

GERONTOLOGY

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GERONTOLOGY

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The task of providing educational leadership in the area of Gerontology should be a shared responsibility of the California college system based on the identified needs of professional and business partners. The number of California community colleges offering Gerontology programs is increasing. The variety and scope of the programs speak to the ability of the community colleges to respond to the ever-changing needs of older adults and their families. Society is changing rapidly, and becoming more diverse (e.g., culture, ethnicity, age, abilities, religion, language and life style) throughout California. Educators must be prepared to lead students, families and communities into the future with the basic skills, workplace and life-long competencies necessary for successful aging.

The impact of the aging of the population requires us to increase the number of classes offered in Gerontology. Gerontology programs should offer a blend of general education and career technical training. These programs may lead to a certificate or an AA degree, with the potential for articulation into a four-year college or university. Internships and service learning requirements allow students to provide important services to older adults, families, and communities. To provide quality instruction and continuing professional development, colleges must make an ongoing commitment of human and material resources to Gerontology programs.

Goals:

The goals for programs in Gerontology are to:

- Provide a comprehensive core curriculum.
- Maintain high academic standards through comprehensive program content, methods of effective instruction with appropriate assessment, and adequately-trained personnel.
- Offer curriculum anchored in evidence-based research to meet the biological, psychological and social needs of the aging population.
- Provide coursework, practicum, internship and experiential learning to prepare students to work with a diverse older population.
- Provide programs that remain flexible and responsive to changing community needs and the dynamics of the workplace.
- Provide services to improve access, retention and transfer opportunities to support a diverse student body in completing its educational, career or personal goals.

- Promote program of study, collaborative activities and statewide articulation through regional and statewide cooperation among community colleges, secondary programs, four-year institutions and other educational/training agencies.
- Conduct ongoing program review.
- Incorporate regulatory changes and legislative mandates into curriculum.
- Explore appropriate instructional delivery methods such as online, satellite, cable and interactive technology.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Career Paths

Students studying Gerontology at California community colleges may proceed through career paths to various levels of employment and learning. Though the entry level (Level I) does allow students to be employed, it is recommended that they pursue an AA/AS degree to facilitate upward mobility on the career ladder. Some of the following careers may not have established educational requirements.

Career Technical Certificates (Level I) - The entry/certificate levels provide students with basic skills and knowledge leading to employment.

Primarily to prepare individuals for immediate employment. Some jobs will require additional training.

Activity Coordinator
 Care/Case Aide
 Elder Care Provider
 Geriatric Aide
 Home Care Specialist
 Home Health Aide
 Intergenerational Care Provider
 Nurse Aide
 Professional Caregiver
 Program Aide or Assistant
 Registry Coordinator
 Volunteer Services

AA/AS Degree (Level II): Technical- The AA/AS degree provides students with skills and knowledge for jobs in Gerontology. It also provides the requisite foundation for transfer to a four-year college or university.

Completion of a community college AA/AS degree in Gerontology may require a minimum of 60 semester credit hours, of which at least 24 semester credits are specific to the major field of study and include a supervised field/work experience.

- Case Manager
- Community Activity Planner
- Community Services Worker
- Community Support Worker
- Family Services Worker
- Human Service Worker
- Life Skills Counselor
- Mental Health Aide
- Occupational Therapy Aide
- Physical Therapy Aide
- Recreation Specialist
- Registry Coordinator
- Registered Nurse
- Residential Counselor Aide
- Respiratory Therapy Aide
- Senior Center Director
- Senior Supportive Services
- Social Work Assistant

BA/BS Degree (Level III): Professional - The BA/BS degree provides students with skills and knowledge for professional positions within Gerontology.

Completion of a four-year bachelor's degree in Gerontology or related subject.

- Agency Director of Family Services
- Career Coordinator/Life Coach
- Case Manager
- Discharge Planner
- Family Resources Consultant
- Industry Consultant
- Occupational Therapist
- Recreational Therapist
- Referral and Placement Specialist
- Respiratory Therapist
- Retirement Planning Specialist
- Social Services Director
- State or Federal Government Administrator

MA/MS or PhD/MD (Level IV): Post Professional - Advanced degrees provide students with the qualifications for more advanced employment.

