

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN GERONTOLOGY

University of Pittsburgh
University Center for
Social and Urban Research



412-624-1019

In response to the current and anticipated educational needs in the area of aging, members of the University Council on Aging have collaborated to create a Graduate Certificate in Gerontology at the University of Pittsburgh. The program is designed to serve professionals in diverse disciplines, in a variety of industries, who are interested in acquiring basic knowledge about gerontology and geriatrics, and specialized knowledge of aging and aging processes in their particular disciplines or occupations.

The student will complete the required core curricula for the program (6-7 credits). The remaining three or more courses (8 or 9 credits depending upon the chosen specialization) would be selected from a prescribed pool of elective courses within dentistry, law, nursing, public health, social work, health and rehabilitation sciences, a multidisciplinary track, and a multidisciplinary prevention and healthy aging track.

Admission to the gerontology certificate program does not require the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), Law School Admission Test (LSAT), or any other graduate school entrance examination. However, students should satisfy all other requirements for admission to the corresponding graduate degree from which the certificate curriculum is drawn. Nondegree students who demonstrate potential and motivation for doing graduate work may be admitted provisionally. Course work completed on a nondegree basis that satisfies the course requirements of a graduate program within the University may be applied as advanced standing toward that degree, with the exception of the JD program offered through the School of Law.

CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS [A minimum of 15 credits is required for certification in the gerontology certificate program.]

Required Courses (Select 6-7 credits)	Credits
NUR 1085 Ethics in Nursing and Health Care	3
ORBIOL 2150 Seminar Series on Aging*	1
Select one of the following courses:	
DENT 2111 Gerontology: Perspectives on Aging*	3
BCHS 2532 Dimensions of Aging, Culture, and Health	2
SWBEH 2077 Human Behavior: Adult Development and Aging	3

Specializations

Specialization in Dentistry (Select 8 or 9 credits)

ANAHS 2035 Age-Related Changes	1
ORBIOL 5913 Aging and Oral Health	1
OMP 5916 Medical and Therapeutic Considerations of Geriatric Dental Patients	1
PROSTH 5918 Clinical Geriatric Dentistry	3
RESTD 5921 Dental Care for the Geriatric Population	3

Specialization in Law (Select 9 credits)

LAW 5201 Administrative Law	3
LAW 5259 Estate and Gift Tax	3
LAW 5330 Employee Benefits	3
LAW 5347 Elderly and the Law	3
LAW 5395 Health Law and Policy	3

Specialization in Nursing (Select 8 or 9 credits)

EPIDEM 2980 Biology and Physiology of Aging	1
EPIDEM 2900 Epidemiology of Aging	2
NURNP 2526 Management of Geriatric Health	3
NUR 1829 Contemporary Issues in Cross-cultural Health Care	3
Other approved elective	2

**Denotes Availability During Evening/Weekend/Web-Based*

Specialization in Occupational Therapy/Rehabilitation (Select 8 or 9 credits)

HRS 2480 Dimensions in Aging: Culture and Health	2
HRS 2484 Issues in Long-term Care for the Elderly	3
HRS 2501 Functional Assessment*	3
HRS 2502 Human Performance: Analysis*	3
HRS 2503 Human Performance: Adaptation*	3
HRS 2594 Specialized Preceptorship: Research*	1-6

Specialization in Public Health (Select 8 or 9 credits)

EPIDEM 2980 Biology and Physiology of Aging	1
EPIDEM 2900 Epidemiology of Aging	2
HPM 2203 Financing and Regulation of Long-term Care Services*	1.5
BCHS 2533 Issues in Long-term Care Services	3
BCHS 2534 Clinical Aspects of Dementia Care	2
BCHS 2541 Research Methods on Aging	2
EPIDEM 2981 Epidemiology of Aging: Methods	2

Specialization in Social Work (Select 9 credits)

Required Course Work:

SWINT 2030 Direct Practice/Interpersonal Skills with the Elderly	3
SWWEL 2039 Social Policy and Gerontology*	3

Approved Electives:

SWINT 2004 Death and Dying*	3
SWINT 2007 Introduction to Psychopharmacology and Social Work Practice	3
LAW 5347 Elderly and the Law	3
BCHS 2533 Issues in Long-term Care	3

Multidisciplinary (Select 9 credits)

Examples of eligible courses:

