

2024: The Year for Gerontology

The start of a new year provides the perfect moment to pause and reflect on where we've been and are headed.

I've found that taking time for thoughtful planning allows me to tweak my game plan, learn from the past, and set the stage for a successful and fulfilling year ahead. One of the things that I have noticed this year, as I have my first meetings and exchanges with people, is the common refrain that this is the year for gerontology education. I am unsure what has brought about this collective awakening for gerontology – but I am thrilled to see it!

And, as this issue shows, there is much to be excited about in 2024!

We have several calls for special issues related to advancing the pedagogy of gerontological education, as well as several new resources and tools to help promote gerontology as a field. The [GSA Annual Scientific Meeting](#) is now accepting abstracts for what promises to be an exciting meeting in Seattle. Even our partner organizations are seeing exciting increases in activity. [The Age-Friendly University Global Network](#) has welcomed 17 new institutions since our last newsletter. The [Accreditation for Gerontology Education Council](#) recently completed its first re-accreditation visit and accredited a new program – gerontology accreditation is alive and well!

In [AGHE](#), the workgroups have developed an exciting work plan for 2024. Careers in Aging Week has been extended to [Careers in Aging Month](#) – providing additional time to spotlight the contributions of gerontologists. On a personal note, I am thrilled to welcome Dr. Britteny Howard as Associate Editor of the *AGHEXchange*. We have known and worked together for several years (a recent piece is available [here](#)), so I was thrilled she accepted this new role.

You can learn all about these developments – and more – in the issue below.

In closing, I encourage you all to think about how you will make 2024 the year of gerontology – and share them on [Connect!](#)

In health –

Aaron Guest
Editor, *AGHEXchange*
AGHE Communications Workgroup Chair

The Chair's Corner

Thoughts from the Incoming AGHE Chair: A Look Back at 2023 and Forward to 2024

As the incoming chair of GSA's [Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education](#) (AGHE), I'm thrilled to continue the fantastic work of my predecessors – most recently Joann Montepare, Dana Burr Bradley, and Judy Howe. AGHE has changed significantly over the past several years, yet we continue offering leading-edge resources for gerontology and geriatrics education. In 2023, restructuring of the former Academic Program Development Workgroup into two new workgroups (the Program Resources Development Workgroup, PRDW, chaired by [Mary Ann Erickson](#), and the Educational Resources Development Workgroup, ERDW, chaired by [Lisa Borrero](#)) has helped to streamline AGHE's efforts and create opportunities for additional volunteer involvement. The Communications workgroup has revised how the [AGHExchange](#) (edited by [Aaron Guest](#)) is delivered, providing just the right amount of information at the right time. Adding [Britteny Howell](#) as associate editor will ensure the continuity of delivery of this amazing educational resource over time. The Advancement Workgroup, chaired by [Kara Dassel](#), has worked hard to create and expand opportunities to highlight Careers in Aging, which we will celebrate in March 2024, [Careers in Aging Month](#). Thanks to everyone who contributed to AGHE's [Tree of Knowledge](#) campaign, as those funds are used to support small grants for Careers in Aging Month activities. We welcome your [continued support!](#)

I look forward to seeing what these amazing groups will continue to do in the coming year!

As AGHE chair, I am excited to work to build bridges to [other sections](#) of the Society. An initial effort was the AGHE Presidential Symposium at the Annual Scientific Meeting in Tampa in November 2023. Titled *Educational Needs and Strategies Across GSA: Building Bridges Within the Society*, the symposium included representatives from Social Research, Policy and Practice (SRPP); Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSS); Health Sciences (HS); and Biological Sciences (BioSci), who shared about great projects underway in each section. Discussant Joann Montepare suggested that AGHE invite representatives from each section to liaise with the AGHE leadership team. Such connection will help ensure the entire Society is aware of the resources available through AGHE, foster opportunities to collaborate on educational initiatives, and reduce redundancy in education-related efforts.

I look forward to piloting a liaison program in 2024 and to strengthening AGHE's connections to other sections within GSA. I hope you all will contribute to and take advantage of AGHE's efforts and resources as educators, whether we teach in a traditional or online classroom setting, train/mentor students or new colleagues, or engage in advocacy efforts to promote an age-inclusive society. AGHE has lots to offer to everyone and the field!

