

Welcome To The Summer Issue

I hope this issue finds you doing exactly what you want to be doing over the next few months. In the past I would say I hope you are enjoying the summer break - but the increasing reality is that Summer Breaks are a thing of the past. Many of us use our summers to catch up on writing, conduct research, and prepare for the Fall semester. Increasingly, many universities have adopted a year-round operation - mine included. Yet, this time of year does bring about one of my favorite parts of my job - celebrating our student's achievements and success. If I can briefly brag, not only did we just induct our first cohort of Sigma Phi Omega (Psi Chapter) members, we also just graduated our first cohort of Master of Science in Aging Students at Arizona State University. The resources provided by AGHE and advice from many of you in our program development were instrumental in setting this program up.

Wherever you may be, I know you will find this issue full of exciting information, updates, and interviews. This issue includes pieces on novel programs to increase aging-related competence among cosmetology students, updates from a successful Careers in Aging Week, spotlights on our members, and updates from across the Association.

As always, please send us your announcements, celebrations, milestones, and news. We welcome submissions focused on programs, pedagogical techniques, and advances in gerontology education.

You can learn more about our submission guidelines and publishing timeline [here](#). The *AGHEXchange* does not exist without your updates. I also encourage you to reach out (aaron.guest@asu.edu) with your feedback. & if no one has told you lately, thanks for all you do to educate our students about aging.

Until next time - Aaron



Photo: Editor on important wine fact-finding mission in Portugal (2022)

The Chair's Corner

On Thursday evening June 1, colleagues gathered for *AGHE Live 2023– It's a Wrap!* What will now be an annual event when the academic year is winding down, familiar and new folks came together to talk about their triumphs and challenges encountered in teaching, research, community engagement, and other academic efforts. They also shared suggestions for looking ahead and how AGHE can support their personal and professional development. As is characteristic of AGHE gatherings, time was made for relaxation and fun. To get things started, Mary Ann Erickson (chair of AGHE's Program Resource Development Workgroup PRDW) led us in a mindfulness meditation. Responding in chat with one or two words to describe how their year went, no surprises were found – with hardworking educators remarking with comments like fast and furious, wild, world wind, WHEW, full of surprises, and a grind with great peaks. In our small group, *Sharing is Caring* breakouts, we talked about something we felt we accomplished this year, something that was a particular challenge, and our plans looking toward the new academic year. Our conversations led to the suggestion that AGHE organize more virtual social events to allow colleagues to get together for these types of exchanges. In “Coffee Talks” we could share specific problems we are facing and get feedback from others about how to address them. We could also organize a book/movie club to give us a place to nourish our social connections, curiosity, and learning outside of the classroom. Mary Ann closed out our session with a gratitude reflection, reminding us of the joy of colleagues. AGHE leaders are looking into these new opportunities – and will let you know what develops.

All the best for a wonderful summer,

*Joann M. Montepare, PhD
AGHE Chair 2023*

Off the Presses

Academic Minute: What Do We Need To Age Well?

Your physical space may become very important to your health as you age. In this week's Academic Minute, **Brittney Howell**, assistant professor of population health sciences and director of the Healthy Aging Research Laboratory at the University of Alaska Anchorage, reports that some environments appear to be better for healthy aging than others. This podcast can be found [here](#).

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

Call For Papers: Protection of Older Adults During The COVID-19 Pandemic in Educational Gerontology. Learn more [here](#).

Age-Friendly University Update

Effective May 1st, the Age-Friendly University Global Secretariat has transitioned to Arizona State University, with University of Strathclyde assuming a Vice-Chair Role. These original founders look forward to continuing the work of Dublin City University. Additional information will be made available in the coming weeks. For inquiries, contact: AFUSecretariat@asu.edu.



AGHE Campus Conversations

If you couldn't join us for the recent AGHE Campus Conversation, "Gerontology and Geriatrics Curricular Standards and Guidelines in Higher Education -- Advancing your Curriculum or Program," the recording is now available ([access it here](#)).

About the Session

With the publication of [the 7th edition of the Gerontology and Geriatrics Curricular Standards and Guidelines in Higher Education](#), opportunities for curriculum development and program enhancements abound. Although health professions programs have led the way in competency-based education, this edition supports the transition for all levels of gerontology programs to shift to a competency-based platform as well. For health professions programs, integrating gerontology and geriatrics into their existing curriculum makes notable the program's preparation to advance their students' knowledge, skills, and attitude to work with older people. Additionally, these Standards and Guidelines are the foundation for attaining the AGHE Program of Merit; a voluntary program of curricular review to recognize meritorious programs.

