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Gerontology Newsletter

Program in Gerontology

2006

Spring 2006 Gerontology Times

St. Cloud State University

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GERONTOLOGY TIMES



Notes From the Director:

Despite the early March snows, spring is finally here! Thanks to everyone who helped make our Gerontology Program external review a success. Your support is greatly appreciated!

We have many exciting events this spring, including our annual **Open House on Monday, April 24, from 3 to 5pm in Stewart Hall 330**. As always, this is a great opportunity to meet others interested in the field of aging -- and of course, to win **“fabulous” door prizes**. This year we are continuing our tradition of joining with The Gerontological Society of America and the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education to celebrate the 5th Annual Careers in Aging Week (April 17th – 21st). The open house will feature information on “Careers in Aging” and is being co-sponsored by the gerontology program, our local Beta Zeta Chapter of Sigma Phi Omega, the Gerontology Club, and the Department of Community Studies. I look forward to seeing you all there!

Also, I invite you to consider joining Sigma Phi Omega (the National Honors and Professional Society in Gerontology). Sigma Phi Omega “seeks to promote scholarship, professionalism, friendship, and services to older persons, and to recognize exemplary attainment in gerontology/ aging studies and related fields.” Students, faculty, and community professionals are welcome to join! Please note that a new sister organization “The Gerontology Club” has also been formed in conjunction with Sigma Phi Omega. All are welcome to join!

Now is also a good time to start thinking about registering for summer and fall classes (see page 3 for a “sneak preview” of the Summer and Fall offerings). Be sure to note the new special topics (GERO 440/540) offering coming up for fall -- “Mental Health and Aging”. Also, be sure to check in with your advisor (Dr. Phyllis Greenberg – Master’s and Certificate Students; Dr. Rona Karasik – undergraduate minors) to make sure your program is on track. We are in the process of making some curriculum adjustments, so if you haven’t already registered as a minor or Master’s students, see your advisor for information on the new program plans!

I wish you all a happy, healthy, and productive Spring semester!

Rona J. Karasik, Ph.D.
Director, Gerontology Program

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FACULTY NOTES



Rona J. Karasik, Ph.D.

It has been a busy year preparing for our external review, traveling to GSA, AGHE, and San Francisco, and continuing work with my two research projects in housing and intergenerational service-learning.

Dr. Karasik's recent presentations:

Karasik, R. (2006). The community as classroom: Service-learning in geriatrics and gerontology education. Keynote address at the CGEC Faculty Development Conference on Service-Learning (Teaching in the Community: Partnerships in Learning), San Francisco, CA.

Karasik, R. (2006). Into the community: Practical approaches to intergenerational service-learning. Invited presentation at the CGEC Faculty Development Conference on Service-Learning (Teaching in the Community: Partnerships in Learning), San Francisco, CA.

Karasik, R. (2006). Taking it on the road: Getting the most out of gerontological internships, service-learning, and site visits. Resource exchange presented at the 32nd Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) Annual Meeting and Educational Leadership Conference, Feb. 11, 2006. Indianapolis, IN.

Elliott, K., Karasik, R., & Wolf, M.A. (2006). Shouldn't we be thriving? Aging populations, the promise of gerontological education, and the challenges of running a gerontology program in changing academic climates. Discussion session hosted at the 32nd Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) Annual Meeting and Educational Leadership Conference, Feb. 11, 2006. Indianapolis, IN.

Phyllis A. Greenberg, Ph.D.

As I look out my window I can see ducks swimming across the Mississippi – amazing since last week it was still frozen. This semester has been very busy. We completed an external review; I am serving on two search committees and was elected Chair of the University Graduate Committee.

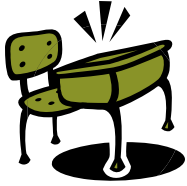
My topics class last semester on working with older adults initiated a project on HIV and Aging. They developed and conducted surveys with participants at Whitney Senior Center and nursing students at both SCSU and College of St. Benedicts. The purpose of the survey was to find out what consumers and health care (or soon to be) practitioners knew about HIV and aging. This is one of the fastest growing segments of the HIV community and there seems to be little accessible information for older adults and even of more concern little research/information for practitioners. The stereotype of older adults being asexual appears to be pervasive and many did not believe that there was any cause for concern. The class will complete some follow-up and graduate students will put together an education and information module for both consumers and practitioners.

