

# GERONTOLOGY (GERO)

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## **GERO 5001 Intro to Gerontology (3 credits)**

This course introduces the theoretical foundations of gerontology, exploring its historical development and multidisciplinary nature. Students will examine how gerontology fits within the broader health and social service landscapes, with an emphasis on the roles it plays in addressing aging-related issues. The course also introduces key theories of aging and critical issues such as demographic shifts, policy implications, and the aging population's impact on society. By the end of the course, students will gain a foundational understanding of gerontology's evolution and its relevance to contemporary health and social services. Typically Offered: Fall.

**Prereqs:** Must be enrolled in the MS Gerontology program

## **GERO 5002 Research Methods in Gerontology (3 credits)**

This course introduces research methods in gerontology, focusing on the fundamental concepts of research design, data analysis, and research reporting. Topics include ethics in research, sampling techniques, reliability and validity, hypothesis testing, and various study designs relevant to aging populations. Students will learn how to critically appraise research and effectively disseminate research findings. A key component of the course is the development and writing of a research proposal, applying the principles learned throughout the course. Typically Offered: Fall.

**Prereqs:** Must be enrolled in MS Gerontology program

## **GERO 5003 Biological Aspects of Aging (3 credits)**

This course explores the biological aspects of aging, with a focus on the theories and science of senescence and longevity. Students will examine the distinction between normal aging processes and pathological changes in health status. Topics include the biological factors that contribute to longevity as well as the causes and consequences of age-related diseases. By the end of the course, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the biological processes underlying aging and the factors that impact healthy aging. Typically Offered: Fall.

**Prereqs:** Must be enrolled in the MS Gerontology program

## **GERO 5004 Community Engagement & Leisure Arts in Aging (3 credits)**

This course explores interdisciplinary approaches to recreational therapy and leisure accessibility for older adults, focusing on how community engagement and leisure activities promote physical and mental health in aging populations. Students will examine the role of recreational therapy, arts, and leisure programs in improving quality of life, social connectivity, and overall well-being. The course emphasizes designing inclusive and accessible leisure opportunities that foster active participation and health benefits in older adults. By the end of the course, students will understand the vital role of leisure and community engagement in healthy aging. Typically Offered: Fall.

**Prereqs:** Must be enrolled in the MS Gerontology program

## **GERO 5005 Rural Health & Aging (3 credits)**

This course provides an overview of the challenges and opportunities related to healthy aging and health interventions in rural settings. Students will explore the unique health care limitations faced by older adults in rural areas, including access to services, resource shortages, and social isolation. The course also covers strategies for promoting healthy aging and delivering effective health interventions in underserved rural communities. Typically Offered: Fall.

**Prereqs:** Must be enrolled in the MS Gerontology program

## **GERO 5006 Health Promotion & Preventive Care in Aging (3 credits)**

This course focuses on evidence-based strategies in health education and promotion to reduce age-related injuries and illnesses and promote positive behavioral change among older adults. Students will explore key factors that maximize quality of life in aging populations, with an emphasis on preventing chronic diseases, enhancing physical and mental well-being, and encouraging healthy lifestyles. Through the application of gerontological theories and public health approaches, students will gain the knowledge and skills needed to implement effective health promotion interventions tailored to the needs of older adults. Typically Offered: Spring.

**Prereqs:** Must be enrolled in the MS Gerontology program

## **GERO 5007 Mental & Cognitive Health in Aging (3 credits)**

This course explores the complex topic of mental and cognitive health in aging. The first half covers psychological health in older adults and evidence-based interventions to promote mental well-being. The second half focuses on cognitive aging, including cognitive decline and neurodegenerative conditions. Students will gain an understanding of both mental health challenges and cognitive changes, as well as strategies for supporting older adults' psychological and cognitive well-being. Typically Offered: Spring.