Completion of a master's or doctorate in Gerontology or related subject:

Administrator (Adult Day Health Care)
Audiologist
Community College Instructor
Family Financial Advisor
Geriatrician
Gerontologist
Gerontological Counselor
Lifelong Learning Specialist
Marriage and Family Therapist
Physical Therapist
Social Worker
Speech Pathologist
University Professor

Note: Refer to the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT)*, **O*NET OnLine** at online.onetcenter.org or consult your campus career information center for additional job titles and information. An additional reference is C. Joanne Grabinski's *101+ Careers in Gerontology*, Springer Publishing.

Future Outlook

As the career ladder demonstrates, the career opportunities in Gerontology are vast. The trend toward corporate and government interest in aging issues will provide increased career opportunities.

The Labor Market Information (LMI) data on current employment opportunities by county should be utilized as a resource for projecting current and emerging jobs and placement potential. This data is available at each California community college and on the Internet.

- Projections for Occupations
<http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/?pageid=1011>
- Projections for Wages
<http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/?pageid=1009>
- For Educators and Trainers, the occupations for which you should provide training <http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/?pageid=112>

The percentage of older adults in California is increasing dramatically, especially among the 85+ population. By the year 2030 in California, older adults will represent 20% of the total population (*California Department of Aging, 2008*). Community programs and services are urgently needed to address issues such as: retirement planning, housing, health care, companionship, recreational needs, balanced nutrition, home management, in-home

services, consumer protection and elder abuse. In response to this increasing older adult population, more courses and educational programs in Gerontology are necessary.

Gerontology is an emerging career field with opportunities available from the certificate through the advanced degree levels. Colleges and universities are expanding educational programs at all levels to address the varied functional abilities and needs of older adults. It is important to convey to students the heterogeneity of our aging population, the difference between normal aging and disease states, and the distinction between chronological and functional age.

CURRICULUM: PROGRAMS, CERTIFICATES AND COURSES

This curriculum is designed to provide a multi-level program of study for students interested in pursuing careers in Gerontology. Courses within the curriculum provide course work to meet state licensing requirements to work with individuals across the age span and provide part of the undergraduate requirements necessary for students wishing to transfer to a four-year institution. Selected courses provide students with lifelong learning skills. Departmental designation and unit value may vary among institutions.

Programs and Certificates

A career technical program is a coherent sequence of core instructional courses that prepares a student for a first job, typically including a high school diploma followed by one or two years of post secondary education, resulting in a skill certificate with or without the AA/AS Diploma. It also incorporates work-based or school-based learning. Each campus should offer additional courses as an extension of the core curriculum in order to complete majors and certification, as well as to meet the specific needs of each community and job market.

It is recommended that these options be made available to students enrolled in Gerontology Instructional Programs.

Gerontology Curriculum

- Introduction to Gerontology
- Biological Aging/ Physiology of Aging/Health Aspects of Aging
- Psychological Aging or Mental Health
- Sociology of Aging
- Health and Human Services Programs and Policies
- Field Practicum

Gerontology Elective Examples:

- Adult Development and Aging
- Caregiving
- Death and Dying
- Nutrition for Healthy Aging

The practicum experience in the Gerontology component should take place in a senior center, retirement apartment complex, adult day care center or other appropriate site serving older adults. Instructional staff should approve sites and provide supervision of the student interns, focusing on topics of working with the elderly included in the core components of the curriculum.

Course Classifications

TOP Classification: The TOP (Taxonomy of Programs) Code classification for Gerontology is:

1309.00 – Gerontology

Principles and practices of working with older adults. Includes physical, social, economic, emotional, health care and support services needs and concerns, related legislation, and community resources.

Career Technical: Courses included in the Gerontology program are considered to be career technical education. Some are general education.

Transfer: Transfer courses have course content that is either currently articulated as an equivalent course at a four-year transfer institution or is a prerequisite for a course at a four-year institution.

Lifelong Learning, Continuing and Adult Education: Many of the courses within the program provide knowledge and skills that enhance quality of life. These courses are offered to students seeking career technical education or with general interest in the subject area.

Community colleges also have the opportunity to offer non-credit adult education courses within this subject area. The purpose, content and class hours should be determined by the local community needs.

Levels: There are four levels identified for the Gerontology area. These levels were explained in the *Career Opportunities* section.

Electives: Some of the courses listed could serve as electives for non-Gerontology majors to complement their study for a degree or certificate or to develop job specific skills. In addition, Gerontology majors might take non-Gerontology courses as electives to complement their study.

