

Gerontology

Purpose and Philosophy

The interdisciplinary Master of Science degree and certificates of study in gerontology are offered under the supervision of the Pruett Gerontology Center. The Gerontology Center is housed within the College of Arts and Sciences and the Department of Sociology and Social Work. Primary purposes of the gerontology program at ACU are to prepare students (1) to assist an ever-growing, older population meet its physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs; (2) to assume leadership roles in residential care facilities for the aged; (3) to become proficient in the planning, coordination and administration of private or public programs in aging; and (4) to teach gerontology at the college or university level.

Course work in this interdisciplinary program is carefully integrated in an effort to add richness, depth and balance to a student's background. Required courses come from such diverse fields as sociology, social work, psychology, family studies, biology, government, communication, administration and health education.

A graduate certificate of studies in gerontology is available for those who do not wish to complete a degree in gerontology, but do wish to supplement their academic training or practical experience in the field of aging. A certificate may be earned independently or along with a degree in another field of study. The certificate is an 18-semester-hour program and is a nationally recognized credential in the field of gerontology education.

Curriculum for the certificate follows recommendations of the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education.

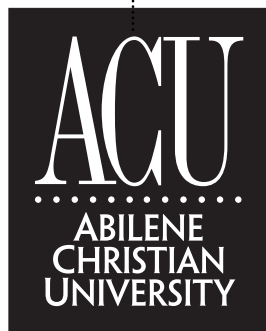
Since 1986, the Pruett Gerontology Center has worked to develop a curriculum in the study of aging, to respond to church and community service needs, and to develop a resource center to serve informational needs of individuals and organizations. The Center has

sponsored numerous workshops, conferences and short courses to address needs and issues in aging now being faced by churches, families and communities.

Admission Requirements

The primary criterion for admission to this program is the applicant's potential for academic success. To assess each candidate's relative potential, the following items must be completed:

1. A completed Application for Admission to the ACU Graduate School and non-refundable application fee.
2. A completed Program Application Form to the Pruett Gerontology Center.
3. An officially reported Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or Miller Analogies Test (MAT) score, within the upper 50th percentile.
4. An official transcript(s) of all previous college work (official means an original with the seal which comes directly from the issuing institution to ACU). The transcript must indicate a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. Admissions are made on the assumptions that applicants will have the bachelor's degree by the time of matriculation, and if not, the Graduate School admission is void.
5. Two (2) letters of recommendation.
6. For students whose first language is not English, an official reported Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of at least 550.
7. An essay on why the applicant wishes to pursue a graduate degree in gerontology.
8. A personal interview with the gerontology advisor.



Departmental Requirements

Entrance into the program is not limited to any specific undergraduate degree. However, a background in the social or behavioral sciences is desirable. A student's professional experience in the helping professions (particularly with older adults) will be taken into consideration. Students seeking the master's degree in gerontology who have less than 15 semester hours in the social or behavioral sciences may be required to complete leveling hours in these fields.

Scholarships and Financial Aid

Financial assistance is available to students through scholarships, loans and part-time employment. Scholarship applications are available through the Graduate School. For further information on financial aid, contact:

Student Financial Services
100 Zellner Hall
ACU Box 29007
Abilene, Texas 79699-9007
800-460-6228 or 325-674-2643

Gerontology

A 42-HOUR NON-THESIS PROGRAM

The Master of Science degree in gerontology requires 42 hours of approved graduate work. Students must complete 6 hours of scientific research courses, 9 hours of gerontology foundation courses, 6 hours of practicum (300 hours of field experience), and 21 hours of approved electives. At least 21 hours must be earned from 600-level courses.

- **Research (6 hours)**
SOCI 615 Social Research
SOCI 516 Social Statistics
- **Foundation courses (9 hours)**
GERO 548 Biology of Aging
GERO 550 Sociology of Aging
GERO 586 Counseling Older Adults and Their Families *or*
GERO 631 Human Life Cycle II
- **Practicum (6 hours)**
GERO 690 Practicum, consult with advisor.
- **Electives (21 hours)**
With approval of the advisor, courses may be selected from various gerontology offerings.

Certification Requirements

Requirements for the 18-hour certificate of studies in gerontology are as follows:

- **Core courses (9 hours)**
GERO 550 Sociology of Aging
GERO 586 Counseling Older Adults and Their Families *or*
GERO 631 Human Life Cycle II
GERO 690 Practicum in Gerontology (150 hours of supervised work placement with the aged)
- **Electives (9 hours)**
With approval of the advisor, courses may be selected from the gerontology offerings.

Faculty

- Charles D. Pruett**, 1992, *director, Pruett Gerontology Center*; B.S., Abilene Christian University, 1991; M.S., ACU, 1992; Ph.D. University of North Texas, 2002.
- Bill Culp**, 1977-1982, 1998, *associate professor of sociology and chair of sociology and social work*; B.A., Harding University, 1967; M.S.U., University of Arkansas at Little Rock, 1976.
- Steven Wages**, 1997, *assistant professor, director, Southwest Center for Fathering*; A.A., Mississippi Gulf Coast Junior College, 1976; B.S., University of Southern Mississippi, 1978; M.M.F.T., Abilene Christian University, 1994; Ph.D., Florida State University, 2002.

