



Program of Merit

Information & Application

For

Gerontology Education Programs

*Globally Recognized Higher Education Gerontology Program
Evaluation*

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Purpose of the Gerontology Education Program

In July 1998, the Executive Committee of the Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE), formerly known as the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education, approved a proposal to establish and implement a voluntary program of evaluation known as the Program of Merit (POM). The POM designation provides gerontology programs with an AGHE “stamp of approval,” which verifies 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 2014, *AGHE Gerontology Competencies for Undergraduate and Graduate Education*® were established. Updated in 2020, these competencies are integrated into this process. Additionally, as of 2015, health professions programs are eligible to apply for POM. The *AGHE Standards and Guidelines for Gerontology/Geriatrics in Higher Education, Seventh Edition, specifically Chapters 10, 11 or 12 (2021) provides guidance for health professions programs*. This worldwide process of evaluation for both Gerontology and Health Professions Programs:

1. Verifies for students that the program is consistent with globally vetted criteria in gerontology and/or geriatrics endorsed and recognized by AGHE;
2. Assures the public of the quality of programs and their graduates;
3. Clarifies for employers the knowledge and skills imparted to students who graduate from POM designated gerontology and health professions programs;
4. Informs campus administrators of global guidelines, expectations, and practice in gerontology education and health professions programs; and
5. Indicates to interested students that the program is of high quality.

AGHE’s **Program Resource Development Workgroup** oversees the POM initiative. Programs of AGHE member and non-member institutions may apply for review. The following outlines the types of Gerontology Programs that may apply for POM:

1. Programs at the Minor, Certificate, Specialization, and Doctoral levels;
2. Programs that culminate in the award of a certificate, minor, or other designation that is either reflected on the student’s transcript or the student receives identifiable recognition; and
3. Free-standing certificates within programs integrated into another degree program.
4. Degree granting (Associate, Baccalaureate, or Masters level) gerontology programs that are in the early stages of their development or have a long-standing program that was “recently” revamped or updated.

NOTE: All Health Professions Programs are eligible to apply for the POM designation. See the AGHE Program of Merit Information and Application Booklet for Health Professions Programs for details.

Prerequisites for the Gerontology Program to Apply for POM

1. Courses offered for credit.
2. Comprehensive coverage of the content (physical, cognitive, emotional, and social aspects).
3. A sequenced developmental curriculum so that introductory information precedes advanced information.
4. A program/curriculum title that clearly identifies the emphasis on aging and/or older people.
5. Courses that create opportunities to demonstrate gerontological competencies and address content primarily on aging or old age.
6. Courses listed in the campus catalog and schedule of classes.
7. Students admitted to the program or recognized as being enrolled in it.
8. Recognition and support by the host institution.

Program Evaluation Process and Related Information

A self-study using the Program of Merit Application Form is prepared by the faculty of the program being evaluated. This report should compare the program curriculum and learning activities with that presented in AGHE's *Standards and Guidelines, Seventh Edition (2021)* and/or *AGHE Gerontology Competencies for Undergraduate and Graduate Education*® (2020). The self-study report should include statements on the need for gerontology instruction; description of the instructional program including learning outcomes and competencies, students, and student services; an outline of the organizational structure and administration; and a description of the relationship with the community.

POM Reviewers and Decision Timeline. Senior faculty from three colleges or universities (other than the one being evaluated) are selected and appointed by the POM Chair(s) to be a POM Review Team. All POM Review Teams have been trained on how to evaluate self-study reports. Efforts are made to select reviewers from diverse institutional settings with at least one reviewer from an institution comparable to the applicant's institution and/or applicant's program. Reviewers base their evaluations on their expertise and a set of guidelines that have been developed for this purpose. This is a confidential review; the identities of members of each Review Team are not disclosed.

To help reduce the cost of the POM process, reviewers provide their services at no cost to AGHE. Therefore, applications are limited to ten per year, unless the AGHE leadership determines that there is the demand and capability to complete more in a given year. If applications are limited in a given year and there are more than 10 applications for the POM designation, priority will be given to AGHE member institutions. In all cases, those institutions waiting for review will be notified that their applications are pending and will be given an approximate date the reviews can be expected to be completed. The POM Chair(s) will make every effort to work with AGHE member institutions to coordinate the scheduling of the review process so that it coincides with the needs of each applicant.