Tina M. K. Newsham, Chair, Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education

Professor of Gerontology, School of Health and Applied Sciences at University of North Carolina Wilmington

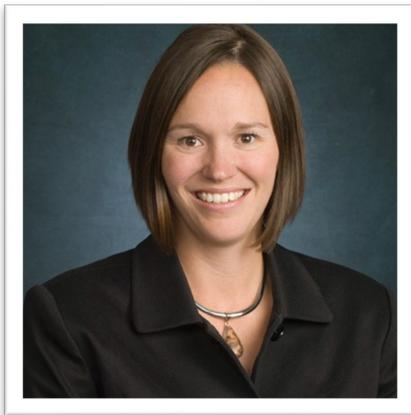


Embracing the Fortitude Factor: Submit your abstract to present at the 2024 Annual Scientific Meeting

Have you had the courage to stand up for something you believed in, especially when others tried to minimize your idea? Do you feel like you embody grit as you guest lecture at yet another class so that you can (maybe) attract one more student to your program? Do you have the stamina to continue advocating for your gerontology or geriatrics program, especially when others see it as a cost to your unit? If you answered 'yes' to any of these questions, you have what it takes to submit an abstract and present your work at the [2024 Annual Scientific Meeting \(ASM\) of the Gerontological Society of America](#) (Seattle, WA; November 13-16, 2024). This year's theme, The Fortitude Factor, set by [GSA's President Dr. Judy Howe](#) embodies the great work you are doing at your institution to educate the next generation of gerontology and geriatric practitioners and scholars.

Fortitude is the act of perseverance or strength in the face of adversity or difficulty. As AGHE members, we embody the 'Fortitude Factor' as it takes stamina to keep our programs running on shoestring budgets and lower enrollments. It takes courage to stand up to colleagues when they threaten to close our programs or do not understand why we 'need' to teach about aging issues. And it takes grit to keep trying new tactics to attract students to our programs and research labs. As a result, I know you have experienced fortitude, and I ask that you share what you learned during these situations at the 2024 ASM.

As chair-elect of AGHE, this year, it is my welcomed responsibility to chair the AGHE Presidential Symposium. My goal is to uplift the ASM theme and frame our work within engaged teaching. For example, many of you encourage students to engage with older adults and community partners through service-learning activities and practicum/internships. Some of you may work closely with undergraduate and graduate students in your research labs and conduct engaged scholarship, whereby students participate in collecting data or conducting program evaluations. Finally, some of you may bring older adults into your classroom for engaged learning activities. Whatever you do to support gerontology and geriatrics programs, your students, and your engaged research, we want to learn from you! Please join me and our AGHE colleagues for a great 2024 ASM and submit your work for presentation at GSA. Abstracts for the ASM are due March 14, 2024. In the meantime, keep embracing The Fortitude Factor, and I look forward to seeing all of you at the 2024 ASM in Seattle, WA.



***Christine A. Fruhauf, PhD., FGSA, FAGHE , Chair Elect,
Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education***

Professor, Department of Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS), Colorado State University
Director, HDFS Engagement and Extension Programs and Initiatives
Healthy Aging Division Director, Prevention Research Center
Coordinator, Gerontology Interdisciplinary Minor

Announcements and Celebrations

GSA 2024 Annual Scientific Meeting Seattle, WA; November 13 -16, 2024

Join us for the premier annual scientific meeting for cutting-edge scholarship, research, and networking relating to the fields of aging and gerontology. This year's theme is "The Fortitude Factor."

Abstract submission is now open, until March 14, 2024.

The call for reviewers is open until Feb 29, 2024.

Congratulations to the following Age-Friendly Universities who received the designation since September 2023

Concordia University Chicago
Georgia State University
ISEG
Kwantlen Polytechnic University
Mississippi State University
Shepherd University
Southern Oregon University
University of Arizona
University of California Los Angeles
University of Central Oklahoma
University of Colorado Colorado Springs
University of Haifa
University of Minnesota Duluth
University of North Carolina Wilmington
University of South Florida
University of the Sunshine Coast
University of Utah

To learn more about the **Age-Friendly University Global Network** visit **[AFUGN.org](https://www.afugn.org)**.

AgeWork: The GSA Career Center exists to Connect talent with opportunity. If you are looking for a new position or hiring one, post with AgeWork. Accessible **[here](#)**.

Congratulations to the [University of Southern California](#) for the re-accreditation of their Master of Arts in Gerontology and Master of Science in Gerontology.

Congratulations to the [Northwood Technical College](#) for the accreditation of their Gerontology-Aging Services Professional Associate of Applied Science.

To learn more about gerontology accreditation visit the **Accreditation for Gerontology Education Council** website: **[GeroAccred.org](https://www.geroaccred.org)**

Welcome to the New AGHExchange Associate Editor!