Presenters:

- Marilyn R. Gugliucci, MA, PhD, FAGHE, FGAS, FAGS, FNAOME, Professor and Director of Geriatrics Education and Research, University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Tamar Shoali, PhD, Associate Professor of Human Development, Eckerd College
- Mary Ann Erickson, PhD, FAGHE, Associate Professor, Department of Health Sciences and Public Health, Ithaca College (Moderator)

Student Spotlight

Meg Tinsley

The logo for Grand Canyon University (GCU) is displayed in a large, bold, purple font. The letters are blocky and stylized, with the 'G' and 'C' being particularly prominent.

Major: Psychology

Department/School/University: Grand Canyon University

What interests you about the field of aging?

Making a difference in the lives of older adults, especially those who are struggling to cope with the changes that come with getting older. I'm also interested in learning about brain-behavior relationships to better understand the triggers that can cause aggressive behaviors in those diagnosed with neurodegenerative diseases, such as dementia. The Geropsychology program has all the courses that I am interested in that will help better prepare me for the field of aging, including but not limited to, Death and Dying, Social and Cultural Psychology, and the Psychological, Emotional and Spiritual Aspects of Aging. After graduation, I hope to become a geropsychologist.

What has been your most impactful learning experience?

My most impactful learning experience was seeing the progression of dementia when I took care of lady a while back who was a wanderer. One day, she didn't want to stay within the areas of the community, or ride in the car with me. She wanted to cross a busy street. So, I had to link my arm in hers and cross. We ended up in someone's driveway for about two minutes, before she wanted to return to the community. Fortunately, there was a religious event going on inside the lobby area connected to the apartments, where the other residents lived. It helped to de-escalate the situation because she was a religious person. So, in the end, it all worked out.

GSA Group Updates: Upcoming AGHE ESPO Webinars and Symposium

Janelle Fassi, Gerontology PhD student and Year 1 ESPO Junior Leader
University of Massachusetts, Boston Janelle.fassi001@umb.edu

As your AGHE ESPO Junior Leaders, Yan-Jhu Su and I would like to give GSA members a sneak peek of our upcoming events. First, we are planning to hold several virtual webinars before the GSA annual scientific meeting in Tampa this November. Speakers will include Dr. Christine Thurlow, who will present on intergenerational teaching strategies, and Dr. Danielle Waldron, who will present on making a teaching guide and academic syllabus for Gerontology introductory courses. Some other speakers will be included as well. These webinars are professional development opportunities for GSA members to interact with AGHE Fellows and AGHE leaders and make the most out of the ASM this November. During the ASM, we are planning a symposium that emphasizes bridging technological gaps in learning environments and intergenerational spaces. We hope you can join some of these events coming your way this fall. Stay tuned!

CALL FOR CONTENT

AGHExchange Volume 46, Issue 3

Deadline September 1, 2023

Share your Back-to-School Announcements, Summer Activities,
and Other Updates with Your Peers.
Now Accepting Submissions.

Meet an AGHE Fellow: Skye N. Leedah

AGHE continues to grow! To help us learn about one another we will be conducting interviews with AGHE Members and Fellows. Keep an eye out for an invite! We start this series with one of our newest fellows, Dr. Skye Leedah

Skye N. Leedah, PhD, FGSA, FAGHE
Department of Human Development & Family Science
University of Rhode Island



How did you find your way to gerontology education?

My journey to gerontological education began in high school when I wrote a research paper on the global aging phenomenon. I was fascinated and decided that I wanted to pursue a career in working with older adults. At that time, most people thought I was a little crazy, but they suggested to me that I work in a nursing home. Following their advice, I became a Certified Nursing Assistant, which led me to valuing and appreciating nursing home nurses and nursing assistants for all they do but also wanting to improve quality of life for older adults living in nursing homes and in the community.

What Courses Do You Teach? What is Your Favorite?

I currently teach undergraduate courses on *Later Adulthood Growth and Development*, *Healthy Living Environments for Older Adults*, and *Policy Issues in Health and Aging*. I also teach a graduate course on *Program Evaluation*, and I created an undergraduate gen ed course based on the show *This is Us* on *Individual & Family Development*. I love all the courses for different reasons, but I especially enjoy *Later Adulthood Growth and Development* because it includes a 36-hour field component that involves students working in the community to learn with and support older adults. I am passionate about experiential education for students and social engagement for older adults, so this class fits both interest areas.

Could You Talk A Little About What the AGHE Fellow Status Means to You?

I am incredibly proud to be named an AGHE Fellow! I have always been inspired by those provided this status and grateful for all their contributions. Now that I am a Fellow, I hope to continue contributing to positive gerontological education experiences at my university and within AGHE and GSA.

What Advice Do You Have For Students & Emerging Professionals Interested in Gerontology Education?