POM Review Teams are provided with a *five*-month time period from receipt of the application to complete the POM review process. A preliminary review of the application is conducted within a one-month period of receipt by the Review Team to ensure the application is complete and/or allows the Review Team to raise any questions or ask for application clarifications in order to conduct the review. Should the POM applicant be asked for additional information, a time allotment is determined between the POM applicant and the POM Chair(s) to submit the requested information. After receipt of the requested information, the Review Team has four months to complete the POM review.

The POM Chair will send a letter to the program applicant indicating the POM Review Team's decision with a summary of the review. This information may also be sent to a designated administrator upon request by the program applicant.

Site Visit. No site visits are conducted for the POM review process. All deliberations are conducted by the Review Team and supported by the POM Chair(s).

Cost of POM Review. The charge for a review is \$650 for GSA and AGHE members and \$1550 for non-members. The cost of maintaining records, verification of program status, and distribution of lists of programs with the POM designation is included in the initial review fee. The fee also includes a copy of AGHE's *Standards and Guidelines, Seventh Edition*. If an institution desires more than one program to undergo POM review (e.g., a gerontology undergraduate minor and a certificate program in gerontology), an additional cost of \$400 per program is charged. The POM review of two programs within the same institution requires two distinct applications. Application submission for each program may be submitted concurrently or at different times as the reviews will be conducted by two separate Review Teams.

Length of POM Designation. The POM designation is for a period of five years. At the end of four years, the program applicant is notified that the POM designation is nearing its completion. The POM application fees apply for program applications submitted to continue their POM designation.

Benefits of POM Designation. Once a program is recognized by the Program of Merit designation the following will occur: (1) A program representative will receive a POM certificate at the annual AGHE Business Meeting held during the GSA Annual Scientific Meeting; (2) the program will be listed on the POM webpage on the GSA website; (3) a POM designation logo to include on the program's website and a link to the POM webpage on the GSA website; (4) each year of the POM designation, upon request by the institution, program graduates will receive a

personalized certificate (suitable for framing) stating that the student graduated from a gerontology program (name of program and institution included) that is recognized as an Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education Program of Merit. Additional benefits include using the POM designation to increase marketing and enrollment, to highlight on grant applications, and to garner support from administrators within the institution.

Outcomes and Appeals Process. The Review Team puts forth its recommendation to the POM Chair(s). One of three possible decisions may be made by the Review Team:

1. POM Recommended Unconditionally
 - AGHE includes a listing of the program on the AGHE POM website and the Program is announced at the AGHE Annual Business Meeting.
2. POM Recommended Conditionally
 - Conditions are outlined and a timeline to address the conditions is determined with the Program applicant, normally not to exceed 12 months from time of the review decision.
 - Longer extensions must be approved by the POM Chair(s).
 - An institution’s application is “put on hold” until the necessary improvements are made (avoiding the necessity of paying for a second review).
 - Once Program documentation has been received indicating that the deficiencies have been remedied, the Review Team will make a final recommendation to the POM Chair(s).
3. POM Denied
 - Communication and documentation are shared with the applicant.

If the Program applicant disagrees with either decision 2 or 3 (above) the following course of action may be pursued:

1. The decision of the POM Review Team may be appealed. Appeals must be filed within three months of the decision. The POM Chair or Co-Chair, and one member of the Review Team who conducted the review examines the information (reason for the appeal) put forth by the program applicant. A decision on the appeal is made within three months of receipt of the appeal request.
2. If the appeal is won, the appropriate POM designation will be awarded accordingly.
3. If the appeal fails, a program may reapply for the POM designation after the programmatic deficiencies pointed out in the original review are addressed.