This month, we are thrilled to welcome the new Associate Editor for the *AGHExchange* - Dr. Britteny Howell! In this role, Dr. Howell will assist in the identification of material, work to develop and identify new authors and topical interests, and advance the AGHExchange through long-term planning. Welcome, Dr. Howell! Read on to learn more about Dr. Howell.



Name: Britteny Howell

Position: Associate Professor in the Division of Population Health Sciences, Coordinator for the Occupational Endorsement Certificate in Gerontology, Director of the Healthy Aging Research Laboratory, and Co-Director of the National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders

Affiliation: University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA)

Dr. Howell is a gerontologist and anthropologist by training. She received her Bachelor of Science from Central Michigan University, Master of Arts from the University of Cincinnati, and PhD from the University of Kentucky. She has been teaching at UAA for 6 years and before that, she was a research analyst and adjunct instructor for 13 years.

Welcome! We are thrilled to have you join us as the Associate Editor of the AGHExchange. Tell us a little about yourself and how you became involved in AGHE.

Tina Kruger Newsham encouraged me to get involved in AGHE back in graduate school. She has been a consistent supporter and mentor to me over the years. So, when Joann and Aaron asked me to consider the role, I jumped at the opportunity!

Now, your disciplinary background is not in Aging, per se. How did you find yourself working in the field of aging?

Nancy Schoenberg was kind enough to take me into her research lab when I was in graduate school in Kentucky, and I may not have ever ended up in the field of aging if it wasn't for her guidance!

How do you think this perspective affects how you approach your teaching?

I regularly include this information in my teaching! I wish I'd had access to gerontology classes at an earlier stage in my education so that I (might) feel less like an imposter today 😊

Do you have a favorite classroom assignment?

My classes on aging are designated as community-engaged or service-learning, meaning that I love getting students out of the classroom and into the community, where they get to engage with older adults.

Turning back to the AGHExchange, what excites you about being involved? What kind of content most interests you?

I am excited to be more involved in AGHE, and working on the newsletter with the Communications Team sounds like a great place to land! I am most interested in content about Interprofessional Education (IPE) and ways to create collaborative educational experiences across the university.

Call for Papers: Gerontology & Geriatrics Education

Gerontology scholars: We invite you to submit your work to [*Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*](#), the official journal of the [*Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education*](#) (a section of the [*Gerontological Society of America*](#)).

G&GE is a peer-reviewed journal publishing high quality research on curriculum development, program evaluation, classroom innovation and more, with educational implications for gerontology and geriatrics. For your convenience, attached is an updated “Instructions to Authors” and G&GE’s calls for papers for our upcoming special issues/sections:

- [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Gerontology & Geriatrics Education](#) (*Manuscripts due June 1*)
- [Technology and Artificial Intelligence in Gerontological Education](#) (*Manuscripts due July 1*)
- [Education’s Role in Gerontology & Geriatrics Workforce Development](#) (*Rolling submissions; no deadline*)
- [Gerontology & Geriatrics Classroom Best Practices](#) (*Rolling submissions; no deadline*)

New Tools and Resources



Public Health and Dementia Caregiving: A New Public Health Curriculum Module for Students and Professionals

The Alzheimer’s Association’s Healthy Brain Initiative is proud to launch the new, free, interactive public health curriculum on public health and dementia caregiving created in partnership with CDC, the University of Minnesota’s BOLD Public Health Center of Excellence on Dementia Caregiving, and Emory University. Designed for the current and future public health workforce, the new module, *Public Health and Dementia Caregiving*, can be accessed at alz.org/publichealthcurriculum. The module is accompanied by a one-page flier, a step-by-step guide on accessing the module, and an instructor guide to supplement the individual learning format of the module with classroom-based activities. The webinar recording launching the new curriculum module is also available and offers insights from educators and public health professionals on how they plan to integrate this module into their course curriculum and diverse work environments. If you are looking for resources to increase public health knowledge of dementia caregiving, this module is for you. Please contact publichealth@alz.org with any questions.

The Age-Friendly Care and Education Collection contains free educational and clinical resources for educators, health professionals, learners, caregivers, and others interested in improving care for older adults.

We encourage you to submit your geriatrics-related content to the Age-Friendly Care and Education Collection. This fully searchable collection includes full citations and links to high-quality resources by experts in aging care, education, and research. Please look at the collection to see if your favorite geriatric resources are in there and contribute more to this online library. z.umn.edu/AgeFriendlyCollection

Call for Submissions

AGHExchange, Volume 47, Issue 2

Deadline: May 30, 2024

The AGHExchange welcomes submissions of program updates, educational resources, individual or co-authored essays, and announcements.

