

Gerontology

In the School of Social Work
In the College of Health and Human Services

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Faculty

Emeritus: DuBois, Harbert, Stanford

Professors: Garrett, Min

Associate Professor: Ko

Assistant Professor: Li

Offered by the School of Social Work

Master of Science degree in gerontology.

Major in gerontology with the B.A degree in liberal arts and sciences.

Minor in gerontology.

Certificate in applied gerontology (offered only in the College of Extended Studies).

The Major

Gerontology concerns itself with the study and application of knowledge about the physical, social, and economic conditions of older people. Since the process of aging touches all aspects of human activity, gerontology is interdisciplinary in nature. Gerontology is becoming a major area of research in the biological, behavioral, and social sciences. With a rapid increase of older people, has come a growing need for more trained professionals to apply new knowledge about the elderly. Such knowledge is needed for planning and developing programs and services which improve the quality of life for older Americans.

Gerontological training and research is an important link in meeting the social, physical, and psychological needs of the elderly. Students of gerontology benefit through the personal understanding of their own aging process. Those wishing to pursue careers in aging will find many exciting opportunities for serving the elderly in a variety of settings.

It is through research, teaching, and community involvement that faculty members from numerous disciplines provide for the intellectual development of students, the enhancement of community programs, and the assurance of a better quality of life for older people in the community, the state, and the nation.

Program Goals

- Provide academic programs and experiences through courses and field experiences, leading to an undergraduate degree in a major and minor in gerontology.
- Provide interdisciplinary education and training that meet the diverse needs of older people in California and in the U.S.
- Prepare students as generalist gerontologists for careers in a variety of gerontological settings such as senior centers, senior service organizations, area and state agencies on aging, supportive senior housing, public, non-profit and corporate settings, health and long term care facilities.
- Provide students with knowledge of aging network and programs on the local, state, and federal level.
- Provide students with knowledge and skills to identify and understand stereotypes and attitude toward older adults, and emphasize their places and contributions in society.
- Prepare students with knowledge needed in describing, assessing and critiquing various programs, intervention and services designed for older adults.
- Prepare students to meet the needs of older adults with cultural competence regarding age, gender, race and ethnicity, and/or diverse abilities.
- Prepare students for evidence-based practice with older adults with appropriate research methods to develop, implement, and evaluate the aging programs and services.

Program Outcomes

- Describe the process of physical (biological), psychological, social aging, and related theories of aging.
- Know about the diverse needs of the older population in terms of age, gender, race and ethnicity, and/or diverse abilities.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the aging network consisting of programs and policies for the aging population.
- Describe and understand own attitudes toward and beliefs about old age and older adults, and reflect and analyze stereotypes or attitudes towards old adults in the portrayal of aging by society.
- Understand basic concepts of research methods necessary to describe and discuss efficacy and effectiveness of the services and program for older adults as guided and informed by empirical evidence.
- Develop effective written, oral, and interpersonal communication skills with individuals, caregivers, families, and community through professional field experiences.
- Demonstrate case management skills such as interviewing, assessment, and report writing.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding necessary to describe, assess, and critique various programs, intervention and services to meet the needs of the growing aging population.
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary to advocate for the needs of older adults and their families by engaging in policy formation, implementation, and analysis.
- Understand the ethical complexities that surround issues with respect to aging.

Advising

All College of Health and Human Services majors are urged to consult with their department adviser as soon as possible; they are required to meet with their department adviser within the first two semesters after declaration or change of major.

Retention Policy

The College of Health and Human Services expects that all gerontology majors will make reasonable academic progress towards the degree. Gerontology premajors who have completed major preparatory courses, earned 60 units, but have less than a 2.0 GPA may be removed from the premajor and placed in undeclared.

Impacted Program

The gerontology major is an impacted program. To be admitted to the gerontology major, students must meet the following criteria:

- a. Complete preparation for the major;
- b. Complete a minimum of 60 transferable semester units;
- c. Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0.

To complete the major, students must fulfill the degree requirements for the major described in the catalog in effect at the time they are accepted into the premajor at SDSU (assuming continuous enrollment).

Major Academic Plans (MAPs)

Visit <http://www.sdsu.edu/mymap> for the recommended courses needed to fulfill your major requirements. The MAPs website was created to help students navigate the course requirements for their majors and to identify which General Education course will also fulfill a major preparation course requirement.

Gerontology Major

With the B.A Degree in Liberal Arts and Sciences
(Major Code: 21043) (SIMS Code: 551902)

All candidates for a degree in liberal arts and sciences must complete the graduation requirements listed in the section of this catalog on "Graduation Requirements." No more than 48 units in gerontology courses can apply to the degree.