Resource List

AGHE Standards and Guidelines for Gerontology and Geriatrics Programs, Seventh Edition (2021). This publication outlines standards and guidelines for the development of gerontology instruction in institutions of higher education. The document includes a set of recommendations for gerontology program development that applies to any program regardless of academic level or type of credential awarded, as well as curricular guidelines, gerontology/geriatrics competencies, internship/field placement recommendations, and policy recommendations for gerontology or health professions programs.

AGHE Gerontology Competencies for Undergraduate and Graduate Education® (2020). AGHE has adopted a revision of gerontology competencies, originally published in 1993. This competency document reflects the consensus-based recommended core competencies and selective contextual competencies for gerontology programs at the undergraduate and graduate level (not doctoral). Gerontology program leadership and faculty now have the tools to design and implement competency-based education in aging. This document is included as an appendix within the *AGHE Standards and Guidelines, Seventh Edition* document or can be accessed on the GSA website (www.geron.org)

Visit the online store at www.geron.org to purchase these documents or contact membership@geron.org for assistance.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the POM proposal all about?

The POM for gerontology education programs provides a system of review for programs within institutions of higher education. The POM currently reviews gerontology minor, undergraduate or graduate certificate, or specialized programs as well doctoral degree programs. Degree granting programs at the associate, baccalaureate, and master's level may be eligible for POM review if the program has been recently developed or has undergone extensive changes. GSA's Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE), evaluates and recognizes programs that follow the spirit of AGHE's *Standards and Guidelines, Seventh Edition* (2021) to develop quality gerontology programs in higher education. 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.

What costs are involved?

The fee for the evaluation process is kept to a minimum. Because the evaluation is based on a self-study report, this avoids costly site visits. There are other costs, however, which are rolled into the \$650 fee to GSA and AGHE members. These costs include AGHE's *Standards and Guidelines, Seventh Edition* (2021), printed materials, mailings, phone calls, and GSA/AGHE staff support. This is a valuable member benefit, because non-members are charged \$1,550 for the same evaluation.

Some smaller programs will be penalized if the institution has less of an ability to support the program. How will this be addressed?

The POM was designed to be a cost-effective method of evaluation that would be affordable for all institutions. The essential criteria are supplied by AGHE's *Standards and Guidelines* regardless of the size of the program. The review process takes into consideration the local context (e.g., budgetary support, staff support, and local need for the program) of the program applying for the POM designation. These considerations should also be emphasized in the self-study report by the institution within its application document.

Administrators are looking for reasons to cut programs. What would it say about a program if it did not receive the POM designation? Could this be used as a reason to eliminate the program?

This is an important question. The POM process is designed to be **constructive** (recognizing the existing strengths of a program), **directive** (offering specific recommendations for the improvement of a program to bring it in line with AGHE's *Standards and Guidelines*), and **protective** (providing results in such a way as not to put a program in jeopardy). The question above speaks to the last of these three—a protective process. Even before the POM application fee

is paid by the institution, it is wise to request a meeting with the AGHE POM Chair/Co-Chair to discuss the program. The POM Chair/Co-Chair are skilled in such discussions and can provide guidance as to whether the program is ready for POM review. Also, once the fee is paid, the packets for the POM self-study review and criteria the reviewers use are made available to the applicant. Should the POM application be submitted, the results of the evaluation process can be used entirely for an internal review to examine areas for program improvement. Therefore, the results do not need to be sent or shared with higher administration. Whether the results of the evaluation are shared with their institution's leadership can be left to the discretion of the Program applicant. The Program applicant, regardless of the POM outcomes will receive a list of program strengths as well as suggestions for program improvement.

The formal application process may begin at any time, allowing ample time for Program applicants to address Program deficiencies that may have been identified during the early stages of POM inquiry.

What does it say about a program if it does not apply for the POM designation?

It could say several things. It could mean that the program is still in a period of development or the institution has decided not to pursue the POM designation because it either has some other measure of demonstrating quality. There could be a concern that not applying for the POM could indicate that the program is of "lower" or "questionable" quality. The bottom line is, each program needs to determine the benefit/risk ratio for applying/not applying for program recognition as an AGHE Program of Merit. The benefits have been outlined in this information booklet. At any point you are invited to reach out to the POM Chair/Co-Chair to discuss your program and possible pathways for recognition.