Work Experience/Internship/Field Studies: Students benefit from having work site experiences within their subject area and related to their educational goal. Students are encouraged to participate in supervised/monitored field experience and travel study courses to gain a deeper understanding of the relationships between classroom and practical application.

General Education: California community colleges' philosophy supports the belief that in granting an associate degree, the college certifies that the recipient has acquired a broad general knowledge of the physical world and its inhabitants, the achievements of humankind, a clear and logical manner of thinking and computational, analytical and communication skills. Each college specifies its own general education requirements with the intent to encourage each graduate to attain this knowledge in a manner consistent with the graduate's interests and goals. Transfer students should be encouraged to have general education courses certified by the community college.

For example, the Life Management course taught in many Family and Consumer Sciences departments currently satisfies a General Education requirement for the Associate degree at a number of California community colleges and for certification and transfer to four-year institutions. On some campuses the course satisfies the social science requirement while at others it has been accepted under lifelong understanding and self-development (See the Consumer Studies chapter of this *Family and Consumer Sciences Program Plan* for more details).

Interdisciplinary: Although a major in Gerontology is identified in this *Family and Consumer Sciences Program Plan* as part of the Family and Consumer Sciences curriculum, there are other avenues available for students to study these subjects via other educational delivery systems. As these subject matters overlap other disciplines, colleges should develop strong interdisciplinary ties. It is imperative to initiate collaborative processes between disciplines regarding skills in the areas of:

- Understanding human development across the ages
- Interpersonal relations/team building
- Developing broader perspectives of career options
- Grant writing/accountability
- Marketing/research/values
- Planning for underserved, changing and diverse populations
- Basic skills
- Literacy in arts and sciences

Collaboration can be accomplished by utilizing methods such as:

- Team teaching
- Cross-listed courses
- Dividing costs between disciplines
- Collaborative development of courses
- Learning communities
- Cooperative publicity

These interdisciplinary efforts between disciplines should compliment the shared concepts into existing curriculum and not replace the delivery within the traditional department. All interdisciplinary approaches must be implemented with sensitivity to the needs of current and future populations.

Curriculum Integration and Implementation

To utilize this *Family and Consumer Sciences Program Plan*, faculty needs to take the *Curriculum: Programs, Certificates and Courses* and the *Course Description, Core Components and Student Learning Outcomes* sections and personalize them to their college and community. In the development of the course content, the topical outline, measurable objectives, evaluation methods and assignments for the course, certain national educational issues must be addressed. Some of these issues relate to federal legislation, others closely affect the delivery of education. Family and Consumer Sciences courses and programs encompassing these issues will be positioned to stay in the forefront of educational reform. See the *Family and Consumer Sciences Program Plan Introduction* for more details.

Core Indicators: The Core Indicators are accountability requirements that measure the performance of career technical programs and were significantly changed by The Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act (Perkins IV). Under the new Act, local districts and agencies must either accept the State's established performance target or negotiate a local performance target with the State. Core indicators were modified or added:

- Core Indicator 1 measures Technical Skill Attainment
- Core Indicator 2 measures Certificate or Degree Attainment
- Core Indicator 3 measures Student Retention or Transfer
- Core Indicator 4 measures Student Placement
- Core Indicator 5 measures Non-traditional Participation and Completion

Core Indicators data and detailed information can be downloaded from the Chancellor's Office website at: http://misweb.cccco.edu/voc_ed/vtea/vtea.htm and the Joint Special Populations Advisory Committee [website at: http://www.jspac.org](http://www.jspac.org)

Career Technical (CTE) deans and researchers on individual campuses can help faculty to access and analyze the Core Indicators data for each Family and Consumer Sciences program at the 2, 4, and 6 digit TOP codes. Campuses can compare their performance data to statewide 1300 TOP code programs. FCS programs in 1300 TOP codes should use the Core Indicators data for purposes of program improvement and to ensure student success. The Core Indicators can also be used as one set of data for program review and for setting funding priorities at the campus level. It is important for all Gerontology program coordinators/directors to monitor the Core Indicators data for their programs and ensure that the information being reported is accurate and reliable.

Soft Skills: Besides technical and academic skills, employers demand personal self-developed skills that transfer from one workplace setting to another. The number one quality that employers want is interpersonal communication skills, both written and verbal, particularly in settings such as presentations, interviews, telephone conversations and electronic communication. Other priorities include critical thinking and judgment, a strong work ethic, initiative, and problem solving skills. Employers report that the way to have an edge in the competitive job market is to be dependable, resourceful, use ethical practices and to demonstrate a positive attitude. Finally, interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence play important roles in job retention and promotion.