GERON 2000 Directed Study* (prerequisite: all core courses)	3
GERON 2003 Intergenerational Studies*	2
NUR 1829 Contemporary Issues in Cross-cultural Health Care*	3
PSY 1230 Psychology of Death and Dying*	3
SWINT 2004 Death and Dying	3
SWWEL 2039 Social Policy and Gerontology*	3
Other electives upon approval of advisor	3

Multidisciplinary: Prevention and Healthy Aging (Select 8 or 9 credits)

Track offered in spring term

Required Course Work:

GERON 2002 Prevention and Healthy Aging*	2
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Approved Electives:

EPIDEM 2980 Biology and Physiology of Aging	1
EPIDEM 2900 Epidemiology of Aging	2
EPIDEM 2260 Epidemiological Basis for Disease Control	2
EPIDEM 2981 Epidemiology of Aging: Methods	2
ORBIOL 5931 Aging and Oral Health	1
BCHS 2532 Dimensions of Aging, Culture, and Health	2
EPIDEM 2110 Principles of Epidemiology*	3
GERON 2000 Directed Study	3
NURNP 2526 Management of Geriatric Health	3
BCHS 2541 Research Methods on Aging	2

**Denotes Availability During Evening/Weekend/Web-Based*

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Course Descriptions

CORE REQUIREMENTS

- DENT 2111 Gerontology: Perspectives on Aging 3.0
This course will provide the student with an introduction to the aging process in our society. It will examine the aging phenomena by focusing on life span development, person-environment interaction, optimal quality of life, cross-cultural considerations, how aging is studied, and access to resources in a new age.
- BCHS 2532 Dimensions of Aging, Culture, and Health 2.0
Provides an overview of the aging experience from a cross-cultural and a public health perspective. The ways in which people cope with and adapt to the aging process is the major theme.
- SWBEH 2077 Human Behavior: Adult Development and Aging 3.0
This is an in-depth human behavior and social environment course focusing on development during the adult years (early and middle age) and on old age. This course offers a framework for understanding adult life stages from a life span developmental perspective. This includes an examination of developmental tasks, dilemmas, and challenges influenced by a complex environment of cultural, economic, and political forces.
- NUR 1085 Ethics in Nursing and Health Care 3.0
This course introduces students to the domain of clinical ethics as a foundation for developing ethical expertise in nursing practice. The course focuses on contemporary nursing and health care issues that raise personal and professional ethical concerns. Emphasis is placed on cultural differences, current legislation, political and religious controversy, economic constraints, and professional commitment related to the resolution of the identified ethical dilemmas. The process of ethical analysis and reasoning is used to resolve representative patient and health care situations.
- ORBIOL 2150 Special Topics: Seminar Series on Aging 1.0
This course provides a student with the opportunity to study independently, and in detail, some aspect of aging in which he or she has a particular interest.

DENTISTRY

- ANAHS 2035 Age-Related Changes 1.0
This course identifies the age-related changes that occur in the oral cavity of humans and other mammalian species. Structural changes are described in both hard and soft tissues. The functional properties of these affected tissues are considered. The clinical implications of such changes manifested in older age are emphasized. The effect of pharmacological agents, disease states, and behavioral modifications associated with aging are considered to demonstrate their potential impact on the tissues of the oral cavity.
- ORBIOL 5913 Aging and Oral Health 1.0
Seminar in gerodontology featuring presentations and discussions with geriatric dentistry researchers and practitioners.
- OMP 5916 Medical and Therapeutic Considerations of Geriatric Dental Patients 1.0
Provides a comprehensive review of oral medicine, dental therapeutics, and general physiologic pharmacology applicable to an older population of dental patients.
- PROSTH 5918 Clinical Geriatric Dentistry 3.0
Clinical experience in complete denture treatment for nursing home residents.
- RESTD 5921 Dental Care for the Geriatric Population 3.0
Provides clinical experiences to senior dental students in treating the geriatric population in nontraditional settings such as long-term care facilities or in the patient's home.