A minor is not required with this major.

Preparation for the Major. Gerontology 101, 250; Biology 100; Child and Family Development 135; Psychology 101; Public Health 101; and Social Work 110. (21 units)

Language Requirement. Competency (successfully completing the third college semester or fifth college quarter) is required in one foreign language to fulfill the graduation requirement. Refer to the section of this catalog on "Graduation Requirements."

Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement. Passing the Writing Placement Assessment with a score of 10 or completing one of the approved upper division writing courses (W) with a grade of C (2.0) or better. See "Graduation Requirements" section for a complete listing of requirements.

International Experience. All gerontology majors are required to participate in an international experience to increase awareness of cross-cultural issues, global health, economic, political, cultural, social services, and health challenges experienced by local populations in international environments. Students participate in residence for two or more weeks (exemption from the study abroad portion of the requirement must be approved by the dean of the college based on serious and compelling life events or physical limitations; a relevant course and community service activity in the U.S. will be substituted). Specific details can be found at <http://chhs.sdsu.edu/international/>.

To meet the international experience requirement, majors must complete one of the following:

1. A CSU Study Abroad Program;
2. An SDSU Exchange Program;
3. An SDSU Study Abroad Program;
4. An SDSU Study Travel Program;

OR

5. One course selected from:
 - Health and Human Services 290 or 350;
 - Asian Studies 490;
 - Education 450;
 - General Studies 450;
 - International Security and Conflict Resolution 450;
 - Latin American Studies 450;
 - Political Science 450;
 - Science 350.

Major. A minimum of 36 upper division units to include Gerontology 310, 360, 370, 380, 400A, 520, Social Work 381, 391; and 12 units selected with approval of the adviser from Gerontology 400B, 496, 499, and 596 (when appropriate); Communication 321, Exercise and Nutritional Sciences 433; General Studies 420; Psychology 380, 456; Public Health 362, Social Work 382*, 483A*.

* Prerequisites waived.

Gerontology Minor

(SIMS Code: 551901)

The minor in gerontology consists of a minimum of 18 units selected from Gerontology 101, 310, 360, 370, 380, 400A, 499, 520, 596; Exercise and Nutritional Sciences 433; General Studies 420; Psychology 380; Social Work 120, 381.

Additional prerequisites may be required for the courses in the minor.

Courses in the minor may not be counted toward the major or the certificate, but may be used to satisfy preparation for the major and general education requirements, if applicable. A minimum of six upper division units must be completed in residence at San Diego State University.

Applied Gerontology Certificate

(Offered only in the College of Extended Studies)

(SIMS Code: 551903)

This program is designed for persons working in the field of aging as well as those interested in obtaining employment in the aging field. Completion of the certificate program will enable participants to assume greater responsibility by broadening their knowledge of and skill in this specialty area. More specifically, the program is designed to provide the following:

1. A broad knowledge base in the bio-psycho-social aspects of aging.
2. Practical knowledge and skills in the application of this information towards services for older people.
3. Knowledge of government programs and program planning and evaluation techniques.
4. Knowledge of programs and services operating in local areas as well as gaps which exist in local programming.
5. Knowledge and skills needed to function in an advocacy capacity to improve services to the elderly.

Certificate Requirements:

1. Complete 18 semester units of coursework with a grade point average of 2.0 or better.
2. Complete coursework within four years after admission to the program.
3. Petition the College of Extended Studies for the certificate upon completion of 18 semester units.

To be admitted to the program, students are expected to show by previous coursework and/or experience some evidence of potential for completing the academic program. Previous courses in gerontology taken at SDSU or at other universities will be considered for credit toward certification on an individual basis, but not to exceed nine units.

The School of Social Work is responsible for the coordination of the certificate program in conjunction with the College of Extended Studies. Admission applications may be obtained from the College of Extended Studies. Applications may be submitted prior to entering the program or before the completion of nine semester units of coursework.

Students are required to submit an Open University Registration Form each semester to the College of Extended Studies.

Students accepted into the program will be assigned an adviser by the School of Social Work.