Research suggests that most career success is attributable to soft skills. Curriculum must be planned to include information and assignments that develop these skills and evaluation systems that will measure the students' success/mastery of them.

All Aspects of the Industry: Students must have a broad view of the industry in which they will work. Perkins IV states that curriculum should reflect “all aspects of the industry” including planning, management, finances, technical and production skills, underlying principles of technology, labor and community issues, health and safety and environmental issues related to that industry.

Sufficient Size and Scope: Perkins IV also requires campuses to support students with programs and services of “sufficient size and scope,” to enhance the likeliness of student success. Examples include having a program-specific counselor, literature in a campus career center, and program-specific tutors. Campuses need to support programs with research into job placement and retention.

Integrated Academics: CTE guidelines clearly identify the need to have an educational curriculum that integrates academic and career technical learning. No singular method has been prescribed as being the model for integrated academics, allowing for the flexibility of the college and educational program to develop their own model. Examples of how integration can be achieved include: paired teaching of academic and career technical courses, team teaching a course which combines the learning of the career technical and academic competencies, certifying a career technical course as to its content and competencies meeting the academic criteria, learning communities and honors programs.

As courses and assignments are developed, Gerontology faculty should work closely with other faculty to be creative in addressing the learning of the traditional "general education" competencies within the career technical programs.

Work-Based Learning: The School to Work Opportunities Act of 1994 (California uses the term School to Career) encourages all states to develop systems that help students transition from school to the workplace. Educational systems must ensure that we are preparing students with the skills and knowledge that allow them to enter and advance within a career. To do this, the following components need to be at the basis of an educational frame:

- An integration of work-based learning and school-based learning;
- A coherent sequence of courses that prepares a student for a first job, typically including one or two years of post-secondary education, a high school diploma, a skill certificate or post-secondary certificate or diploma;
- A program incorporating work-based learning, school-based learning and connecting activities.

Educational programs can provide work-based learning through such methods as cooperative work experience, internships, field work placement, job shadowing, service learning, volunteering and mentoring. Faculty also has the opportunity to experience work-

based learning through grants which allow their return to a work site for a limited period of time.

Distance Education: One important educational trend is distance learning that allows students to learn at time schedules and locations that meet their own needs. The most common delivery method is where portions or all of a course are presented online via the Internet utilizing school learning platforms, podcasts or through telecourses. The use of blogs or wiki pages can also be beneficial.

Articulation and System Alignment: This *Family and Consumer Sciences Program Plan* supports the importance of creating "seamless" curriculum that allows students to progress through California's educational system. An overriding goal of articulation has been to eliminate duplication of learning from course to course, level to level and among and between educational segments. As Tech Prep programs, ROCPs and Career Pathway agreements expand, it is critical that Gerontology courses clearly state student learning outcomes. Only through faculty's continued effort to work collaboratively with faculty from other educational institutions and systems can articulation be developed, expanded and made to benefit the student in his or her progress toward an educational goal.

Equal Access and Learning Success: Gerontology programs must focus on recruitment of students and ensure that equal access is provided to all. This includes but is not limited to students who are underrepresented such as academically and economically disadvantaged, limited English proficient, culturally diverse, students with disabilities, and those who select gender imbalanced programs. Faculty must ensure that bias in instruction and instructional material has been avoided and that all students have the opportunity to succeed.

Faculty needs to work cooperatively with college student support programs and services. In-service training is critical to allow faculty to learn strategies that complement student success in learning. Collaborative assignments, multimedia presentations, self-paced learning, and module learning are just a few of the teaching modalities that are important to today's classroom. Recruitment and marketing materials should also address these issues.

PROGRAMS AND COURSES

Gerontology Core Curriculum

- Introduction to Gerontology
- Biological Aging/Physiology of Aging/Health Aspects of Aging
- Psychological Aging or Mental Health
- Sociology of Aging
- Health and Human Services Programs and Policies
- Field Practicum

Gerontology Electives:

Adult Development and Aging
Caregiving
Death and Dying
Nutrition for Healthy Aging

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS, CORE COMPONENTS AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

CORE CURRICULUM

Course titles and descriptions are suggestions and will vary among campuses. Student learning outcomes suggest specific skill sets as they relate to the course content and student qualifications upon course completion.