LAW

- LAW 5201 Administrative Law 3.0
Administrative law chiefly comprises the procedural law that regulates how government agencies implement statutory programs, such as those relating to environmental protection, workplace safety regulation, securities regulation, the regulation of collective bargaining, veterans' benefits administration, Social Security Administration, and so on. This course will focus almost entirely on federal constitutional law as applicable to both federal and state agencies, and federal statutory and judge-made law as applied to federal agencies.
- LAW 5259 Estate and Gift Tax 3.0
This course primarily involves a study of the unified system of federal gift and estate transfer taxes imposed by Chapters 11 and 12 of the Internal Revenue Code.
- LAW 5330 Employee Benefits 3.0
An examination of the federal regulation of private pension plans and other employment-related benefit plans.
- LAW 5347 Elderly and the Law 3.0
In this course we will examine the areas related to aging that have particularly impacted law and public policy, including Social Security, private pensions, Medicare, Medicaid, long-term care financing, guardianship and mental capacity, health care decision making, housing, and the abuse and neglect of the elderly.
- LAW 5395 Health Law and Policy 3.0
This is a broad survey course of the legal regulation of the health care industry. In general, it examines how concerns by patients, health care providers, and health care payers about cost, quality, and access affect the way in which health care is provided. The topics covered are the legal regulation of the quality of health care through mechanisms such as professional licensure, hospital privileges, and institutional licensure; common law and statutory obligations to provide care; state and federal regulation of insurance and managed care; health care fraud and abuse; and health care antitrust.

NURSING

- EPIDEM 2980 Biology and Physiology of Aging 1.0
Course objective is to learn current concepts and theories of the biology and physiology of normal human aging, contrasted with disease and disability. Complements EPIDEM 2900 Epidemiology of Aging.
- EPIDEM 2900 Epidemiology of Aging 2.0
Teaches epidemiological methods pertinent to research on aging individuals and the current state-of-the-art knowledge of epidemiology of diseases that primarily affect aging individuals.
- NURNP 2526 Management of Geriatric Health 2.0
Focus is on the theories and principles from the sciences central to the delivery of health care to the elderly. Emphasis is on assessment and health promotion, management of common health problems, nutrition and aging, geriatric pharmacology, psychosociology and psychopathology of aging, and geriatric health issues.
- NUR 1829 Contemporary Issues in Cross-cultural Health Care 3.0
The purpose of the course is to increase awareness of how delivery and acceptance of health care may be influenced by social, cultural, and environmental factors. It will provide an overview of how these factors influence a person's response to stressors, daily health, and living needs. The goal is to help students increase their understanding of culturally congruent care by utilizing cultural concepts, theories, and research. Students will analyze factors that facilitate/hinder communication about health needs, acceptance of the health care regimen, and access to health care systems.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY/REHABILITATION

- HRS 2480 Dimensions in Aging: Culture and Health 2.0
Provides an overview of the aging process from a cross-cultural and a public health perspective. The ways in which people cope with and adapt to the aging process is the major theme.
- HRS 2484 Issues in Long-term Care for the Elderly 3.0
The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the patterns and modes of health care delivery in the long-term care setting. Services and delivery systems in nursing homes, home health care, hospices, ambulatory long-term care, rehabilitation, and mental health will be introduced and examined. The work of the accrediting, licensing, and certifying agencies will be examined in relation to financial reimbursement, legal and ethical issues, personnel administration, medical record policies, and quality of care.
- HRS 2501 Functional Assessment 3.0
This course focuses on diagnostic decision making from the perspective of the evidence for the validity and reliability of selected functional assessment instruments. Instruments that focus on the consequences of pathologies at the levels of impairment, activity limitation, and participation restriction will be reviewed.
- HRS 2502 Human Performance: Analysis 3.0
This course focuses on diagnostic decision making from the perspective of diagnostic reasoning and the relative validities of various functional (disability) assessment methodologies: self-report, proxy report, clinical judgment, performance testing.
- HRS 2503 Human Performance: Adaptation 3.0
This course focuses on the evidence supporting compensatory occupational therapy interventions, including task and environmental adaptations, job modifications, and assistive technology.
- HRS 2594 Specialized Preceptorship: Research 1.0-6.0
This course provides experiential learning in coordinating occupational therapy research, including obtaining Institutional Review Board approval, getting informed consent, participating in data collection, and managing data quality.