Can a program that is considering applying for the POM designation know ahead of time what its chances are of having a favorable outcome?

AGHE periodically provides information about the POM through a variety of means—pre-conference workshops held in conjunction with the GSA Annual Scientific Meeting, presentations during the annual meeting, and articles published in the *AGHExchange* newsletter. The AGHE Program of Merit Chairs are quite forthcoming and a time can be planned to discuss whether the program in question is ready for the POM review. Information is also posted on GSA website (www.geron.org).

HOW TO APPLY

General Guidelines for Gerontology Education Program Applicants

The following guidelines will assist you in writing your self-study report for the POM. If you have questions about these guidelines or the POM Application Form, please contact Gena Schoen, Director of Member Engagement: membership@geron.org or (202) 842-1275.

1. The self-study narrative (excluding Table of Contents, syllabi, and supportive materials) should be no more than 30 pages in length.
2. Include a Table of Contents (not included in the 30-page limit).
3. Type the document. Use 1” margins and 12-pt font.
4. Label appropriately all items included in the appendices, and cite each one in the text of the self-study narrative. NOTE: The appendix for Syllabi and for faculty CVs tend to be many pages. Please be sure to create separate PDF documents for each of these appendices. (See: **Supportive Materials Checklist** below for details on creating the appendices for the Syllabi and Faculty CVs). For all other information included as an appendix, these documents can be merged into one PDF document which needs to include a Table of Contents and corresponding page numbers so the POM Review Team can find each item easily.
5. Use charts and tables when appropriate (e.g., budget, student enrollment rates, graduation rates) to help clarify or illustrate points discussed in the self-study.
6. Create one PDF file for the Self Study Narrative and three (3) PDF files for the Appendices (1) Syllabi; (2) Faculty CVs; and (3) all other documentation referred to in appendices in the Self Study Narrative. Each Appendix/Appendices document requires a Table of Contents and Page numbers. Thank you.

NOTE: The AGHE POM Review Team’s central question as they conduct the review is: **Is this gerontology program sustainable over the next five years?**

It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure this question is addressed affirmatively through the answers provided within the application (be sure answers are descriptive and written for the person who knows nothing about your program) and the supporting documents.

Supportive Materials Checklist

Required Documents

- College or university catalog documentation of the gerontology program being reviewed (include a copy in the appendix or provide web link).
- Assessment plan for the gerontology program and assessment outcomes such as course evaluations, internship/field placement evaluations, student advising assessment, student exit interviews, etc.
- Syllabi for all courses included in the gerontology competency-based curricula. The gerontology competencies in each course syllabus should be clearly identified within the objectives, assignments, and evaluation of material (learning outcomes). **IMPORTANT:** Create a PDF document of all Syllabi with a Table of Contents. In the table of contents list each course syllabus that is included in the document and corresponding page number of where it can be found.
- Curriculum Matrix (included in the Standards and Guidelines 7th Edition) – a “map” of the relationship between the curriculum and student learning outcomes in which various course objectives or competencies are applied and assessed. The Program should provide a matrix outlining the timeline and assessment for student learning outcomes during each year of the assessment cycle.
- Field supervisor’s evaluation form (or other forms to assess students’ performance in the field).
- Course/competency-based evaluation form and a summary of evaluation outcomes.
- Curriculum vita for faculty whose primary teaching duties are in the gerontology program. **IMPORTANT:** Create a PDF document of included faculty CVs with a table of contents. In the Table of Contents list each faculty CV that is included in the document and the corresponding page number of where each CV can be found.

Recommended Documents (include to facilitate the review process)

- Letters of support – one or two letters of support for the program from administrators (e.g., department head, dean, provost) and two or three letters from community agency representatives. If you are not submitting letters with your application materials, please explain why.
- Advisement survey instrument (if one is used) and summary report

- Alumni survey instrument (if available) and summary report
- Capstone paper guidelines (if one is required)
- Exit interview questionnaire (if one is used) and summary report

Please submit 3 PDF files

- 1) The application and supporting materials (addendums) not included in (2) or (3) below (e.g., competency matrices, evaluation/assessment tables, and materials, letters, etc.);
- 2) The syllabi with a Table of Contents listing the syllabi and the page number for each; and
- 3) The CVs of primary teaching faculty in the program with a Table of Contents listing the names and page number for each faculty CV.