Introduction to Gerontology

Overview of social, economic, biological and psychological functions of aging. Exploration of issues of the aged with emphasis on consumerism, housing, health, leisure time, family roles, retirement, widowhood and sexuality.

Core Components

Aging from a multi-disciplinary perspective
Effects of the stereotypes and societal images of aging
Biological, psychological, and social changes
Stress factors of aging
Mental health
Development of positive attitude toward aging
Coping skills for aging
Scams/frauds/consumerism
Meeting the needs of the aging adult
Caregiving
Death and dying
Wellness and fitness for active aging
 Nutritional needs of elders
 Recreation and leisure activities
 Older workers

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Based upon case studies, demographic data and current research, be able to assess the impact of aging upon individuals, their families and society
- Through written and verbal interactions, apply effective communication skills to support opinions using solid research principles

- Demonstrate critical thinking skills by applying research principles and theories to improve care and services for older adults

Biological Aging/Physiology of Aging/Health Aspects of Aging

This course will explore normal versus abnormal changes in aging and the human ability to adapt. Each body system will be reviewed, focusing on how age changes can relate to the development of disorders and disease in later life. Methods of assisting older persons in adapting to acute and chronic illness and in health promotion and maintenance will be discussed.

Core Components

Biological theories of aging
 Organ systems
 Sensory changes
 Body composition
 Sex and race differences
 Functioning: Activities of daily living and instrumental activities of daily living
 Physical health and sexuality
 Chronic illness and disability
 Poly-pharmacy

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Through case studies and research, interpret and apply the major biological theories and principles of aging to determine their impact and implications on the individual and society
- Through written and verbal interactions, apply effective communication skills to support opinions/ideas utilizing solid research principles
- Demonstrate critical thinking skills by applying research principles and theories to differentiate normal age-related changes in the older adult from changes that are associated with pathology (disease)

Psychological Aging or Mental Health

Investigates abnormal and normal psychological aging including developmental theories, cognitive changes, loss and transitions in the lives of older adults. Explores the potential for longer, healthier lives with opportunities and challenges for retirees and the elderly.

Core Components

Developmental theories

Memory and learning
Intelligence
Motivation
Loss, grief, bereavement
Mental status assessment
Cultural differences
Retirement and career choices
Depression and dementia

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Based on case-studies, observation, and/or research, be able to interpret and apply major psychological theories and principles of aging to determine their impact and implication on the individual and society
- Through written and verbal interactions, be able to apply effective communication skills and support opinions using solid research principles
- Based on research, observations and/or profiles of aging individuals, demonstrate critical thinking by developing a plan which will maintain independence and adapt the environment to suit the needs of elderly individuals and their families

Sociology of Aging

A multidisciplinary overview of sociological aspects of the aging process including the effects of an aging population upon society.

Core Components

Living arrangements
Financial status
Changing family structure
Health care system
Elder abuse
Elder care
U.S. and global demographic changes
Retirement
Continuum of long term care services
Cultural diverse responses to aging

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Based on research, observation and/or profiles of aging individuals, explain the impact of current and expected physiological, cognitive, economic and interpersonal influences on the individual and how environment may be adapted to improve quality of life
- Through written and/or verbal interactions, demonstrate patience and skills in research and interpersonal and professional communication

- Given case studies, scenarios, and/or observations, be able to interpret group and individual behaviors of aging persons related to the aging process. Formulate conclusions and predict likely actions based on an analysis of cultural norms, social structures and expectations

Health and Human Services Programs and Policies

The nature of health and human services in urban and rural communities, social problems and society's response. Explores the variety, scope and goals of health and human services programs, and public policy.

Core Components

Primary human services in urban and rural communities
 Social problems and issues
 Cultural diversity
 Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security
 Older American's Act
 Ideology of health and human service programs
 Federal and state legislation and advocacy
 Advanced Directives and Durable Power of Attorney

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Based upon case studies, demographic data and current research, be able to evaluate public policy and assess its impact on older adults and society
- Through written and verbal interactions, apply effective communication skills regarding public policy utilizing solid research principles
- Based upon research, case studies, and demographics, demonstrate critical thinking by developing policy proposals to improve care and services for older adults

Career Exploration and Field Practicum

Using informational interviews with experts in the field, networking, and field experience with older adults in a variety of settings, develop communication, teamwork, and assessment skills. Provides a forum for discussing ethics, confidentiality in a real life setting.