PUBLIC HEALTH

- EPIDEM 2980 Biology and Physiology of Aging 1.0
Course objective is to learn current concepts and theories of the biology and physiology of normal human aging, contrasted with disease and disability. Complements EPIDEM 2900 Epidemiology of Aging.
- EPIDEM 2900 Epidemiology of Aging 2.0
Teaches epidemiological methods pertinent to research on aging individuals and the current state-of-the-art knowledge of epidemiology of diseases that primarily affect aging individuals.
- HPM 2203 Financing and Regulation of Long-term Care Services 1.5
This course is designed to provide the student with an overview of the financing and regulation of long-term care (LTC) services. Students will understand the interrelationship between the methods chosen to finance health care services, state regulations about quality and quantity, and the structure of long-term care that has evolved. Students will understand the role of demonstrations as a method to inform policymakers on how to change LTC policy. Students examine the traditional role of insurance and characteristics of the markets that inhibit growth of insurance programs for LTC.
- BCHS 2533 Issues in Long-term Care Services 3.0
Long-term care is a system of institutional and community-based services for the aging population. Using this framework, services and delivery systems are analyzed for adequacy and appropriateness, systemwide issues are identified and discussed, and selected components of the delivery system are examined for administrative problems.
- BCHS 2534 Clinical Aspects of Dementia Care 2.0
This course is designed as an independent study for students in the public health and aging program. Its focus is on the methods and technology for diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer's disease.
- BCHS 2541 Research Methods on Aging 2.0
This course is designed to familiarize students with methods for conducting research on aging populations. Through lecture, discussion, and examples of current research, the instructors will provide a basic understanding of the appropriate methods for data collection and the problems and issues related to the conduct of research on older adults. Students are required to have taken some courses in aging, or be familiar with the basic concepts on aging theory and research design.

SOCIAL WORK

- SWINT 2004 Death and Dying 3.0
This course covers methods of intervention with the suicidal and terminally ill patient and his or her family, covering ethical problems related to right-to-life and right-to-death issues, explication of Kubler-Ross' five stages of dying, religious orientations to death and dying, and pathological and normal grief reactions.
- SWINT 2030 Direct Practice/Interpersonal Skills with the Elderly 3.0
This course defines the range of interpersonal practice with and for the elderly in terms of primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of intervention. A broad range of clinical practice roles is addressed in regard to practice across a broad spectrum of settings. All of the established social work practice approaches are looked at in detail for treatment procedures that can be applied to work with the elderly. An eclectic perspective to practice with the elderly is stressed.
- SWWEL 2039 Social Policy and Gerontology 3.0
This course is designed to examine the dynamics and procedural steps in social policymaking and implementation first in a general context and then more specifically in relation to the older population. The last half of the course is devoted to the identification of major issues in social policy for the aged and intensive analysis of selected policy decisions.
- SWINT 2007 Introduction to Psychopharmacology and Social Work Practice 3.0
This course is designed to familiarize students with the basic terminology and models of pharmacokinetics and the role of social workers in medication management. The development of psychopharmacology from a historical and sociological perspective as well as an overview of neurochemistry and biological-psychological functioning will be addressed. Emphasis will be placed on the development of a range of techniques and strategies in collaboration with clients, families, and other providers in order for social workers to be responsive to the comprehensive needs of their clients.

MULTIDISCIPLINARY PLAN

- SWINT 2004 Death and Dying 3.0
This course covers methods of intervention with the suicidal and terminally ill patient and his or her family, covering ethical problems related to right-to-life and right-to-death issues, explication of Kubler-Ross' five stages of dying, religious orientations to death and dying, and pathological and normal grief reactions.
- NUR 1829 Contemporary Issues in Cross-cultural Health Care 3.0
The purpose of the course is to increase awareness of how delivery and acceptance of health care may be influenced by social, cultural, and environmental factors. It will provide an overview of how these factors influence a person's response to stressors, daily health, and living needs. The goal is to help students increase their understanding of culturally congruent care by utilizing cultural concepts, theories, and research. Students will analyze factors that facilitate/hinder communication about health needs, acceptance of the health care regimen, and access to health care systems.
- SWWEL 2039 Social Policy and Gerontology 3.0
This course is designed to examine the dynamics and procedural steps in social policymaking and implementation first in a general context and then more specifically in relation to the older population. The last half of the course is devoted to the identification of major issues in social policy for the aged and intensive analysis of selected policy decisions.
- GERON 2000 Directed Study (prerequisite: all core courses) 3.0
A student-initiated educational experience, guided by a faculty member, that significantly supplements the core curriculum of the certificate and provides specialized, focused training in aging.
- GERON 2003 Intergenerational Studies 2.0
This course is an online, interactive experience based on the 13-year success of the Generations Together Intergenerational Training Institute at the University of Pittsburgh. The course is designed to help develop skills needed for success in the intergenerational field. Students read course materials, do online assignments, discuss the content with fellow students and instructors, and follow step-by-step procedures to complete the individual units.
- PSY 1230 Psychology of Death and Dying 3.0

