

# Gerontology

In the College of Health and Human Services

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## Faculty

Gerontology is a multidisciplinary program administered through the Department of Gerontology. Faculty assigned to teach courses are drawn from the Departments of Anthropology, Psychology, Recreation, Parks and Tourism, and Sociology; the School of Social Work; and the Colleges of Arts and Letters, Health and Human Services, and Professional Studies and Fine Arts.

Emeritus: Stanford  
Chair: Garrett  
Professor: Garrett  
Assistant Professors: DuBois, Usita  
Lecturer: Arnett

## Offered by the Department

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 Extension).

## 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 multidisciplinary in nature. Gerontology is becoming a major area of research in the biological, behavioral, and social sciences.

Every day there is a net increase of 1,000 Americans 65 years of age and over. This is an increase of more than 3,500,000 elderly persons per year. With this striking increase 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.

One of the primary goals of the gerontology program is to provide students with a broad base for comprehensive understanding of the impact of society's changing demographics on every aspect of their social and work lives. 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.

## 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.

## Gerontology Major

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

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; Community Health Education 101; Psychology 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 the catalog on "Graduation Requirements."

**Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement.** Completing one of the approved upper division writing courses (W) with a grade of C (2.0) or better or passing the Writing Proficiency Assessment with a score of 10 or above.

**Major.** A minimum of 30 upper division units to include Gerontology 350, 360, 370, 400A, 400B, 402, 520, 522; and six units selected with approval of the adviser from Child and Family Development 335; Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences 580; Gerontology 496, 499, and 596 (when appropriate); Exercise and Nutritional Sciences 433; Psychology 456; Recreation 580; Social Work 420\*; Women's Studies 521.

\* Prerequisites waived.

## Gerontology Minor

The minor in gerontology consists of a minimum of 15 units to include Psychology 350; and 12 units selected from Gerontology 101, 350, 360, 370, 400A, 400B, 402, 499, 522, 596; Child and Family Development 496\*; Exercise and Nutritional Sciences 433; Recreation 580; Social Work 120, 420; Sociology 496\*; Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences 580; and Women's Studies 521.

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.

\* When relevant.

## Certificate in Applied Gerontology

**(Offered only in Extension)**

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 Department of Gerontology 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 Department of Gerontology.

### Required Courses for the Certificate Program

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

#### **I. Introduction to Gerontology**

Gerontology 101. Introduction to Human Aging (3)

#### **II. Psychological Aspects of Aging**

Psychology 350. Abnormal Psychology (3)

#### **III. Sociological Aspects of Aging**

Gerontology 250. Intergenerational Issues and the Elderly (3)

Gerontology 350. Social Policy and Aging (3)

#### **IV. 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. Minority and Ethnic Aging (3)  
 Gerontology 370. Images of Aging in Contemporary Society (3)  
 Gerontology 402. The Aging Network (3)  
 Gerontology 499. Special Study (1-3)  
 Gerontology 520. An Inside Look at Aging Programs–Program Analysis (3)  
 Gerontology 596. Advanced Special Topics in Gerontology (1-4)  
 Recreation 580. Leisure and the Aging Process (3)  
 Women's Studies 310. Women in Cross-Cultural Perspective (3)  
 Women's Studies 521. Life Cycles of Women (3)

**Courses (GERO)**

**LOWER DIVISION COURSES**

**GERO 101. Introduction to Human Aging (3) I, II**

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

**GERO 250. Intergenerational Issues and the Elderly (3)**

Controversial issues surrounding interpersonal relations between the aged 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 350. Social Policy and Aging (3) II**

Prerequisite: Gerontology 101.

Philosophical and practical gerontological knowledge for the operation of health and human service organizations. Multiprofessional perspective of policies, services, and administrative techniques.

**GERO 360. Minority and Ethnic Aging (3) I**

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

Attitudes and cultural values related to aging members of ethnic minorities. Major social and psychological theories on aging as they relate to ethnic minority elderly. Impact of class, economic resources, and health on the aging process.

**GERO 370. Images of Aging in Contemporary Society (3) I, II**

Prerequisite: Gerontology 101.

Images of older persons in our society. Influence of films, newspapers, radio, television, books and magazines, and a wide range of advertising mechanisms.

**GERO 400A-400B. Practicum in Gerontology (3-3) Cr/NC I, II**

Twelve hours of laboratory.

Prerequisites: Gerontology 350, 360, 370.

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. The Aging Network (3) I**

Prerequisite: Three units in gerontology.

Current status of aging services in the community. Evaluation of effectiveness of programs and services to maintain elderly in the community.

**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 522. International Issues on Aging (3)**

Prerequisite: Three units in gerontology.

Socio-economic implications of rapidly growing number and proportion of older people around the world. Comparative study of aging populations in different countries, analysis and evaluation of related policies and programs.

**GERO 530. Research Methods and Evaluation (3)**

Prerequisites: Course in elementary statistics and satisfaction of the Entry-Level Mathematics requirement. Recommended: Sociology 201.

Research methodology, assessment, and evaluation of gerontology. Basic statistical techniques in evaluating gerontology databases. Methods, statistical procedures, hypothesis testing, evaluation, use of tables and graphs, and use of gerontology databases. SPSS using gerontology databases for instruction.

**GERO 540. Physical Function and Disease Prevention (3)**

Prerequisites: One course in gerontology; Community Health Education 101 or 406; Psychology 101.

Physical functioning of older persons and diseases related to age changes. Healthy aging, assessments of frailty, risk factors related to diseases of aging, current medical and health promotion interventions directed to risk reduction and healthy aging.

**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 or master's degree. Maximum combined credit of six units of 596 and 696 applicable to a 30-unit master's degree.

**Greek** – Refer to "Classics" in this section of the catalog.

**Health Science** — Refer to "Community Health Education" in this section of the catalog.