NOTE: Include the name of the institution in each of the 3 PDF file names along with (1) Application; (2) Syllabi; and (3) Faculty CVs.

Submit application to Gena Schoen, Director of Member Engagement:

membership@geron.org

Subject Line: Program of Merit



PROGRAM OF MERIT APPLICATION FORM Gerontology Education Programs

Part I Overview, History, and Description of the Program

Questions in this section provide the reviewers with a clear sense of your program, how it evolved, how it fits within the institution, who it serves, how it operates, how it is administered, and so forth. Information from this section is essential for reviewers to have a sense of context as they read about your program goals, accomplishments, and challenges in your self-evaluation (Part II).

A. Title of the Gerontology Program

Provide the official level of the credential (i.e., minor, certificate, specialization or doctoral level).

B. History of the Program

Please discuss the evolution of your program. Address the following issues:

1. How long has the program been in existence?
2. How and why was the program originally developed?
3. What have been the program's significant achievements?
4. Describe how the program has changed over the years.
5. Discuss the size of the college/university, and changes in the college/university which have affected your program.
6. Briefly describe the community (geographic and demographic) your institution serves.

C. Program Mission

State the mission of the program AND state the mission of the institution.

1. Describe how the program's mission fits into the broader mission of the college/university.

D. Major Challenges and Opportunities

1. List the ongoing (long-term) problems or difficulties inherent in the program that have been challenging to address over time.
2. Please state which of these challenges are a priority to be addressed.
3. What is the plan for addressing the issues in the short term (within the next year)?
4. How will the plan outcomes either support or challenge your program's longevity?
5. List the opportunities that are within reach for your program.
6. How will each of these opportunities aid the longevity of your program?

E. Organizational Structure and Administration

1. Where does the program fit within the organizational structure of the college/university?
 - a. Describe where the gerontology program is "housed" and why is it within this structure.
 - b. To whom does the gerontology program director (chair/coordinator) report?
2. How is the program director (chair/coordinator) selected or appointed and renewed?
 - a. What is the term of appointment and under what circumstances can it be terminated or renewed?
 - b. What are the rights and responsibilities of the program director (e.g., job description)?
 - c. Describe the review process (include how often the review occurs and by whom).
 - d. What is the type and level of support the program director/coordinator receives from their supervisor and from the institution's leadership?
3. Is the level of administrative staffing appropriate?
 - a. How much of the program director's time is devoted to administration?
 - b. What type of support staff is available? How much of their time is devoted to the program?
4. In what ways has the administrative structure (reporting or staffing) changed over the years?
 - a. If it has changed what effect has this had on the gerontology program?
5. What is the annual budget?

- a. Allowing for inflation, is the level of funding increasing, decreasing, or staying about the same?
- b. Who controls the budget?
- c. Describe institutional support and any other sources of income, including grant activities or donations. Is this support ongoing or temporary? Is the support increasing, decreasing, or staying about the same?

NOTE: The budget must reflect the program that is being reviewed for POM status. In the case where a number of gerontology programs within one unit/department share one budget, provide the overall budget stating what programs are included within this budget and then provide an estimate of budget allotments to the program under review.

6. What resources are available to purchase books, journals, and audiovisual and other instructional materials?

F. Students

1. How many students completed your program in the past year? How many are currently enrolled? What is the average over the past three years? Is that number increasing, decreasing, or staying the same? How does the number compare with the original estimates for the program? (Preparing a table is useful)
2. How are students recruited and selected?
3. Describe the student population that is most interested in the program.
4. Describe the trends regarding continuing student interest in the program? What is drawing student interest to apply for this program, what are the deterrents?
5. What have been the trends in the number, type, and quality of students in the program? In what ways has this changed over the years?
6. What types of student services are available (e.g., financial aid, job placement)?
7. Describe the advising of students in this program. How is this assessed and how frequently?