MULTIDISCIPLINARY: PREVENTION AND HEALTHY AGING

- GERON 2002 Prevention and Healthy Aging 2.0
Prevention and Healthy Aging is an online course that provides the guidance and rationale for promoting health, prevention, and effective risk factor management in the adult population (50+) in respect to rising health care costs, decreasing benefits, and the aging of our population. This course offers a general overview of various aging issues (physical, cognitive, social, cultural, and economic) that impact the individual, community, and society. This course will prepare students to integrate optimal preventive practice into their professional context and translate evidence-based strategies into community outreach services that are designed to prevent or delay the common conditions of aging and ones that emphasize the importance of healthy behaviors throughout the life span.
- EPIDEM 2980 Biology and Physiology of Aging 1.0
Course objective is to learn current concepts and theories of the biology and physiology of normal human aging, contrasted with disease and disability. Complements EPIDEM 2900 Epidemiology of Aging.
- EPIDEM 2900 Epidemiology of Aging 2.0
Teaches epidemiological methods pertinent to research on aging individuals and the current state-of-the-art knowledge of epidemiology of diseases that primarily affect aging individuals.
- EPIDEM 2260 Epidemiological Basis for Disease Control 2.0
This course provides the student with an introduction to the epidemiological basis for designing and evaluating prevention programs in the community, the epidemiological basis of evaluating health services, and analysis of health care and design of community programs.
- EPIDEM 2981 Epidemiology of Aging: Methods 2.0
The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the methodological aspects of epidemiologic research in the field of aging and geriatrics. The course will examine major epidemiologic cohort studies of aging, clinical trials, and nursing home research. The focus of this course will be demography, study design, sampling, recruitment, and physical and cognitive assessment. During this course, students will be asked to formulate a research question and develop an analysis plan. Part of the credit hours will include a field experience with one of the major studies. Part of this material was previously included in the first part of EPIDEM 2900.

- *EPIDEM 2110 Principles of Epidemiology 3.0
This course reviews the basic concepts of epidemiology including community diagnosis, analytical techniques, and evaluation of preventive methods. Examples of both acute and chronic diseases will be covered. The course includes lectures, readings, homework assignments, and several multiple-choice examinations. CourseWeb is utilized. (Three sections are offered, one of which is Web based.)
- *EPIDEM 2900 Advanced Epidemiology of Aging 2.0
This course teaches epidemiologic methods pertinent to research on aging individuals and the current state-of-the-art knowledge of epidemiology of diseases that primarily affect aging individuals. Prerequisites: EPIDEM 2181, EPIDEM 2980, and BIOST 2041 or BIOST 2011.
- *EPIDEM 2980 Biology and Physiology of Aging 1.0
The course objective is to learn current concepts and theories of the biology and physiology of normal human aging, contrasted with disease and disability. This course complements EPIDEM 2900 Epidemiology of Aging. Prerequisite: EPIDEM 2004 or EPIDEM 2712.
- BCHS 2541 Research Methods on Aging 2.0
This course is designed to familiarize students with methods for conducting research on aging populations. Through lecture, discussion, and examples of current research, the instructors will provide a basic understanding of the appropriate methods for data collection and the problems and issues related to the conduct of research on older adults. Students are required to have taken some courses on aging or be familiar with the basic concepts of aging theory and research design.
- *EPIDEM 2981 Epidemiology of Aging: Methods 2.0
The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the methodological aspects of epidemiologic research in the field of aging and geriatrics. The course will examine major epidemiologic cohort studies of aging, clinical trials, and nursing home research. The focus of this course will be demography, study design, sampling, recruitment, and physical and cognitive assessment. During this course, students will be asked to formulate a research question and develop an analysis plan. Part of the credit hours will include a field experience with one of the major studies. Part of this material was previously included in the first part of EPIDEM 2900. Prerequisite: EPIDEM 2110, which may be taken at the same time as this course.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information about the gerontology certificate program, please contact Jennifer Bissell, 121 University Place, 412-624-1019 or bissell@pitt.edu.

The University of Pittsburgh Institute on Aging can provide information on a wide range of aging-related topics including health care services, educational programs, and research studies. Call 1-866-430-8742 or visit www.aging.pitt.edu.

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