To those interested in gerontology education (particularly those who might find themselves as one of the only students interested in gerontology or one of the only faculty members in the department who teaches gerontology), do your best to 1) convince your colleagues that all students should have at least one required gerontology course as part of the curriculum, and 2) once students are in a gerontology class, connect them with older adults in meaningful ways. I find that students won't often sign up for a gerontology course, but once they do, they truly enjoy it and find the gerontology theories and concepts more interesting and important than they thought it would be. The students usually state that the older adult engagement portion was the most impactful or meaningful part of the course. There are many great classroom resources for identifying exciting ways to do this.

Preparing the Workforce in our Aging Communities: A Gerontology and Cosmetology Partnership

Jennifer L. Ellis, MS, HS-BCP, Gerontology – Aging Services Professional Program Director and Instructor and April M. Thompson, Cosmetology Instructor

Corresponding Author:

Jennifer L. Ellis, Gerontology – Aging Services Professional Program, Northwood Technical College, 600 North 21st Street, Superior, WI 54880, USA. Email: jennifer.ellis@northwoodtech.edu.

Northwood Technical College serves the 11 northwestern counties in Wisconsin, an almost 11,000 square mile region. Offering over 60 career areas, Northwood Tech has four main campuses and three outreach centers. The Gerontology – Aging Services Professional program is a two-year associate degree available at all locations and virtually, while the one-year Cosmetology technical diploma is offered at the Superior and Rice Lake campuses.

History of Gerontology and Cosmetology Collaboration

Cosmetology instructor April Thompson was a licensed cosmetologist when she joined Northwood Technical College in Fall 2018. A chance meeting in the hallway in Spring 2019 with Jennifer Ellis (Gerontology instructor) led to a discussion on how to bridge the emerging needs of an aging client base in salons across the region. Counties in northern region of the Midwest will comprise 30 – 50% adults aged 60 and above in less than 20 years; hence, the motivation to prepare cosmetology students for the demographically-changing workplace was evident (Wisconsin Department of Health Services, 2023). Diving deeper, and with support from divisional leadership and College, planning began on how to contextualize gerontology education within the cosmetology curriculum.

First, the Superior (WI) cosmetology student salon became a dementia-friendly business through the Douglas County Caregiver Coalition. Gerontology instructor Jennifer Ellis, a member of the coalition, provided the initial dementia-friendly business training. The training, offered for free throughout Wisconsin, provides an overview of what dementia is, dementia-related statistics, aging-specific demographic information, and an overview of local resources. Since Spring of 2019, the training has been embedded in the first semester foundational course, *Cosmetology Fundamentals*.

Immediately realizing the benefit of the training given feedback from Superior students, the dementia-friendly business training expanded to the Rice Lake (WI) cosmetology program. Cosmetology faculty Jolie Losey and Carol Goodale worked with Gerontology instructor Kimberly McDonald to arrange for the dementia-friendly business training Dementia Care Specialist, Trisha Witham, from the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ARDC) of Barron and Rusk Counties. Additionally, Gerontology instructor Kimberly McDonald worked with cosmetology students using the program's aging simulation equipment.

In addition to the dementia-friendly business training, students were able to use the Gerontology program's aging simulation equipment in the campus salon. Instructors explored with students how to best serve customers who may have physical and/or cognitive impairments using the following empathy-building simulation equipment:

- Visual impairment including macular degeneration, cataracts, unilateral detached retina, retinitis pigmentosa, diabetic retinopathy, and glaucoma.

- Tinnitus.
- Back and knee pain simulators.
- Durable medical equipment such as walkers, wheelchairs, and canes.
- Parkinson tremor gloves.
- Hemiparesis (stroke) suit.
- Aging suit.

Instructors empowered students to use creativity in adapting to clients' physical and/or cognitive needs using the simulation equipment. This included assisting clients in salon navigation, use of salon equipment such as stools and bolsters, and different ways to change their approaches to make clients comfortable. Students appeared to feel accomplished and reported having an 'a-ha' moment by the end of the education sessions. Cosmetology faculty encouraged students to reflect upon the experience and will revisit with students to apply what they learned when serving clients in the training salon on campus. Gerontology faculty also encouraged students to touch base if other questions arise related to better serving older adults, even after graduation.

During the pandemic, the dementia-friendly business training sessions continued virtually. Unfortunately, the aging simulation equipment experience was not a COVID-friendly activity, so it went on pause for three years. However, since Fall 2022 in-person aging simulation activities and the dementia-friendly business training has resumed. In addition, the training and simulation day has expanded to now include Dementia Live® simulation offered by Dementia Care Specialists Chelsea Thompson (ADRC – Douglas County) and Trisha Witham (ADRC – Barron & Rusk Counties). The plan is to continue training and simulation experiences for Northwood Tech's cosmetology program students each semester for each new class.