Core Components

Career options
 Law and Ethics
 Confidentiality
 Roles and responsibilities
 Observation and assessment
 Community resources

Family support services
Elder abuse

Examples of Placements:

Senior Centers
Area Agencies on Aging
Adult Day/Health Care
Residential Care Facilities
Skilled Nursing Facilities
Senior Housing
Hospitals/Clinics

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Based upon field experience, be able to apply major (sociological, biological, psychological) theories and principles of aging in real life situations
- Based on ability and interest assessments, demonstrate critical thinking skills in developing measurable goals and objectives
- Through written and/or verbal interactions, apply research principles and/or effective communication skills as documented and observed by the field supervisor

GERONTOLOGY ELECTIVES

Adult Development and Aging

This course focuses on sources of both change and continuity within the developmental framework of adulthood. Examination of current literature and research on the biological, cognitive, psychological and social dimensions of adult development will be covered. Gains and losses in physical and mental health, interpersonal well-being, social roles, personality, and motivation will add insight into the stresses of life experiences and the resiliency of the human spirit.

Core Components

Myths and realities of aging
Biological, cognitive, psychological, and social aspects of adulthood
Health and health disorders
Longevity, health and wellness
Memory, intellect, creativity, and wisdom
Cognitive impairments, including dementia
Roles and relationships
Friendships and family ties
Personality and motivation

Stress and coping
Death and dying
Individual differences in adulthood
Cultural/ethnic differences in adulthood

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Based upon case studies, demographic data and current research be able to distinguish among the major theoretical perspectives that guide understanding of adult development
- Through written and verbal interactions, apply effective communication skills to discuss cultural influences on adult development and behavior
- Based upon research, case studies, and demographics, demonstrate critical thinking by analyzing processes contributing to normative and non-normative physical and mental health experiences

Caregiving

Overview of knowledge and skills needed to work with the elderly. Provides in-depth practical information on how to work with elderly clients who are frail due to advanced age or dementia and their families, as well as grandparents raising grandchildren and other populations.

Core Components

Law and Ethics
Confidentiality
Roles and responsibilities
Health and social needs
Cultural diversity
Observation and assessment
Personal care and body mechanics
Homemaking skills
Community resources
Communicating with special populations
Client self determination
Regulations/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Stress management
Nutritional needs
Sanitation and safety
Elder abuse
Fraud prevention and consumer protection
Supportive home environments
Exercise/recreation/mental stimulation

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Based on case-studies, observation and research, be able to interpret and apply major (sociological, biological, psychological) theories and principles of aging to determine their impact and implications on the individual and society as a whole
- Through written and/or verbal interactions, apply research principles and/or effective communication skills to support opinions/ideas by utilizing solid research principles
- Based on research, observations, and/or profiles of aging individuals, the student will demonstrate critical thinking skills in developing a plan that will enhance effective communication, maintain independence, and adapt the environment to suit the needs of older adults and their families

Death and Dying

Introduces students to the multidisciplinary approaches to death, dying and bereavement in the context of the biopsychosocial model and explores cross cultural perspectives of death and dying and our own perceptions and beliefs.

Core Components

Attitudes and values regarding death and dying
Stages of death and dying
Cultural norms, expectations and social behavior
Rituals related to death and dying
Bereavement and grief
Separation and loss
Support or counseling strategies
Theories of grief
Emotional reactions to dying
Hospice care
Funeral industry
Medical ethics
Euthanasia
Suicide

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Based upon case studies, demographic data and current research be able to evaluate cross-cultural, religious and personal perceptions of death and dying
- Through written and verbal interactions, apply effective communication skills regarding cross-cultural perception of bereavement utilizing solid research principles
- Based upon research, case studies, and demographics, demonstrate critical thinking by analyzing the ethical implications of end-of-life decisions

Nutrition for Healthy Aging

Basic nutritional needs of older adults as related to biological changes that occur with aging, factors that influence food intake and nutritional status, and diet adaptation for chronic diseases commonly found in older people.