G. Faculty

1. How many faculty (full-time employee positions and total number of people) are involved in the program?
2. What percentage is full-time, part-time, adjunct faculty? For each faculty member, what percentage of his or her time is committed to the gerontology program?
3. What proportion of the faculty is in tenured or tenure-track lines? NOTE: Include a table with the faculty name, academic rank, status (full/part time adjunct), percent

time dedicated to your program, tenure/non-tenure status.

4. Describe the disciplinary background of the faculty (this question seeks information on the diversity of academic backgrounds of the faculty teaching in the gerontology program).
5. What changes have occurred in the number of faculty, disciplinary backgrounds of faculty members, or other characteristics of the faculty (e.g., full- or part-time status, tenured or non-tenure status) over the years?
6. Is the number of full-time faculty members adequate to meet the needs of the program? Discuss how the current balance of full-time to part-time, tenure-line to adjunct, etc.) is appropriate and desirable for your program?

H. Relationship with the Community

1. Describe current relationships with agencies and organizations within the community and how they relate to the gerontology program. Discuss the extent to which such a connection is consistent with the mission of your program.
 - a. What is the connection with the aging network and how does it function?
 - b. In what ways do faculty provide service to community agencies and organizations (e.g., board memberships, consultation)?
 - c. What opportunities do students have to participate in a volunteer capacity? Provide examples and approximate hours in an academic year?
 - d. Describe how community agencies and organizations are receptive to students doing practicum placements or internships on site; provide examples.
2. Address if there has been changes over the years with regard to your relationship with and activity within the community.
3. Is there a community advisory committee to the gerontology instructional program? If so, how are members appointed? What are the term limits if any? What is the committee's function?
4. What special events does your program provide or help to plan (e.g., conferences, workshops, and lectures?) If so, provide details.
5. Are continuing education and/or community service programs offered? If yes, provide information on these and address in what ways are those programs consistent with the goals of the instructional program?
6. To what extent has the community been involved in providing feedback to the program?

Part II Self-Evaluation

In this section you are asked to present your reflections on the fit of your program's operations with its goals. Whenever appropriate, refer to local context to explain the ways in which the gerontology program adheres to or departs from either the *AGHE Standards and Guidelines for Gerontology and Geriatrics Programs, Seventh Edition* (2021) or the *AGHE Gerontology Competencies for Undergraduate and Graduate Education*® (2021). For points of departure, a rationale must be stated ensuring that the gerontology program is attending to key educational components.

A. Components of the Instructional Program

1. What are the goals of the program?
 - a. What are the program's learning outcome goals for students? What should students know and be able to do when they complete the program? (See and complete the Matrix located in the Appendix of the 7th Edition)
 - b. In what ways are those goals consistent with the mission of your academic institution?
 - c. Your program should have an assessment plan for determining whether program goals have been met. What criteria are used to assess program quality? What progress, if any, has been made using the results of past assessment? Please attach this plan as an addendum to this application form and include assessment data from the past 2-3 years.
 - d. What role does the faculty have in contributing to curriculum construction, implementation and assessment?
 - e. Share the ways the program has been successful in reaching those goals? Which goals have been met? Which have not? For those not met, please explain.
 - f. When was the last time these goals were changed/updated? How is it determined if changes or updates need to be made to the goals? How often do you review the goals for updates or changes?
2. Describe the curriculum (attach sheets from the institutional catalog and curriculum materials in the appendices of this application form or provide a link to the website).
 - a. How is the core content of gerontology covered so that it coincides with the *AGHE Standards and Guidelines, 7th Edition (2021)* or *AGHE Gerontology Competencies (2021)*?
 - b. Does the curricular content of the program deviate from the competencies recommended by either of the above listed AGHE documents? If so, please explain how the program deviates and the rationale for doing so. How does this affect the quality of gerontology education received by students?
 - c. Is there a clear sequencing of competencies within the courses in the gerontology curriculum? Please explain. If there is not a clear sequencing, explain why this is so and the rationale for this curricular approach.
 - d. Describe the evaluation process for faculty and courses. How often is each evaluated?

