responsibility - Organizational Management, Human Resources Management, Business and Financial Management, Environmental Management, and Resident Care Management.

Yee-Melichar, D., Flores, C. and Renwanz-Boyle, A. (November 2020). [Assisted Living Administration and Management: Effective Practices and Model Programs in Elder Care \(2<sup>nd</sup> ed.\)](#). Springer Publishing Company.

*Description:* Assisted Living Administration and Management: Effective Practices and Model Programs in Elder Care 2nd Edition provides students and healthcare professionals with the most up to date and essential knowledge on assisted living and residential care. This comprehensive text empowers current and future assisted living administrators to employ effective practices, understand model programs, and learn the necessary tools and tips to maximize the overall health, safety, and comfort of residents in their care. Organized by domains of practice, it also covers content information required to prepare for state-based Residential Care and Assisted Living (RC/AL) administrator certification or licensure exams.

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## New Website for Discussions and Reviews of Movies on Aging

Terra Nova Films is now offering an educational resource on aging and elderhood. Through reviews and discussions of films on aging, Terra Nova's [new film review website](#), Movies About Aging and Elderhood, will empower viewers and readers to see aging as a natural continuum of life with new realms of possibility and growth. You will find an abundance of thought-provoking film reviews to introduce and explore aging and elderhood issues from various angles with various audiences. Liven up a class session to engage students, spark conversation at community or library events, launch a watch party, or just kick back for movie night with a collection of free films. For more information, subscribe to the site to receive a brief e-mail update when new reviews and films are added.

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## Connecting Research Concepts with Clinical Experiences: Teaching Research Methods to Nursing Students from a Gerontologist's Perspective

*Sarah D. Holmes, PhD, MSW; University of Maryland School of Nursing;*  
[sarahholmes@umaryland.edu](mailto:sarahholmes@umaryland.edu)

As a social gerontology researcher and educator within a School of Nursing, I have a unique opportunity to integrate gerontological content and customize learning around real-world clinical problems that are relevant to nurse scientists. I am an Assistant Professor in the Department of Organizational Systems and Adult Health at the University of Maryland School of Nursing (UMSON). I have received my Ph.D. in gerontology from the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) and a master's degree in social work from the Ohio State University (OSU). My role as a teacher and mentor with nursing students involves challenging them to think critically about their clinical experiences which are often used to fuel their research agendas as emerging nurse scientists, particularly as it relates to issues relevant to aging and older adults.



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In the PhD program in nursing at UMSON, I teach a non-experimental research methods and analysis course (NURS 814). This course emphasizes learning and applying research methodologies and analytic skills that will prepare doctoral students to undertake their own dissertation research. Students take this course in their first or second year of the program, as it provides a core foundation for advanced methodological and analytic courses. Many are non-traditional students who are simultaneously working full- or part-time in various clinical settings. They arrive to each class with real-world examples of clinical scenarios observed in their nursing practice that drive their passion for research and pursuit toward a PhD in nursing. Many of these practice-based issues involve the clinical care of older adults. For example, students have shared stories about being challenged by the complex health care needs for their older patients, encountering ageist practices in their clinical settings, as well as having a dearth of standardized geriatric screening measures for at-risk populations. As students bring such examples to the classroom, we are able to connect them to methodological concepts learned in the course and explore together how they might be addressed from a researcher's perspective. Their clinical experiences provide a springboard for inspiration during class discussions and offers a creative gateway into exploring various research methodologies.

Throughout the semester, we cover the full range of steps in the research process and apply research design concepts through the critique of non-experimental research studies. Additionally, students are tasked with translating a clinical problem into a fully developed research proposal. The research proposal is drafted in sections and revised through a peer review process wherein students critique and provide feedback on each other's work. In this way, students learn collaboratively how to refine and reformulate their ideas into workable research plans. Some of the students' research proposal topics have a focus on aging and/or older adults which are developed based on their clinical practice work. Examples have included topics such as multimorbidity among older adults with HIV, social isolation and loneliness in low-income minority older adults, and consequences of polypharmacy among persons with dementia. The research proposals provide an opportunity for students to connect real-world problems observed in their clinical practice and apply them in understanding the research process. What starts out as a preliminary research question based on curious observations or

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noted gaps in knowledge, evolves over time to include more sophisticated components such as specific aims and hypotheses, detailed study procedures, and analytic plans. We also talk through potential challenges and considerations for conducting research with older adults, such as tackling recruitment barriers and assessing decision-making capacity for informed consent among persons with cognitive impairment.

The mastery of research methods is critical for preparing students to undertake independent research as emerging scholars and to enable them to become critical consumers of research. As gerontology is an applied interdisciplinary enterprise, my perspective on teaching research methods for nursing students involves embracing their practice-based knowledge and meaningfully engaging them in the course material. The integration of students' real-world nursing practice and linking these experiences to methodological concepts in the course has been one strategy for making the learning process more accessible for students.

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*Student Spotlight:* Brianna Morgan, MSN, CRNP, ACHPN®



*Program/University:* PhD in Nursing Science, University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing

*What interests you about the field of aging?*

I have had the privilege of observing my grandparents live independently, continue to engage in work and philanthropy, navigate their communities by car and bicycle, and live overall very

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happy and healthy lives into their late 90s and early 100s. This personal proximity to aging well initially inspired me to focus on gerontological nursing. Then, as a critical care nurse, I encountered a divergent picture of aging where most people faced debilitating illness and death. It was in this time that I learned and embraced the principles of palliative nursing that focus on alleviating suffering and maximizing quality of life based on a person's goals and values. As a Palliative & Gerontologic Nurse Practitioner, I was able to combine these philosophies to support people who held living and dying in a balance. Now, as a doctoral student, I continue to be influenced by the intersection of gerontology and palliative care and aim to explore the strengths that people bring to living with serious terminal illnesses.

*What brought you to your program?*

Healthcare systems are incredibly adept at identifying problems – we have problem lists, problem visits – even billing focuses on what problems are addressed. However, the people sitting in front of me for a so-called “Problem Visit” demonstrated enumerable strengths that were not explicitly captured or leveraged. Yet, those strengths were essential in helping them navigate their illness. The research literature mirrored this pattern of over-emphasizing deficits and eschewing strengths. Once I identified this gap in the research literature and passion for addressing it, I knew it was the right time to go back for a PhD. Penn was the perfect fit for me with incredible resources across diverse departments, world-renowned leaders in gerontological nursing, and a talented group of peers who continue to challenge me.

*What would you like to do after graduation?*

After graduation I hope to continue developing my program of research and building evidence for strengths-based assessment and intervention for persons living with serious, life limiting illnesses, specifically Alzheimer's and related dementias. I feel very lucky that the field of aging offers so many opportunities to do this type of work. I will consider both post-doctoral fellowships that advance my training and tenure track faculty positions in departments that focus on health and aging.



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*What has been your most impactful learning experience?*

Initially, I considered the formal learning structures (i.e., curriculum, formal mentors, course work) to be the most important part of my PhD program. While those are incredibly valuable, I realized that there are numerous opportunities for learning beyond those bounds. Critical engagement with my peers within my institution and beyond has allowed me to be vulnerable with my research ideas and grow in surprising new directions. Beyond the research community, people living with illness and their care partners have shown me what's important to them and guided me in how to make my work more impactful and meaningful. Finally, becoming a first-time parent during the pandemic challenged me in ways I never anticipated. Most importantly, I learned to set boundaries, prioritize the things that are important, and let go of things that aren't.