Core Components

Review of basic nutrition information
Diet modifications
Biological changes of the aging person
Psychological changes that affect food practices
Limitations that affect food selection and preparation
Potential nutrient deficiencies
Drug/nutrient interactions
Safety and sanitation
Effects of exercise on overall health
Appropriate foods to meet individual needs
Menu planning
Vitamins and supplements
Nutrition quackery
Government nutrition programs available
Cultural foods
Cost effective menu planning
Nutrition and weight control
Hydration
Food allergies and intolerances

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Based on case-studies, observation and research be able to interpret and apply major (sociological, biological, psychological) theories and principles of aging to determine their impact and implications on the nutritional status of older adults
- Through written and/or verbal interactions, apply research principles and/or effective communication skills to support opinions/ideas by utilizing solid research principles
- Based on research, observations, and/or profiles of aging individuals, the student will demonstrate critical thinking skills in developing a plan/project which will enhance the nutritional status and meet the cross-cultural needs and interests of older adults

Special Topics in Aging

Introduction of contemporary issues in aging. Additional electives may include many of the topics listed below.

Core Components

- Crisis intervention
- Cross-cultural diversity
- Elder abuse
- Financial management (pre-retirement/ retirement planning)
- Human sexuality
- Independent living for people with disabilities
- Intergenerational programs
- Advocacy
- Law and ethics
- Activities/recreation training
- Residential care certification
- Life-long learning
- Communicating/interacting with the elderly
- Housing

Student Learning Outcomes:

Student learning outcomes will vary depending on the specific special topic offered.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

Professional Standards for College Faculty and Staff

Dedicated, enthusiastic and innovative faculty members are the major resource in community college education. They provide education and guidance to students and direction for programs to meet the challenge of a rapidly changing world. Adjunct instructors should meet minimum qualifications and have the same status and compensation as other full and part-time faculty.

Gerontology faculty must meet the hiring requirements (AB 1725) for community colleges as established by the State of California and follow the California Community College Chancellor's Office guidelines. The document, *Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges* identifies hiring criteria. In addition, it is strongly recommended that faculty has current work experience directly related to the courses that they teach. It also can be valuable for faculty to have access and ongoing contact with families and older adults in their related field, such as supervising students in subject-related field experience or practicum in community or campus settings. Evaluation of faculty should be done on a regular basis, no less than biennially. Faculty should be encouraged to participate in staff development and continuing education activities of professional organizations.

Close working relationships among faculty, counselors, placement, other support staff, administration and the business community enhance the services to Gerontology students on campus.

Program Review

Colleges and faculty have an obligation to keep programs current and relevant. Many campuses have individual Program Review formats and processes that allow local colleges to assess program strengths and to target areas for improvement. Results can be shared with staff, advisory committee members, governing boards and students to ensure program content validation.

Each community college needs to develop Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), which describe how gerontological concepts and theories apply in the real world. Assignments, projects, and exams should be designed to assess successful completion of coursework.

Professional and Advocacy Organizations

Professional, advocacy and trade organizations provide a valuable resource for program content and currency, student experiences and forming partnerships. A *Directory of Professional and Trade Organizations* is included as a separate section of this *Family and Consumer Sciences Program Plan*.

Faculty membership and participation in related organizations is encouraged. These include:

ASC	<u>Aging Services of California</u>
AA	<u>Alzheimer's Association</u>
AAFCS	<u>American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences</u>
AARP	<u>American Association of Retired Persons</u>
AAA	<u>American Audiology Association</u>
AMA	<u>American Medical Association</u>
ANA	<u>American Nurses Association</u>
APTA	<u>American Physical Therapy Association</u>
APA	<u>American Psychological Association</u>
ASA	<u>American Society on Aging</u>
ASHA	<u>American Speech-Language, Hearing Association</u>
ACTE	<u>Association for Career and Technical Education</u>
AGHE	<u>Association for Gerontology in Higher Education</u>
CALA	<u>California Assisted Living Association</u>
CAADS	<u>California Association of Adult Day Services</u>
CAHF	<u>California Association of Health Facilities</u>
CAHSA	<u>California Association for Health Services at Home</u>
CCGG	<u>California Council on Gerontology and Geriatrics</u>
CRCAC	<u>Community Residential Care Association of California</u>

GU	<u>Generations United</u>
GSA	<u>Gerontological Society of America</u>
GP	<u>Gray Panthers</u>
IALC	International Association of Life Coaches
N4A	<u>National Association of Area Agencies on Aging</u>
NASW	<u>National Association of Social Workers</u>
NCOA	<u>National Council on Aging</u>
NHPCA	<u>National Hospice and Palliative Care Association</u>
OWL	Older Women's League

Student membership in and student chapter affiliations with professional organizations should be encouraged.