Applying Experiential Learning in Cosmetology and Beyond

Cosmetology instructors and students find that the training and simulation experiences go far beyond satisfying the program's competencies. Students anecdotally report to their instructors that the collaboration with the gerontology program is one of their favorites throughout their courses. Instructors observe that the increased awareness for supporting older adults and clients with special needs has become second nature. Over the years, several students in the cosmetology program have shared their appreciation for the hands-on learning experience as they currently work as direct care workers in home care and facility settings.

Over 150 cosmetology students have participated in the hands-on instruction and have found it to be valuable. Students describe the training as eye-opening and impactful in how they'll serve clients in the future. Cosmetology students shared the following about their experiences:

"The dementia friendly training gave me a real-life perspective into the mental and physical challenges people with dementia face every day" (Ella G., personal communication, April 26, 2023).

"I feel the dementia friendly training was heartfelt because we see the way people live every day; we want to learn how to accommodate them" (Tamara Z., personal communication, April 26, 2023).

The impact has been great on cosmetology instructors as well, and they are inspired to support opportunities for other cosmetologists to be trained. Instructor Jolie Losey shared that “after experiencing the dementia friendly presentation with my students, I feel it is important to increase awareness and understanding of brain health in the community. In the salon environment, many will encounter the effects of dementia with their clients” (personal communication, April 10, 2023). Thus, Jolie and the planning team for the upcoming Northwood Tech Cosmetology Expo in Spring 2023 will include a Dementia Friends Information Session in partnership with the local dementia care specialist.



A student participating in the program.

Rena Flaherty, owner of Trends Salon in Superior, WI brought dementia-friendly business training to her organization more than five years ago. She believed that becoming a dementia-friendly salon was important as her team works with clients of all ages; they strive to serve the community the “best way possible”. As an employer of students from the Northwood Tech cosmetology program, Rena appreciates hiring graduates as they “have compassion for what they do for humans. Compassion sets them apart” (personal communication, April 20, 2023).

Instructors from both Gerontology and Cosmetology encourage students to include the training on their resume. Additionally, both programs have received very positive feedback when they share about the collaboration with their respective advisory committees, community partners, and employers. With the continued support of the College and divisional leadership, the programs intend to maintain and evolve the partnership as student and industry needs continue to change.

References

Wisconsin Department of Health Services. (2023). Home. Retrieved on March 10, 2023, from <https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/>.

Acknowledgements: The authors would like to acknowledge all of the contributing Northwood Tech team members and ADRC partners contributing to this collaboration: Jean Engebretson (Cosmetology Instructor), Dondi Erickson (Adjunct Cosmetology Instructor), Carol Goodale (Cosmetology Instructor), Raya Horst (Adjunct Cosmetology Instructor), Jolie Losey (Cosmetology Instructor), Kimberly McDonald (Gerontology – Aging Services Professional Instructor), Alison Moffat (Dean – Family and Consumer Services), Chelsea Thompson (Dementia Care Specialist, ARDC of Douglas County), Laura Wassenaar (Dean – Innovative Learning), and Trisha Witham (Dementia Care Specialist, ADRC of Barron & Rusk Counties).

AGHE Program of Merit: Latest Updates

Marilyn R. Gugliucci, MA, PhD, FAGHE, FGSA Professor and the Director for Geriatrics Research, University of New England

In July 1998, the Executive Committee of the [Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education \(AGHE\)](#), formerly the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education, approved a proposal to establish and implement a voluntary evaluation program known as the [Program of Merit \(POM\)](#). The POM designation provides gerontology programs with an AGHE “stamp of approval,” which can be used to verify program quality to administrators, to lobby for additional resources to maintain a quality program, to market the program, and to recruit prospective students into the program.

In 2015, the Program of Merit was expanded and adapted to implement a voluntary evaluation process for [health professions programs](#) that integrate gerontology/geriatrics competencies in order to prepare students for working with older adults as well as their informal care partners. Health professions programs are eligible to apply for the Program of Merit designation. A special benefit for both gerontology and health professions programs that attain a Program of Merit designation is that each year AGHE staff will prepare a certificate for each graduating student that is sent to the program to distribute prior to graduation. The certificate is suitable for framing and highlighting that the student graduated from a recognized AGHE/GSA Program of Merit, including the institution and the gerontology or the health professions program name.

The Program of Merit for Gerontology and Health Professions programs are based on the [AGHE Standards and Guidelines for Gerontology/ Geriatrics in Higher Education, Seventh Edition \(2021\)](#). In the 7th Edition, resources are provided, such as the competencies for gerontology programs, health professions programs, Doctor of Pharmacy programs, and osteopathic medicine programs. Additionally, the appendices have competency mapping tools for gerontology and health professions programs.

Each of the POM review booklets was updated in 2023, and there are over 45 reviewers from across the US and internationally who are eager to be part of review teams for college and university programs in gerontology or the health professions.