We particularly welcome pieces that advance the state of gerontological and geriatrics education and highlight age-related programming on campus.

Submit updates, pieces, updates, and ideas

Aaron Guest at Aaron.Guest@ASU.EDU and **Brittney Howell** at bmhowell2@alaska.edu.



Support the Future of AGHE
Donate to the Tree of Knowledge Campaign Today

[Donate Here](#)

Congratulations to the Careers in Aging Month Award Winners

The following universities were selected through a competitive process to receive support in hosting Careers in Aging Month Events.

Christine Fruhauf, **Colorado State University**

Bezawit Eschete, **Marymount University**

Angie Perone, **University of California, Berkely**

Judith Scott, **University of Colorado, Colorado Springs**

Tina Newsham, **University of North Carolina, Wilmington**

Gail Towsley, **University of Utah**

Audrey B. Winograd, **University of Vermont**

Brian Carpenter, **Washington University, St. Louis**

Melissa Cannon, **Western Oregon University**



Businesses, clinics, universities, and organizations worldwide unite to showcase the incredible career possibilities in aging. GSA highlights this rising need during Careers in Aging Month (CIAM) each March.

Learn More: [Careers in Aging Month](#)
& [Make Plans to Celebrate Careers In Aging Month in March 2024](#)

Gerontology & Geriatrics Education

Announcements

Gerontology & Geriatrics Education (G&GE), the official AGHE peer-reviewed journal, encourages submissions which highlight "the exchange of information related to research, curriculum development, program evaluation, classroom and practice innovation, and other topics with educational implications for gerontology and geriatrics."



Most Recent Issue: [Gerontology & Geriatrics Education, Volume 45, Issue 1 \(2024\)](#)

Call For Reviewers: We are currently accepting submissions for new reviewers to enhance our existing pipeline of experts. Consider becoming a reviewer today! You can learn more [here](#).

From the Vault: Barbara Waxman (2005). Teaching Cross-Cultural Aging: Using Literary Portrayals of Elders from Chile and the United States. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 26:1, 77-95, [DOI: 10.1300/J021v26n01_06](#)

Literary texts are cultural artifacts revealing a society's values and attitudes; reading literature about elders and old age can change readers' ageist attitudes. Beginning with these assumptions, I discuss ways of teaching cross-cultural aging in undergraduate literature courses, using Chilean texts paired with American texts. Students learn how old age is socially constructed and how writers can either reinforce or challenge negative societal stereotypes of elders. Chilean texts reveal Chileans' respect and affection by associating elders with nature and ascribing to them otherworldly wisdom. American texts respectfully depict elders connected to nature, but not as transcending the earthly.

Fresh Off the Press: Colette V. Browne, Shelley Muneoka, Lana Sue Ka'opua, Yan Yan Wu, Rachel L. Burrage, Yeonjung Lee, Noreen K. Mokuau, & Kathryn L. Braun (2023). Developing a culturally responsive dementia storybook with Native Hawaiian youth. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 43:3, 315-327, [DOI: 10.1080/02701960.2021.1885398](#)

Similar to the nation's majority and racial/ethnic minority populations, Native Hawaiian families provide the bulk of care to loved ones with dementia. Limited research has focused on youth caregivers, who are largely invisible to the eldercare service system. This knowledge gap is especially critical for Native Hawaiians who place a high value on eldercare, often provided in multigenerational homes. To address this gap, we describe the process by which a university community center developed a culturally responsive storybook on dementia targeted to Native Hawaiian youth. The development process honored community-based participatory research principles grounded in the cultural values and practices of Native Hawaiians, active collaboration of an advisory council, and face-to-face engagement with Native Hawaiian youth. Future directions are shared about culture-based programming and evaluation in dementia care that may be useful in working with other racial/ethnic youth and families.

Program Spotlight | Northwood Technical College Gerontology - Aging Services Professional

Year Founded: The gerontology program at Northwood Tech was created under the U.S. Department of Labor's Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant in 2015.

Offerings : Associate of Applied Science degree in Gerontology, Dementia Care Pathways Certificate (embedded undergrad), Gerontology for Professionals Pathways Certificate (embedded undergrad)

Program Highlights: The program exists to upskill the up-in-coming and existing workforce through hands-on learning in a Your Choice delivery. Students may choose to participate in live evening sessions on one of four Northwood Tech campuses, virtually from home, or review the live session recording later. Aging and dementia simulation experiences are embedded in the curriculum, along with presentations from context experts in various areas of gerontology including the aging intellectual and developmental disabilities population, indigenous elders, LGBTQ+ elders, behavioral health, and grandparents raising grandchildren. Other emerging areas are also explored including incarcerated populations, domestic violence in older adulthood, and culture change in long-term care.