Required Courses for the Certificate Program

A minimum of 12 semester units must be selected from four of the five following areas inclusive of the practicum:

I. Introduction to Gerontology

Gerontology 101. Introduction to Human Aging (3)

II. Biological Aspects of Aging

Gerontology 310. Biology of Aging (3)

III. Psychological Aspects of Aging

Psychology 350. Abnormal Psychology (3)

IV. Sociological Aspects of Aging

Gerontology 380. Social Issues of Aging (3)

V. Practicum

Gerontology 400A or 400B. Practicum in Gerontology (3) (Cr/NC)

Elective Courses

A minimum of six semester units selected from the following:

- Gerontology 360. Diversity and Aging (3)
- Gerontology 370. Images of Aging in Contemporary Society (3)
- Gerontology 499. Special Study (1-3)
- Gerontology 520. Analysis of Programs for the Aging (3)
- Gerontology 596. Advanced Special Topics in Gerontology (1-4)
- Women's Studies 310. Global Cultures and Women's Lives (3)

COURSES (GERO)

Refer to *Courses and Curricula and University Policies* sections of this catalog for explanation of the course numbering system, unit or credit hour, prerequisites, and related information.

LOWER DIVISION COURSES**GERO 101. Introduction to Human Aging (3) [GE]**

Overview of field of gerontology, including demographic trends, basic theories, concepts and philosophic ideas, social policies, planning issues, and services available to meet needs and problems of older adults.

GERO 250. Intergenerational Issues and the Elderly (3)

Controversial issues surrounding interpersonal relations between older adults and other age groups.

GERO 296. Experimental Topics (1-4)

Selected topics. May be repeated with new content. See *Class Schedule* for specific content. Limit of nine units of any combination of 296, 496, 596 courses applicable to a bachelor's degree.

**UPPER DIVISION COURSES
(Intended for Undergraduates)****GERO 310. Biology of Aging (3)**

Prerequisite: Gerontology 101 or 250.

Biological aging processes and impact on development of disease in later life. Age-associated diseases, approaches to prevent or reverse adverse effects of biological aging to promote healthy span, biological aging in various body systems, lifespans, mortality rates and senescence, and theories of aging.

GERO 350. Social Policy and Aging (3)

Prerequisite: Gerontology 101.

Policy development process including analyses, evaluation, and advocacy. Social controversies about aging of populations. Review of U. S. Social Security and Medicare. Analysis of Older Americans Act.

GERO 360. Diversity and Aging (3) [GE]

Prerequisite: Gerontology 101 or completion of the General Education requirement in Foundations of Learning IIB, Social and Behavioral Sciences required for nonmajors.

Attitudes and cultural values related to aging members of ethnic and minority groups. Influences of class, gender, sexual orientation, economic resources and health on aging process.

GERO 370. Images of Aging in Contemporary Society (3) [GE]

Prerequisite: Gerontology 101 or completion of the General Education requirement in Foundations of Learning IIB, Social and Behavioral Sciences required for nonmajors.

Impact of current cultural attitudes and values on images of older persons. Influence of media and advertising in creating views and perceptions of aging. Major myths and stereotypes.

GERO 380. Social Issues of Aging (3)

Prerequisite: Gerontology 101 or 250.

Attitudes toward aging shaped through various cultural, media, and social institutions. Interaction of personal social status characteristics with both social institutions and policies. Quality of life for people of all ages.

GERO 400A-400B. Practicum in Gerontology (3-3) Cr/NC

Two hundred hours of internship.

Prerequisites: Gerontology 360, 370, 380.

Integration of theoretical background and practical experience in providing services to elderly. Fieldwork and observation in settings providing services to the elderly. Direct experience in aging projects relevant to their field of interest.

GERO 402. Aging Network (3)

Prerequisite: Three units in gerontology.

Networks, programs, and services available to older adults in communities. Effectiveness of programs that assist older adults to age successfully.

GERO 496. Experimental Topics (1-4)

Selected topics. May be repeated with new content. See *Class Schedule* for specific content. Limit of nine units of any combination of 296, 496, 596 courses applicable to a bachelor's degree.

GERO 499. Special Study (1-3)

Prerequisite: Consent of department chair.

Individual study. Maximum credit six units.

**UPPER DIVISION COURSES
(Also Acceptable for Advanced Degrees)****GERO 520. Analysis of Programs for the Aging (3)**

Prerequisite: One upper division course in gerontology.

Major programs in aging that support daily functioning of elderly. Effectiveness of programs in serving today's elderly with attention to ethnic and cross-cultural variations.

GERO 596. Advanced Special Topics in Gerontology (1-4)

Advanced selected topics in gerontology. May be repeated with new content. See *Class Schedule* for specific content. Limit of nine units of any combination of 296, 496, 596 courses applicable to a bachelor's degree. Maximum credit of six units of 596 applicable to a bachelor's degree. Credit for 596 and 696 applicable to a master's degree with approval of the graduate adviser.

**GRADUATE COURSES
Refer to the *Graduate Bulletin*.****Greek**

Refer to "Classics" in this section of the catalog.