If you have any questions or wish to learn more about Program of Merit, please contact Gena Schoen at membership@geron.org – *Please include AGHE POM in the subject line.*



THANK YOU FOR AN AMAZING CAREERS IN
AGING WEEK 2023



We Look Forward To Seeing You in 2024

Careers in Aging Week Highlights

The **Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) Advancement Workgroup** awarded eight program applicants funds to support their Careers in Aging Week (CIAW) events on campus and virtually to promote the diversity of career options related to aging. Below are highlights from these CIAW events.



St. Cloud State University held a hybrid “Careers in Aging” booth that provided information about gerontological educational programs and careers to 100 people. Graduate and undergraduate students participated in the event. Students had the opportunity to win prizes through a trivia quiz. They also offered a “Careers in Aging” Panel consisting of alumni and professionals working in the field of aging. Approximately 20 people attended the panel discussion.

Stockton University held a CIAW panel discussing opportunities to work with older adults. Twenty students from various majors were in attendance. Four members of the Gerontology Minor faculty shared their experiences in clinical care and academia. Diane Conover of Royal Suites Healthcare and Rehabilitation in Galloway, New Jersey brought a wonderful addition to the program, highlighting the rewards of working with older adults as a registered nurse and now in community outreach. In another activity, twelve adults from the local community shared tips on successful and blissful living with twelve students while enjoying fruit and dark chocolates for healthy aging. The intergenerational exchanges were enlightening and inspiring, with some students exchanging contact information with members from the community. New friends were made!



University of California, Berkeley Retirement Center hosted two virtual “careers in aging” panels. The first panel focused on academics and policy/research with 42 attendees. The second panel focused on community-based services and senior housing, with 28 attendees. Over $\frac{1}{3}$ of attendees were students or participants we typically don’t reach. Many later career employees and retired staff also attended.

Recordings are posted online: academic panel and senior housing panel. Videos are segmented into chapters based on the questions.

University of Maryland Baltimore County Erickson School of Aging partnered with *Leading Age* Maryland for their speed mentoring CIAW Event. The event included nine professionals in the field of aging and allowed small groups of students to meet with them for 15-minute intervals. Professionals highlighted careers in aging that intersected with technology, policy, interior design, housing, hospice, and eldercare. Forty-five students attended the speed mentoring event. Some evaluation responses included, “I liked that the speakers had a variety of work and educational experience to make us aware of differing career paths and opportunities we should keep in mind and look out for in the future” and “I liked how vast the different speakers were career-wise. It was interesting to hear how some things I might not have anticipated being in the field somehow connected.”



Medical College of Wisconsin student chapter of the American Geriatrics Society (AGS) hosted a “lunch and learn” to educate medical and pharmacy students about polypharmacy in older adults. Dr. Ed Duthie, a geriatrician, and Dr. Rachel Kavanaugh, a pharmacist, spoke about medication management and presented cases for students to analyze medication lists. There

were 48 participants from MCW’s Milwaukee, Green Bay, and Wausau medical campuses and MCW’s School of Pharmacy. This was a huge turnout for an AGS event, and it was exciting to have significant representation from the pharmacy program and regional campuses. Overall, this was an excellent event that exposed students to careers in aging and helped them consider how to serve their future patients best.

Xavier University hosted three events for Careers in Aging Week (CIAW). First, they hosted a viewing of *The Age of Love*, with one student in attendance. Second, they held Myth Busters *Jeopardy!*: Aging Edition, with four students in attendance. Lastly, they hosted a Career Panel Presentation featuring five professionals from the field of aging. Twelve students and several community members attended; six students reported being interested or very interested in a career in the field of aging. All students attending reported being satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of the event, which is a success. Eight students attended an event to earn credit for a class or club, while eight attended because it interested them.



An Inter-university Panel for Careers in Aging Week

Elise Eifert (UNC Greensboro), Cynthia Hancock (UNC Charlotte), Tina M. K. Newsham (UNC Wilmington), and Chantelle Caro (UNC Greensboro)

“Collaboration is far more powerful than competition”- Jaggi Vasudev

To promote gerontological education and careers in aging, the Gerontology programs at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and the University of North Carolina Wilmington collaborated during Careers in Aging Week 2023 (CIAW) by organizing a virtual panel discussion featuring alumni from all three programs. This may seem unusual given that these programs hypothetically compete for students, funding, donations, visibility and prestige, and even survival. However, the programs are unique in key aspects that they are not in direct competition. While all three programs offer an undergraduate gerontology minor, UNC Charlotte offers an on-campus gerontology concentration in the BA in Interdisciplinary Studies and a graduate certificate in gerontology, UNC Greensboro offers an online masters degree and graduate certificate, and UNC Wilmington offers an on-campus masters degree and post-baccalaureate certificate. Collectively, these programs provide options to meet the learning needs of different students and serve to prepare the aging services workforce in North Carolina and beyond. Furthermore, the leaders of these programs believe strongly that increasing awareness of gerontological education and careers in aging will benefit and elevate all Gerontology programs (i.e. “A rising tide raises all boats”).