Research with Recovery Plus continues. A new phenomenon is emerging – older adults who are addicted to substances other than just alcohol. There has been a minimal amount of research in this area and that has focused on prescription addiction/mismanagement. We are seeing increasing numbers of older adults each year with addiction to drugs like marijuana, cocaine, crack cocaine and morphine in addition to pain medications. This is another area where there needs to be not only increased research but education for older adults, health care practitioners and addictions specialist.

Be sure to check out the listings of courses for the Fall Semester. I will be teaching a new topics course GERO 440/540 on Wednesday evenings – Mental Wellness and Aging. I am excited at the potential this course will have and believe it will benefit students, practitioners and the larger community.

Also join us for Careers in Aging Week – at the Gerontology Annual Open House. It is an opportunity to meet, mingle, learn, eat yummy food and win fabulous door prizes. It will be on Monday – April 24th from 3-5 in Stewart Hall 330.

As always if you have any questions about the Gerontology programs please feel free to contact Rona Karasik or myself. We are eager to assist you and can ease anxiety and answers most questions. Take care and stop by – Phyllis



Fall 2006 Course Schedule



Undergraduate Courses in Aging:

Gerontology

GERO 208-01	INTRO TO GERONTOLOGY	10:00-10:50	M/W/F
GERO 208-02	INTRO TO GERONTOLOGY	12:30-1:45	T/TH
GERO 405-01	AGING & DIVERSITY	5:00-7:45	T
GERO 411-01	AGING POLICY & PROGRAMS	3:30-4:45	T/TH
GERO 425-01	DEMENTIA & AGING	3:00-4:15	M/W
GERO 440-01	MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS	5:00-7:45	W
GERO 444-01	INTERNSHIP		

Remember to check the on-line schedule for any last minute changes!

Community Studies

CMTY 333-01	STUDYING COMMUNITIES	12:30-1:45	T/TH
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Psychology

PSY 345-54	PSYCHOLOGY OF DEATH AND DYING		
	*Online course		

Sociology

SOC 350-54	SOCIOLOGY OF AGE & AGING		
	*Online course		

For Registration information visit:

www.stcloudstate.edu/registrar

SCSU Admissions:

(320) 308-2244 or 1-800-369-4260

***Contact Continuing Studies for more**

information: (320) 308-4721

Graduate Courses in Aging:

Gerontology

GERO 505-01	AGING & DIVERSITY	5:00-7:45	T
GERO 511-01	AGING & POLICY PROGRAMS	3:30-4:45	T/TH
GERO 525-01	DEMENTIA & AGING	3:00-4:15	M/W
GERO 540-01	MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS	5:00-7:45	W
GERO 630-01	AGING & COMMUNITY	5:00-7:45	M
GERO 644-01	INTERNSHIP		
GERO 696-01	PRACTICUM		
GERO 699-01	THESIS		

Counselor Education and Educational Psychology

CEEP 678-01	INTRO TO GRADUATE STATISTICS	5:00-7:45	M
CEEP 678-02	INTRO TO GRADUATE STATISTICS	2:00-4:45	TH
CEEP 678-03	INTRO TO GRADUATE STATISTICS	5:00-8:00	F
		9:00AM-4:30PM	Saturday
CEEP 678-54	INTRO TO GRADUATE STATISTICS		
	*Online course		

Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate

FIRE 579-01	SOCIAL INSURANCE	11:00-11:50	M/W/F
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Psychology

PSY 543-01	PSYCHOLOGY OF ADULT DEV/AGING		
	*Online course		

Summer Session:

Social Work/First Term

SW 430-01	Social Work Practice With Aging	12:30-4:30	TR
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Psychology/Full Term

PSY 345-55	Psych of Death and Dying	SELF-PACED COURSE	
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Sociology/Full Term

Soc 350-54	Sociology of Age/Aging	SELF-PACED COURSE	
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Get Active in Gerontology

Careers in Aging Week

The Gerontological Society of America and the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education are proud to present "Careers in Aging Week" taking place April 17-21, 2006. The purpose of this week is to create awareness to the wide-ranging career opportunities that exist in the field of gerontology.

*Gerontology Open House
Monday April 24th
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm in
Stewart Hall room 330.
An SPO and Gerontology
club meeting will follow
from 5-6 pm.*

Check out the new Gerontology website!
www.stcloudstate.edu/gerontology

GERONTOLOGY CLUB

Interested in the study of aging? The Gerontology club is a new organization that is open to all SCSU students who have an interest in gerontology. Elections for next year's officers will be held during April's meeting (April 24, 5-6 pm). Anyone interested in a position should make sure to attend the meeting or contact Rona Karasik at (320) 308-5224 or Phyllis Greenberg at (320) 308-3156.