**Prereqs:** Must be enrolled in the MS Gerontology program

## **GERO 5008 Designing and Evaluating Programs for Aging Populations (3 credits)**

This course explores the key components of program development and implementation science in gerontology, focusing on stakeholder engagement, fundraising, and grant writing. Students will learn to apply evidence-based practices to create and implement effective programs that address the diverse needs of older adults. The course also covers evaluation techniques to assess program outcomes and ensure sustainability, equipping students with the skills needed to design, manage, and evaluate impactful aging-related initiatives. Typically Offered: Spring.

**Prereqs:** Must be enrolled in MS Gerontology program

## **GERO 5009 Seminar on Aging in the Arts (3 credits)**

This seminar explores the portrayal of aging in the media and the arts, examining both accurate and inaccurate depictions of older adults. Students will critically analyze how aging is represented in various forms of media, including film, literature, visual arts, and popular culture, and assess the cultural and social implications of these portrayals. The course will also explore the influence of media and the arts on societal perceptions of aging and the potential for positive representation to challenge stereotypes. By the end of the course, students will develop a nuanced understanding of aging in the arts and its impact on society's views of older adults. Typically Offered: Spring.

**Prereqs:** Must be enrolled in MS Gerontology program

## **GERO 5010 Pharmacological Management for Older Adults (3 credits)**

This course equips healthcare providers to deliver safe, effective, and individualized pharmacotherapy for the aging population. It is designed to enhance understanding of medication management for older adults. Students will learn about the physiological changes that impact pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics, focusing on minimizing harm through careful medication selection and administration. Participants will explore evidence-based strategies to manage polypharmacy, identify and deprescribe high-risk medications using tools like the Beers Criteria, and prevent adverse drug reactions. The curriculum also covers drug interactions, optimizing adherence, and managing common geriatric conditions. Typically Offered: Spring.

**Prereqs:** Enrolled in MS Gerontology program

**GERO 5011 Integrative Capstone I: Applied Research & Practice (1 credit)**

The integrative capstone course allows students to apply their gerontological knowledge by completing a faculty-directed project that addresses a real-world issue related to aging. Through projects such as service-based initiatives, program development, or other approved fieldwork, students will conduct an in-depth literature review to identify and analyze evidence-based practices. This review will inform the development and implementation of their capstone project in the next semester, grounding it in current gerontological research and best practices. Typically Offered: Spring.

**Prereqs:** Must be enrolled in MS Gerontology program

**GERO 5012 The Ethics of Aging (3 credits)**

This course explores the ethical issues surrounding aging, with a focus on the social determinants of health and the cultural factors that influence the aging experience in the U. S. Students will examine how historical and societal factors have shaped aging populations, as well as the ethical principles guiding care for vulnerable groups. The course also covers legal frameworks such as ADA and elder law, ensuring the rights and safety of older adults. By the end of the course, students will understand the ethical and cultural considerations critical to providing equitable care in aging. Typically Offered: Summer.

**Prereqs:** Must be enrolled in MS Gerontology program

**GERO 5013 The Business of Geriatric Care Management (3 credits)**

This course reviews the business and ethical principles of geriatric care management, focusing on the delivery of care across various levels of aging services, from independent living communities to intensive long-term care models. Students will explore key operational, financial, and ethical considerations in managing geriatric care, including client advocacy, care coordination, and navigating regulatory frameworks.

The course also covers business strategies for managing geriatric care practice and ensuring high-quality care for older adults in diverse settings. By the end of the course, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the business operations and ethical challenges in geriatric care management. Typically Offered: Summer.

**Prereqs:** Must be enrolled in the MS Gerontology program

**GERO 5014 Integrative Capstone II: Project Implementation & Evaluation (2 credits)**

The Integrative Capstone II builds on work completed in GERO 5011 by allowing students to implement and evaluate a gerontology-focused project under the guidance of a faculty sponsor. In this course, students will apply their gerontological knowledge and skills to address real-world challenges related to aging populations, demonstrating the integration of theoretical and practical content from their coursework.

This culminating experience provides students with the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of their project, make data-driven adjustments, and showcase their ability to apply evidence-based gerontological principles to improve outcomes for older adults. Typically Offered: Summer.

**Prereqs:** Must be enrolled in MS Gerontology program