Development

In February 2023, the Graduate Coordinator for the Gerontology program at UNC Greensboro, Elise Eifert, reached out to Cynthia Hancock and Tina Newsham, the program coordinators for the Gerontology programs at UNC Charlotte and UNC Wilmington, respectively. This initial contact included an invitation to promote each other’s CIAW activities to each coordinator’s students, alumni, and community. The goal was to increase and diversify the opportunities that participants had access to during CIAW. While institutions may host a small number of events related to CIAW, with inter-university cooperation, the number of events available to everyone increases. Inter-university cooperation also increases participation in events from members of further-away communities that would not typically be reached or included by each institution alone (i.e., events at UNC Greensboro typically don’t reach the Wilmington audience). Inter-institutional cooperation expands the reach and increases the visibility of each institution’s CIAW activities while exposing more people to the career opportunities that exist in aging. Plus, it was fun!

As the coordinators discussed their CIAW plans, the idea to collaborate on a single event was born – a virtual panel of alumni from each institution’s Gerontology program discussing their careers. A date and time was selected and each program coordinator identified two to three potential alumni to speak on the panel, paying particular attention to having a diverse range of perspectives, careers, and time since graduation

reflected in the panel. Six panelists were selected, two from each institution, including a care manager with his MS from UNC Greensboro, a home care operator with her MS from UNC Greensboro, a senior living wellness and enrichment coordinator with their MS from UNC Wilmington, a consultant with her MS from UNC Wilmington, a senior center program director with a graduate certificate from UNC Charlotte, and a healthcare interpreter with her graduate certificate from UNC Charlotte.

The program coordinators also discussed the theme and types of questions to be asked to the panelist with the goal of promoting careers in aging by highlighting opportunities, pathways, challenges, and trends related to aging. A list of questions (provided in advance to panelists) included:

1. Describe your career in aging journey. Did you always want to work in aging? Have you held other jobs? [Please emphasize the role gerontology education has played in helping you find and perform your job(s).]
2. What careers in aging would you recommend? Do you see any future trends?
3. What are the key success factors for those pursuing careers in aging?
4. What are the biggest challenges facing those pursuing careers in aging?
5. What advice do you have for emerging professionals in aging?

The virtual panel discussion was hosted via Zoom. During the event, the program coordinators took turns asking questions. Each panelist was given an opportunity to respond to the questions. The event was recorded and a full video of the event is on the UNC Greensboro Gerontology's YouTube channel - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwnARL3Oelk&t=9s>

Marketing

Once the idea for a single panel event was solidified and a date selected (the evening of the Tuesday of CIAW), marketing the event was the next step. Chantelle Caro, who works with the social media marketing for the Gerontology Program at UNC Greensboro, took the lead for some of the promotional materials for the panel. A digital flier was created to promote the panel and tailored for each institution to include other events being held locally. The flier included a QR code to RSVP for the virtual panel and was sent to current and prospective students, affiliated faculty, community members, and others. In addition, the flier was posted by each institution on their social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.), advising sites on our LMS (e.g., Canvas, Blackboard, etc.), and through program and university listservs.

Panel Highlights

The panelists came with a wealth of knowledge and experience to share with the audience. Each panelist described their own journey to gerontology work and how their education prepared them. Gerontology programs in general helped panelists to narrow down their interests to a career field, build connections, provided experiential learning, and provided a “leg up” when it came to starting their career path. All panelists agreed there is no direct path in this career field. In terms of future trends in the field, panelists mentioned policy work, homecare, advocacy, gerontologists in

non-traditional fields, and development work. Advice from panelists included: “Figure out what problem you want to solve and figure out what career will help you to do so - even if you need to create the career.” Don’t be afraid - there is great job security as there will always be older adults. “If you want to earn a lot of money this might not be the career field for you.” Focus on what interests you. And recognizing that we are getting ready to have an older generation of people who have been a part of large social movements. The panelist noted “these people [older adults] have been making waves their entire life and I don’t expect it to stop.” All the panelists agreed that they look forward to the excitement this will bring to their work environment. Viewers were encouraged to change the narrative of aging - to realize that we can learn so much from older adults and the opportunity for conversations are priceless. And to take time to build relationships. All agreed that we needed to help others see the value of this field of study.

Benefits and Future Suggestions

This virtual panel provided an excellent opportunity to inform prospective students (attendees included high school students, non-gerontology students, and community members, among others) about the benefits of gerontology education. We encourage others to invite members of these groups to their program activities for CIAW and beyond. One non-gerontology student who attended the presentation reflected that she only thought of “bedside care and nursing facilities” when she thought of careers in aging prior to the event. Afterward, she said, she realized “that there are endless possibilities beyond bedside care.” Another student noted that she had not associated such a strong sense of purpose with having a career in aging but learned how rewarding such careers are. One attendee shared that the panel made him “rethink and reevaluate his ideas” about not wanting to work in the field of gerontology.