Gerontology Spring 2006 Interns

Undergraduate Interns

Jenell Jerde, Wellstead of Rogers, Rogers, MN

Melinda Moulzolf, The Care Program, Foley, MN

Erica Pender, Senior Helping Hands, St. Cloud, MN

John Tasto, Whitney Senior Center, St. Cloud, MN

Laura Winkelman, Carefree Living, St. Cloud, MN

Graduate Interns

Sarah Jones, RSVP, St. Cloud, MN

Abby Smith, Good Shepherd, Sauk Rapids, MN

Suzanne Snyder, Presbyterian Homes & Services, St. Paul, MN



William E. Arnold, Ph.D.
Arizona State University

Next year the first wave of the boomer generation turns sixty. Newspapers and magazines are filled with stories of what boomers and their parents should be doing to live long and well. Each story offers a key to successful aging. Andrew Weil, M.D. a professor at the University of Arizona suggests four components in his new book *Healthy Aging*. His are meditation, diet, nutrients, and exercise.

While these are important they don't cover all of the basics for aging well. I would propose that there are six C's to becoming a centenarian. They are challenges, condition [mental], communication, companionship, conditioning, and consumption. The first four are for your mind and the last two for your body.

If you are like me, you notice changes in your mind and body that could be improved. The research findings are clear. You have to challenge your mind if you want to reduce the risk of dementia. Reading, taking classes, and even doing crossword puzzles stimulates your brain. Like exercise for the body, we have to actively use our minds or they both deteriorate.

What is your mental condition? Are you constantly stressed, depressed or worried about personal or world events? These factors increase your potential for heart attack, stroke and related conditions. Dr. Weil and others suggest mediation, yoga or other relaxation techniques to lower blood pressure and reduce stress.

Most of us have a need to communicate with others. Communication goes hand in hand with companionship. As we age we lose our friends and loved ones. It gets harder to find new friends. Companionship through communication can lessen feelings of stress and depression. Social isolation and loneliness often lead to an unhealthy lifestyle and a shortened lifespan.

Enjoying game nights, developing hobbies, attending concerts, and taking classes, can help you accomplish the first four of the C's. Check your local newspaper for free lectures, discussions and other mind exercising activities.

A healthy body complements a healthy mind. Conditioning is a fancy word for exercise. Exercise should consist of four components—cardiovascular fitness, strength, flexibility, and balance. While the suggested amount of exercise continues to change, the need for it has not. It's hard to be healthy if you only workout on the weekend. Walking every-day and working out with weights three times a week would be a good start for your exercise routine.

As we age the need to maintain flexibility and balance increases. If you don't do yoga, do simple stretching exercises. If you are like me and work at a desk for a long period, take breaks to get up and stretch. In the United States, one of every three adults 65 or older falls each year. Falls are the leading cause of injury deaths in this age group. Developing and maintaining balance could save your life

The last component is what I call consumption. This consists of diet and nutrition. According to some studies, there are over 58 million Americans that are overweight and 40 million who are obese. What we eat has caused us to supersize. Being overweight can lead to many conditions like diabetes, heart conditions, and even cancer. Check out the latest Federal guidelines on the food pyramid for information on the current suggested food intake at www.mypyramid.gov.

Nutrition includes the types of food that you eat as well as any supplements that you might be taking. Clearly we would be better off getting our nutrition from foods rather than supplements, but that is not always possible. Many food products are enhanced to promote a more healthful diet. In fact, I just read of a new chocolate "candy" that will contain flavanols and antioxidants so it will be healthier for you.

Every component listed in this article is something that you personally can do if you want to age successfully. There is no magic pill that will give you good health and a long life, it takes commitment and perseverance. Be sure that you get a complete physical examination before you make changes in your lifestyle. I will explore each of the six C's more fully in future articles.

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Gerontology Program
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720 Fourth Avenue South
St. Cloud, MN 56301-4498

Gerontology Open House

The St. Cloud Gerontology program and the Sigma Phi Omega Honors and Professional Society in Gerontology and the Gerontology Club are hosting the annual Spring **Gerontology Open House**. Students, faculty and community members are invited to an afternoon of networking and learning what's new in the field of Gerontology. We welcome you **April 24th** to **Stewart Hall** room # **330** from **3:00-5:00** pm! An SPO and Gerontology Club meeting will follow from 5-6 pm.