



K-State Center on Aging
Gerontology Update
February 2009
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Center on Aging Achievements 2008

Expanding on the research reputation of the Center in the field of long-term care (our priority)

- We completed a six-year commitment to develop culture change promotional materials for the PEAK-ED initiative, funded by the Kansas Department on Aging. KDOA expressed a desire to continue working with us but the funding for the project has been restricted due to economic pressures at the state level. We are currently negotiating with KDOA for a \$30,000 contract to continue some of this work. We have viewed losing this grant as a problem, in that we lost a staff member, but also as an opportunity as it has forced us to think more creatively about revenue enhancement.
- Two staff members conducted a small pilot project evaluating attitudes toward sexuality in nursing homes before and after an in-service training. This project led to a presentation at a national conference and a press release that was picked up nationally. We are currently working to find funding to do a large study assessing policies regarding sexuality in nursing homes.
- We collaborated across disciplines to write and submit an NIH grant to evaluate the new “household” model of care for frail elders. Awards are granted in March.
- Gayle is currently involved in a project to evaluate the resident outcomes from participation in a kindergarten classroom that has been built in a nursing home in Coffeyville, Kansas.
- We’ve been working with Teresa Radebaugh at Wichita State University and David Ekert from KU to find a collaborative research agenda.
- Laszlo Kulcsar (Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work and the Kansas Population Center) is our new Center on Aging research chair. He has a very strong research background and has been beneficial in directing our endeavors.
- The Center on Aging satellite office at Meadowlark Hills Retirement Community will open this spring. Recruiting and coordinating K-State faculty in conducting research on the MH campus will be an objective of the office.

Cutting edge educational programs:

- Our student recruitment efforts are paying off. We have set a goal of 100 secondary majors by May '09. We currently have nearly 80 students enrolled in either the secondary major or long-term care administration. In Fall of '07 we had 56. Gayle took Susan Watt (our best advocate in pre-health, the source of a large number of our student enrollments) out to lunch and Pam and Gayle are meeting with her to explain

some of our newer classes. We have scheduled an open house for an invited list of advisors so that we can explain the importance of the secondary major. This will occur in late February. I have been scheduled to meet with a large group of Kinesiology students in February as well.

- We've also worked to improve our retention of students. Graduation rates have continued to climb. In 2008 we graduated 18 students. That is up several from recent years.
- Because of the growing number of students we've seen an increased demand for classes. We currently teach five Introduction to Gerontology classes per year with a total enrollment of approximately 250. We are examining the possibility of adding another section of Intro in the fall. We will also be adding another section of Seminar in Gerontology for the fall of '09. Numbers in this class have been over 25 for the past several years making it too large to teach comfortably as a seminar. In addition, some of our students are not completing the secondary major because this class has traditionally only been taught in the spring semester. The additional courses will be DCE courses, bringing needed revenue into the office.
- Other new courses added this year: Gerontechnology, Spring '09 (online); Politics and Aging, Fall '09. Gayle is working with Sally Bailey (theater), Jana Fallin (music) and Deborah Murray (literature) to develop a Humanities and Aging course. We hope to have this ready for Spring '10.
- We've assigned Laci Cornelison to coordinate our student activities and she has done exceptionally well. She sends a quarterly on-line newsletter to students and coordinates 7-8 career and research panels yearly.
- We have completed the transfer of the Great Plains-IDEA program to the Center on Aging. Applications for the fall semester were due by the first of February. Because of six or seven graduations last year our enrollment is down and we will fill to the cap of 35 again. I am serving as faculty chair for the Great Plains-IDEA gerontology faculty and I have been working on my peers to add more classes or to accept more students into classes so we can continue to grow the program. There is no incentive for faculty to do this and I would like to see this changed. We have identified a recruitment strategy with design students that could substantially increase our numbers. Bringing this program into our office has required additional efforts on our part and we are still learning what need to be done.
- Completed assessment documents for secondary major and GP-IDEA program

Improve our capacity for engagement and outreach:

- Presented resources and an aging simulation for the Manhattan Ministerial Alliance
- Working with the Manhattan Pilot Club to evaluate Brain Gym at Meadowlark Hills and the Riley County Senior Center
- Presented at four Extension functions in the last year.

- Working with Tallgrass Creek resident research project (<http://www.ericksoncommunities.com/opk/>) .
- Students in the senior seminar class had mentors from Meadowlark Hills and did community service projects.
- Served as the liason for Schowalter Villa and faculty and students at KSU.
- Working with NetGiver, KAHSA, KHCA, AAA, Heritage One and numerous nursing homes.
- Have sponsored speakers:
 - Melissa Brunner (WIBW) and a Medicare specialist (videotaped for use in online classes)
 - Maria Glymour, Harvard School of Public Health
 - Caregiving workshop with the Methodist church
- Staff has given presentations at church, service group meetings, Senior University.
- Have had two media releases and one opinion piece published.
- Developed a new logo to be used for Center branding as well as gifts for speakers. The new logo will be made into graduation pins for our seniors. Looking for other opportunities for use. See the new logo on the top right of the first page of this document.
- Another newsletter published and sent to alumni and friends.