Advisory Committee

Advisory committees for Gerontology programs should include representatives from community agencies and organizations, business and industry, secondary, community college, and four-year institutions, counseling and placement centers, and knowledgeable individuals who are served by the college.

Membership should be diverse and reflect the college community. It should reflect the needs of community agencies that will utilize student graduates seeking vocational placement and employment. The purpose of the advisory committee is to coordinate, articulate and communicate common needs, current practices and changing opportunities within the college service area. The committee should advise on current curriculum, transfer/access issues, facilities and equipment and other instructional and support services priorities, which will meet student and community needs.

It is recommended that advisory committees range in size from 12 to 18 members.

Equipment

Courses in the field of gerontology are taught in lecture, discussion, group activity, laboratory and work experience modes. Therefore, it is imperative that programs have adequate classroom and lab facilities.

- WiFi Classrooms
- Computer lab
- Library with print, video and digital media support
- Learning resource centers
- Interactive whiteboards, LCD projectors and other current technological equipment

Marketing and Recruitment

Marketing and recruitment for programs in Gerontology can be accomplished by the following:

- Describe and illustrate the benefits of the instructional program to traditional, non-traditional, and underserved student populations.
- Promote the contribution of the instructional program to members of the college community and other educational institutions, including instructional counseling and support staff.
- Increase linkages with community agencies, businesses and organizations in order to expand educational opportunities, as well as the potential for the employment of students that complete the program.

Techniques for marketing and recruitment include:

- Utilizing student success stories
- Placing "blurbs" in community newspapers and webpages about new/ongoing or special classes
- Producing newsletters and fliers as linkages with community agencies
- Initiating outreach within campus community
- Outreaching to community including high schools, community agencies and four-year institutions
- Using distance learning
- Forming and maintaining active advisory committees
- Supporting students by forming and advising student clubs and organizations
- Participating in local and regional forums
- Writing columns for local printed media
- Developing and distributing career briefs for the programs in Gerontology
- Creating a website and home page for the program
- Making presentations in the local community
- Supporting students by advising student clubs/organizations
- Networking with local professionals via organizations
- Utilizing Internet sites such as, YouTube, Facebook, MySpace, as well as podcasts, blogs and other interactive technology
- Linking to other organization websites
- Regularly posting job and internship opportunities

Student Clubs: A student club within Gerontology can provide enhanced opportunities for students to network with one another, strengthen cohort ties, develop leadership and organizational skills, and mentor one another in program requirements. The bonds that develop may carry over into the workplace. Marketing opportunities expand dramatically with student club involvement. In fact, a student club often becomes the strongest advocate for the program itself.

Student club activities can also augment curricula offerings by sponsoring agency guest speakers on campus, coordinating tours of community programs, and staffing information booths at local resource and job fairs. Former student club members will often

be an information pipeline with regard to prospective job openings within agencies and businesses.

Placement and Follow-up

It is the college's responsibility to provide programs and courses that help students develop necessary job skills. Transfer courses should be articulated with four-year institutions.

Gerontology faculty should work closely with student support services and should publicize their programs at every opportunity so community employers are aware of potential employees. Faculty should also be aware of articulation agreements between their program, high schools and other two and four-year colleges striving to meet the goals identified in this *Family and Consumer Sciences Program Plan*.

Accountability is important in order to assure that the program is accomplishing its purpose. Job placement data and articulation agreements are two ways to measure results. Student questionnaires and/or surveys also provide accountability. Employer surveys can assess the relationship of curriculum to job performance skills. Data covering job placement and relevancy of program should be collected. The Gerontology instructional staff should cooperate in collecting Core Indicator data for the Statewide Follow-up System. Reports summarizing student and employer follow-up responses are available at each California community college.

Maintaining contact with former students is necessary for accountability. Many colleges have alumni groups that are a useful resource for tracking former students and for promoting programs.

Gerontology Programs in Community Colleges

American River College
Chaffey College
Coastline Community College
East Los Angeles Community College
Los Angeles Mission College
MiraCosta Community College
Mt. San Jacinto Community College

Gerontology Emphasis in Human Services Programs

Porterville College
Mt. San Antonio Community College
Saddleback Community College
San Diego Community College
San Joaquin Community College
College of the Siskiyous
Vista Community College