The gerontology program at Northwood Tech was recently accredited by the **Accreditation for Gerontology Education Council (AGEC)**. The program offers a new career pathway from nursing assistant/CNA to an undergraduate degree in gerontology. Combined, the two-program faculty have nearly four decades of experience working in acute care, hospice, home care, and continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs) in addition to their years as post-secondary instructors.

Who to Contact: Jennifer Ellis, MS, HS-BCP, CPG (Program Director & Instructor)
[\[jennifer.ellis@northwoodtech.edu\]](mailto:jennifer.ellis@northwoodtech.edu)



Do you know a deserving student who we should spotlight? What about a program or faculty member? Nominate them for an AGHE Spotlight. We accept student, faculty, and program spotlights. For more information visit here: [Spotlight Nominations](#).

Launching of a Novel Dual Master's Degree Program: Meeting the Current And Future Needs of an Aging Population

Jacqueline Eaton, Ph.D., FGSA, AGHE, Kara Dassel, Ph.D., FGSA, FAGHE, Katarina Friberg-Felsted, Ph.D., FAGHE, Leigh Elrod, DPAS, MPAS, PA-C, & Jennifer Myers Coombs, Ph.D., MPAS, PA-C

In January 2024, the University of Utah's [Division of Physician Assistant Studies](#) and [College of Nursing Gerontology Interdisciplinary Program](#) launched the [first dual degree program](#) (nationally and internationally). This program enables students to pursue a [Master of Physician Assistant Studies](#) (MPAS) degree with a Master of Science Gerontology (MSG) degree.

[With the ever-growing geriatric community in Utah and the nation](#), this program is instrumental in educating the next generation of healthcare providers, preparing them to meet the current and future needs of the aging population. By combining gerontology and PA training, graduates of this innovative dual degree are superbly equipped to care for and address the needs unique to an older population, such as chronic illnesses, memory loss, bereavement, and palliative care.

The Gerontology Interdisciplinary Program and the Utah Physician Assistant Program share common interests in understanding factors that influence health and identifying opportunities to create conditions for the optimal health, safety, and well-being of older adults. This requires interdisciplinary knowledge and an analytical and practical skill set that includes inter-professional problem-solving. Further understanding of gerontology will benefit students and their future patients.

[Approximately 80% of older adults have a chronic illness, such as diabetes or heart disease.](#) Persons with chronic illnesses should be cared for and treated by a primary care provider specializing in geriatrics. The MPAS/MSG would provide specialized training for PAs who desire to work in gerontology by expanding their gerontological knowledge base and career options. Through the additional training with MSG, they will be better capable of managing psychosocial, behavioral, and medical issues commonly encountered by the geriatric population.¹

[Primary care shortages are predicted as increasing numbers of physicians select specialty practice.](#) While primary care-focused PAs are currently trained to meet the medical needs of underserved patients, including older persons, additional training in gerontology will position graduates of this program with the augmented skill sets and knowledge (or expertise) to become leaders and advocates in geriatric care. Students graduating with dual degrees – MPAS and MSG – will be more competitive in the market than those with a single degree and can fill the primary care void for the older adult population, which has some of the highest health risks.

The MPAS/MSG, dual degree graduates, will ideally fit in the primary care setting, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, rehabilitation facilities, palliative and hospice care, and memory clinics. An analysis of 2018 data shows that approximately [8% of PAs work in geriatric medical care](#). This is a significant growth from 3% in 2013, and PAs are noted as a solution to the healthcare shortage in geriatrics. The MPAS-MSG dual degree program at the University of Utah will help fill a significant healthcare void by meeting the needs of the geriatric-trained primary care workforce.

The dual degree capitalizes on the strengths and missions of the MPAS and MSG programs, attracting a diverse group of students from across the country who are dedicated to improving the health of older adults. While completing these two degrees concurrently would take 51 months,

the [dual degree program](#) allows highly qualified students to earn both degrees in 32 months and with significant cost savings. Students must complete 117 credit hours while taking courses concurrently over three years rather than the 121 credit hours required to earn the two degrees separately. Because of this overall reduction in credit requirements for both degrees, a student enrolled in the program can expect to complete the two degrees in approximately eight semesters of full-time study.

In summary, this dual degree includes broad gerontological content and provides opportunities for students to develop skills that will enhance their ability to serve the older adult population.