Accomplishments of individuals, programs, and projects in the unit:

- Laci Cornelison completed a grantwriting class through support of the center. As a result of the class she wrote and submitted a grant to the Alzheimer's Society. The notification will be in the spring.
- Stephanie Gfeller took the same grantwriting course a couple of years ago. This year she wrote for the Tilford and DCE grants. Both were funded.
- Majka Jankowiak wrote an article about Sexuality in Nursing Homes. It was accepted and printed in the January issue of Provider. Majka also wrote a grant for the Kansas Health Foundation. It was not funded.
- Laci and Stephanie teach the Intro course. Their teacher effectiveness ratings were above the 4.5 level. They are both very good instructors.
- Pam Evans continues to do an excellent job with advising students who perennially praise her work, especially when compared to advising they get in other programs.
- Megan Steele, graduate student, has developed many of our new graphic designs used in newsletters and brochures. She is also our editor and researcher for our written materials.
- Ben Bolender was the beneficiary of a DCE grant for the development of our new on-line Gerontechnology course. This class has just started. I am monitoring closely and it seems to be going well.
- Staff completed several new modules for the PEAK-ED program.

Strategic Planning 09-10

Mission: *To develop the Center on Aging as a national leader in the field of quality of life for frail elders.*

Goal #1: Continue to expand the research reputation of the center in the field of long-term care.

Action Steps:

- Continue a collaborative relationship with the Kansas Department on Aging while weaning ourselves away from a reliance on funding from them.
- Investigate marketing plans for the PEAK materials.
- Re-submit the AHRQ proposal if it is not funded. This grant would address outcomes from the new “household” model of care.
- Re-submit the Alzheimer project if not funded. This grant uses music therapy to help older persons with dementia to retain their ability to be functionally independent.
- Get funding to do a national study about policies related to sexuality and sexual diversity in nursing homes.
- Inform and promote K-State faculty research on the Meadowlark Hills campus.
- Complete Windsor Place (Coffeyville, KS) Kindergarten research and submit an article.
- Seek collaborative opportunities with other universities and organizations as well as departments on campus. These opportunities may be with other gerontology faculty but will not be limited to a gerontology connection.
- Seek national speaking opportunities.
- Submit articles for publication.
- Increase student opportunities including promotion, scholarships, career development, and possibly student research (i.e. the Schowalter project with design students).

Goal #2: Create a cutting-edge educational program for the development of leaders in quality of life for frail elders.

- Improve the quality of gerontological instruction
 - Attend instructional training workshops and lectures
 - Add more electives to the schedule
 - Assist gerontology faculty in developing their courses to on-line formats
 - Teach more courses with older adults as presenters or as participants in classes
- Recruit students from diverse fields of study for gerontology classes and the secondary major.
 - Increase the number of secondary majors to 100 by May, 2009.
 - Recruitment ideas for males
 - Open house for advisors (provide information about secondary major)
 - Have Pam present to more introductory courses.
 - Provide information about gerontology to High School counselors.

- Continue to work with Meadowlark Hills to create a learning center to include the following:
 - Career ladder opportunities
 - Life-long learning
 - Intergenerational learning
 - Integrated internship program
 - Support for the Seminar in Long-Term Care Administration intersession course
- Continue to develop new courses
 - Complete the first semester of Gerontechnology and evaluate
 - Add an undergraduate course, “Politics and Aging” for the fall semester.
 - Add another Seminar in Gerontology and another Introduction to Gerontology as DCE courses
 - Convert PEAK modules to continuing education short courses.
- Recognize and support students through:
 - Scholarships
 - Graduation pins using our new logo
 - Recognition emails from the director and Intro class instructor for students signing up for the secondary major
 - Career planning through newsletters and panel discussions
- Strengthen the Great Plains-IDEA gerontology masters program
 - Additional advising
 - Opening enrollment to spring and fall
 - More elective courses

Goal #3: Improve our capacity for engagement and outreach.

- Determine a less expensive way (than the current print newsletter) to reach our alumni and stakeholders.
- Continue to refine and market aging sensitivity trainings.
- Market PEAK materials and workshops.
- Work with Media Relations and local media to provide information and commentary when appropriate.

If you have questions or comments about any of the items listed in this document please respond to Gayle Doll at gdoll@ksu.edu.