Courses of Instruction

- GERO 541 Social Welfare Policy and Services** (3-0-3). A descriptive and analytical study of social welfare programs and policies; examination of the relationship between social work and other aspects of the U.S. social welfare system, noting overall impact on social problems. (Same as SOCW 540.)
- GERO 548 Biology of Aging** (3-0-3), May. Survey of the human anatomy and physiology with implications of normal and abnormal age related changes.
- GERO 550 Sociology of Aging** (3-0-3), spring. An overview of the research and literature related to the demographic, social, and cultural aspects of aging in the United States and in other cultures. Same as SOCI 350/550.
- GERO 554 Aging and the Family** (3-0-3). Problems of aging in the family as related to interpersonal relationships, nutrition and environmental needs of the elderly in maintaining personal independence. 5 hours of field experience required. (Same as FCS 554.)
- GERO 560 Ethics and Social Issues** (3-0-3). An attempt to help students reach a higher critical and reflective consciousness of the relationship of ethics to professional and business decision making and problem solving. (Same as SOCI 560.)
- GERO 561 Nursing Facility Organization and Environmental Management** (3-0-3). This course is designed to give the student knowledge of organizational and environmental management principles suggested by the National Association of Board of Examiners for Nursing Facility Administrators. Completion of this course will provide the student two of the seven academic domains specified by the Texas Board of Licensure for Nursing Facility Administrators.
- GERO 562 Nursing Facility Financial and Personnel Management** (3-0-3). This course is designed to give the student knowledge of financial and personnel management principles suggested by the National Association of Board of Examiners for Nursing Facility Administrators. Completion of this course will provide the student approximately 33 percent of the academic material specified by the Texas Board of Licensure for Nursing Facility Administrators.
- GERO 563 Regulatory and Resident Management in a Nursing Facility** (3-0-3). This course is designed to give the student knowledge of regulatory and resident care management suggested by the National Association of Board Examiners for Nursing Facility

For More Information

Materials for application to the Master of Science programs in gerontology may be obtained from:

Jennifer Walker
Graduate Admissions
200 Zellner Hall
ACU Box 29000
Abilene, Texas 79699-9000
800-395-4723 or 325-674-2650
Fax: 325-674-2130
Email: gradinfo@acu.edu
Web: www.acu.edu/grad

Advisor for graduate gerontology:
Dr. C.D. Pruett
Abilene Christian University
ACU Box 27793
Abilene, Texas 79699-7793
325-674-2350
Fax: 325-674-6804
Email: charlie.pruett@gero.acu.edu

Administrators. Completion of this course will provide the student with approximately 33 percent of the academic material specified by the Texas Board of Licensure for Nursing Facility Administrators.

GERO 579 Programs and Services for the Elderly (3-0-3). Health care delivery system, aging networks, delivery of care, communication disorders in the elderly. (Same as COMP 579.)

GERO 586 Counseling with Older Adults and Their Families (3-0-3). Obtain an understanding of how cultural experiences impact the aging process, including assessments of problems, mental health issues and community resources. Introduces a range of counseling techniques, intervention strategies, behavior change concepts and related issues. (Same as PSYC 586.)

GERO 631 Human Life Cycle II (3-0-3). Provides a thorough survey of the specified divisions of the life span – from early adulthood, through middle adulthood and late adulthood to death. (Same as PSYC 631.)

GERO 636 Seminar in Death and Dying (3-0-3). This seminar will explore the theoretical and theological basis for the study of thanatology. The course will expose each student to significant new literature in the discipline of death, dying and grief. (Same as BIBM 636.)

GERO 644 Management and Funding of Human Services (3-0-3). Designed to develop a working knowledge of the planning, allocation, and control processes of resources in a social service agency and procedures and techniques of developing and receiving grants and/or contract support and addressing methods of organizational change and community improvement as they relate to social services. (Same as SOCW 644.)

GERO 668 Housing the Older Client (3-0-3). This course will provide a thorough review of the literature, research and theory in the field of housing for the older client. Managerial aspects of the industry will focus upon providing a quality living environment at the best independent level care possible.

GERO 670 Social Services Administration and Planning (3-0-3). Will be directed toward the administration and planning process in social service organizations. The course will also help the students to assess service needs of a target population, to evaluate programs and to develop and implement viable alternatives within the agency structure. (Same as SOCW 670.)

GERO 675 Special Studies in Gerontology (3-0-3), on demand. Prominent guest lecturers are invited to share their special expertise on a variety of selected topics in the field of Gerontology. This course may be repeated under the leadership of a different lecturer or the study of different topics under the same lecturer.

GERO 680 Educational Gerontology (3-0-3). An analysis of older adult learning processes and applications of these concepts to actual learning situations for older adults. Students will design and conduct a learning experience for an older adult group during the semester.

GERO 685 Advanced Seminar in Gerontology (3-0-3), fall. This course will lead the student to apply the theory, knowledge and practice of gerontology toward a particular field or job area.

GERO 690 Practicum in Gerontology (3-6 hours). Supervised field placement of 150 to 300 hours.

SOCI 516 Social Statistics (3-0-3), fall, spring. An introduction to computer-assisted statistical analysis of social data, with the emphasis on nonparametric concepts and applications. Prerequisite: junior standing or approval of the instructor.

SOCI 615 Social Research (4-0-4). An application of the scientific method to the study of social phenomena; consideration of basic methods of data gathering, analysis and reporting, including basic statistics. Students experience organizing, conducting and evaluating research.