Given these powerful outcomes for attendees, the fun the coordinators had planning the event, and the relative simplicity of putting together virtual panels, the inter-institutional collaboration described here is something these three UNC system schools will repeat in the future. We hope this event also serves as a model for other institutions (whether in a common system like UNC or not) to work together (including with us!) to promote careers in aging and the value of gerontology education. The resulting recording is now publicly available, and we encourage others to use the video in their classes and create and share their own recordings of such events.

The essence of this collaboration from its inception was embedded in the shared goals, values, and visions of three gerontology programs and their coordinators. Notably, as the collaborative relationship around the CIAW alumni panel event evolved, we became aware of other opportunities for collaboration. This has led to plans for future collaborations including CIAW events and research projects. We strongly encourage other Gerontology Programs to consider inter-university events during CIAW and throughout the year. This reflects the collaborative nature of the discipline of gerontology and promotes and elevates gerontological education and careers in aging everywhere.

Careers in Aging at Western Oregon University

Melissa Cannon (cannonm@wou.edu)

This was the 12th year of celebrating Careers in Aging Week at WOU, sponsored by the Gerontology: Aging and Older Adulthood program, WOU Gerontology Student Association (WOUGSA), and Kappa Eta Omega, our Gerontology Honor Society Chapter.

Every year, we offer a collaborative series of events highlighting the diverse careers available in the field of gerontology and aging. This year our events included:



Gerontology Table Talks 🤝

Are you curious about Gerontology and how you can work with older adults? Learn more by visiting our table and pick up some fun swag!

Careers in Aging Week Kickoff + Health Promotion Panel 🗣️

Join the Gerontology Department to learn about career options and pathways in the field of aging. Following this, you will hear from a panel of professionals about working in health promotion for older adults.

WOUGSA Event: Age-Friendly Initiatives + Social Hour! 🍷🍷🍷

Join the WOU Gerontology Student Association and Gerontology faculty to learn about age-friendly initiatives happening at Western Oregon University and in the broader Monmouth & Independence community. Enjoy time for socializing/networking.

Gerontology Alumni Panel + Social Hour! 🧑🧑🧑

We are hosting a panel of Gerontology alums with backgrounds in healthcare, long-term care administration, & program/service delivery in local and state agencies. Enjoy time for socializing/networking.



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

[Donate Here](#)

Gerontology & Geriatric 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 44, Issue 2 \(2023\)](#)

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: Judith L. Howe PhD, M. Joanna Mellor DSW & Christine K. Cassel MD (1999) Cross-Disciplinary Approaches to Teaching Interdisciplinary Teamwork and Geriatrics, *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 19:4, 3-17, DOI: [10.1300/J021v19n04_02](#)

The Mount Sinai Medical Center Geriatric Interdisciplinary Team Training Program prepares future health professionals to work on geriatrics interdisciplinary health care teams through structured educational and training experiences. This article describes the Program's educational goals and teaching methods. The Program has had considerable impact at the trainee, faculty, management and institutional levels, but issues and challenges to cross-disciplinary team training remain. Suggestions for overcoming learning, professional culture, and implementation barriers are given.

Fresh Off the Press: Ashley Lytle, Caitlin Monahan & Sheri R. Levy (2023) Do media portrayals of super-agers reduce or increase ageism toward older adults?, *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, DOI: [10.1080/02701960.2023.2218817](#)

Super-agers are older adults with exemplary cognitive and/or physical abilities. However, the impact of media portrayals of super-agers is unknown. This study examined whether exposure to mass media stories about "moderate" super-agers (exemplary cognitive and physical skill levels) versus "extreme" super-agers (most extreme cognitive and physical skill levels) impacts young adults' ageism. Undergraduate participants exposed to media portrayals of moderate super-agers reported greater agreement with positive age stereotypes toward older adults, whereas participants exposed to extreme super-agers reported lower levels of ageism as compared to control participants. Based on these findings, young adults may perceive super-agers in a positive manner as super-agers highlight positive attributes. Since super-agers are often portrayed as defying negative stereotypes through diligence and a positive outlook (less so through good genes or access to healthcare), exposure to super-agers could have negative effects, which is an important future direction.