- a. What tool(s) is/are used to evaluate faculty and courses? (Include the tool(s) as an addendum to the application.)
 - e. Is there specialization within the program? If so, how are specializations covered within the curriculum?
- 3. Is a practicum or field placement required for your program according to the *AGHE Standards and Guidelines, 7th Edition* (2021)?
 - a. If yes, discuss how your program meets or exceeds the guidelines for practicum/field placement.
 - 1) In what ways is the practicum requirement consistent with the objectives of the program?
 - 2) How many contact hours are required?
 - 3) How are students supervised and evaluated?
 - 4) How are the field placement sites oriented and evaluated to ensure the partnership is successful/productive for student learning?
 - 5) Please list pertinent student benefits that have resulted from your field placements.
 - b. If your program deviates from the guidelines for practicum/field placement/internship, it is important to map out the opportunities students have to attain experiential learning hours through their courses.
- 4. Are there opportunities beyond the field placement, practicum, or courses for students to interact with older people (e.g., service-learning) within the community as a part of the regular curriculum? Please describe these interactions and how they contribute to students' educational experiences in gerontology.

B. Faculty

CVs for faculty who have primary teaching duties in the gerontology program are to be included in an appendix (see Supportive Materials Checklist: Page 11). For each CV, yellow highlight citations that are related to aging. This includes education/degrees, job titles, awards/honors, teaching/courses, grants/research, publications, presentations, service and leadership that relate to the field of aging.

C. Students Support

- 1. It is encouraged for each gerontology program to have an organization for students to socialize students into the field of gerontology, integrate them into the larger community, and give them a sense of cohesion. If you have such an organization or student chapter of a state or national organization, please answer the following:
 - a. What is the mission or goal of this organization and when was it created?
 - b. What activities does the organization tend to create, host, or participate in?
 - c. How do the activities of the organization relate to the overall mission of the gerontology program?

- d. How is the organization supervised? If there is a faculty member that advises the organization, how is that person selected and what is their role?
- e. Provide the student leadership structure including the officers, how they are selected or elected, and how long they hold the leadership position,

D. Program and Student Assessment

1. Describe the evaluation process for faculty and courses. How often is each evaluated? What tool(s) is/are used to evaluate faculty and courses? (Include the tool(s) as an addendum to the application)
2. What type of methods are in place to get feedback from students graduating from the program? How is feedback review conducted and what types of questions are asked? If a survey is conducted, please attach it to the application as an addendum.
3. For the gerontology program:
 - a. Provide information regarding areas of the program that students express they are satisfied or like?
 - b. What areas do students express dissatisfaction with?
4. How many students leave the gerontology program without graduating? If exit interviews are conducted with these students, why are their reasons for leaving?
5. If exit interviews are not conducted, why not?
6. Describe your assessment system for ascertaining information from program graduates in terms of job placement or continuing education or graduate degree enrollment? (This information may be best presented in a table)
 - a. What percentage of the program's graduates are employed in the field? Please address the employment trends of your students.
 - b. What types of jobs do the graduates get hired for?
7. Please describe any other mechanisms used to elicit feedback from students enrolled in the gerontology program.
8. Attached copies of surveys or other evaluation documents as an addendum to the application.

NOTE: Include survey outcomes on student satisfaction/dissatisfaction, the gerontology program in general, employment or continuing education data, or exit interviews for at least the past 2-3 years.

Please submit 3 PDF files

- 1) The application and supporting materials (addendums) not included in (2) or (3) below (e.g., competency matrices, evaluation/assessment tables, and materials, letters, etc.);
- 2) The syllabi with a Table of Contents listing the syllabi and the page number

- for each; and
- 3) The CVs of primary teaching faculty in the program with a Table of Contents listing the names and page number for each faculty CV.

NOTE: Include the name of the institution in each of the 3 PDF file names along with (1) Application; (2) Syllabi; and (3) Faculty CVs.

Submit application to Gena Schoen, Director of Member Engagement:
membership@geron.org
Subject Line: Program of Merit

For additional information contact:

Membership@geron.org
The Gerontological Society of America
www.geron.org

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