Program Spotlight | University of Maryland, Baltimore & University of Maryland, Baltimore County Gerontology Doctoral Program

Year Founded: 2001 in the UMBC College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences and UMB School of Medicine

Degree Offered: Ph.D, and MS in Gerontology (Online)

Program Highlights: UMB/UMBC graduated 48 doctoral students since 2005 who work in government agencies (e.g., Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services), long-term care, non-profit organizations (e.g., American Society of Aging), and academia/research institutes (e.g., Johns Hopkins University, University of Maryland, Baltimore). Our UMB/UMBC gerontology doctoral program is an intercampus, interdisciplinary research degree program within the dynamic Baltimore/Washington, DC corridor. We are training a new generation of gerontology scholars contributing to interdisciplinary and integrative paradigms and new research designs examining unique, reciprocal, and dynamic aspects of aging. We added a new online Master of Science in Gerontology program now enrolling for Spring 2023. The online MS program is designed for working professionals as well as students who aim to advance their gerontological training. This fully online program provides students with core knowledge of the interdisciplinary field of gerontology, a foundation in research methods, and familiarity with questions of central to an aging society.

Who to Contact: Justine Golden (jgolden@som.umaryland.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](#).

From the Field: GSA Student Chapter| Portugal

The GSA Student Chapter from the University of Aveiro, Portugal, was proud to take part in The First International Gerontology Conference held on the 23rd and 24th of March, 2023 in the picturesque city of Porto. This conference brought together 300 professionals and students working in the field of aging. The conference's main theme was "Decade of Healthy Aging", with a focus on the challenges, opportunities and best practices to promote active and healthy aging. It also highlighted the importance of Gerontology as a multidisciplinary field of study. The conference featured prominent national and international guest speakers who emphasized its core message of creating healthy environments for older adults that can promote social relationships, community resources and much more.



Group photo taken at the First International Gerontology Conference, Porto, March 23rd, 2023. From right to left: Dr. Oscar Ribeiro (GSA Student Chapter Advisor), Giuliana Casanova (GSA Student Chapter President), Cristiana Nascimento (Chapter Member), Taiane Abreu (Chapter member)

At the conference, the GSA student chapter showcased an informative stand that provided information about the Gerontological Society of America and our student chapter. We are delighted to have been part of this event and to have established a partnership with the National Association of Gerontologists (ANG) in Portugal. Our hope is to collaborate with them in the future to be part of more events like this, offering students in the field with an opportunity to learn, expand their network, and create new connections. As we continue to participate and be part of these events, our goal is to increase visibility of our chapter, grow our membership, and welcome more students to join the Gerontological Society of America to reap the benefits that come from being a member.

Want to Learn More About GSA Student Chapters? Contact AGHE Leadership.

Spotlight | Faculty



Carol Weisse, PhD

Ronald M. Obenzinger Professor of Psychology and Director of Health Professions
Union College

Academic Training: BS, Psychobiology, Quinnipiac College
Ph.D., Medical Psychology, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences

Core Course Taught: Behavioral Neuroscience; Death and Dying; Health Psychology; Brain and Behavior

Favorite Course: Death and Dying-the course hopefully opens students' eyes to the reality captured in Atul Gawande's *Being Mortal*: "Our ultimate goal after all is not a good death but a good life to the very end."

Favorite Assignments: I like to pose a lot of "what would you do in this situation" scenarios to help students realize how complicated it can be to provide care for seriously ill individuals at the end of life, especially individuals without resources or advocates.

Background:

Dr. Weisse's current research examines systems of care for chronically and terminally ill residents in the community, focusing on hospice and palliative care in home settings. She is interested in community-based models of care and how caregivers develop the empathy and skills to provide quality care. Recent projects investigate symptom management at the end of life, focusing on using medications to treat terminal agitation, delirium, and pain. Dr. Weisse has also conducted research on the influence of gender and race on pain reporting and treatment decisions.

How Did You Develop Your Interest in Gerontology?

In 2000 a neighbor whose wife was on hospice noticed I was home (on sabbatical) and asked if I could sit with her on Fridays so he could go bowling. It was, at first, a very frightening experience but one that ultimately was very transformative and motivated me to pursue training as a hospice volunteer and later as a caregiver in a residential care home for hospice patients with housing/caregiver instability. These experiences shaped a deep interest in working with the dying and gerontology given that most hospice patients were older adults.

What's Your Advice to Emerging Scholars and Students?

#1 Collaborate!!! I didn't really emerge as a true scholar until I turned 60 in the middle of a pandemic. I spent the first 30 years of my career working alone "doing" research that was safe/familiar but oftentimes felt like going through the motions required of tenure and promotion.
#2 Consider public scholarship. When I switched to community-based, participatory research, it was so much more rewarding and meaningful to me, and that helped motivate me as a researcher.

Selected Recent Work:

Weisse, C. S., Melekis, K., & Hutchins, B. (2019). Providing End-of-Life Care: Increased Empathy and Self-efficacy Among Student Caregivers in Residential Homes for the Dying. *American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine*, 36(6), 538-545. Abstract