



K-State Center on Aging

Gerontology Update

November 2008

www.humec.ksu.edu/aging/

Calendar

Nov 12 Maria Glymour presentation

Nov 27 Thanksgiving holiday

Nov 28

Dec 15 Finals begin

Dec 29 January Intersession
to Jan 14

Jan 19 University holiday

NOTES:

Students wishing to take GERON 600
need permission to enroll from Pam
Evans in our office.

**Please remember the
presentation by Maria
Glymour, Harvard School of
Public Health, on November 14,
9 am in Leasure Hall 112. See
the last page of this
gerontology update for more
information**

Note from the Director

The academic year started great and we are seeing an interest and good participation in our Careers in Aging panel presentations. Although we graduated 17 students in summer 2008, we have since added almost as many new students since August. We appreciate your assistance in encouraging students to consider the secondary major in gerontology. Please keep sending them our way – we love working with them toward their career goals.

Did you know that the Center on Aging has three acting committees: Research, Academic Affairs, and Outreach? We will feature the work of each group through our next few newsletters.

The members of the research committee are Laszlo Kulcsar, Sociology, Anthropology & Social Work, chair; Candace Shoemaker, Horticulture, Forestry & Recreation Resources; Mark Haub, Human Nutrition, and Laci Cornelison, graduate student in gerontology and Center on Aging staff member. The tasks of the research committee include:

- assisting in development of initiatives to encourage research and research proposals related to aging
- making short and long-term recommendations regarding strategies to involve faculty in gerontological research
- organizing research seminars to respond to faculty/student interests
- allocating seed monies/graduate assistant support for extra-mural grant proposals
- reviewing applications for Gerontology Faculty

The specific goals that the committee is working on for this year include developing a lecture series with two to three events or activities per semester. These may include a possible research showcase in January 09 to feature past winners of the Center on Aging research award. The committee will also review the application process and make new awards as well as recruit and review applications for gerontology faculty status.

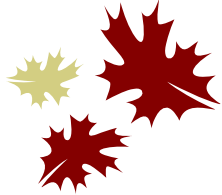
Learning how to learn is life's most important skill.

~ Tony Buzan ~



Note from Laszlo Kulcsar, Research Committee Chair

Every successful academic program requires a strong research component. The gerontology program is uniquely positioned since it spans across various fields with their own research programs. The Research Committee at the Center on Aging has the role of bringing these fields closer together by finding common themes in gerontology and offering various opportunities for research support and dissemination. The Center will feature national speakers at K-State, promote faculty research through the gerontology research grant in the summer and help with the dissemination of results using an improved website. We will put great emphasis on involving students in research, both by encouraging projects providing field experience and offering opportunities for students to present their research experiences. While we have certain ideas promoting research, the input and feedback from the gerontology faculty is essential in the development of the program. Let us know what you think.



Students and Research

Although it isn't standard practice to include undergraduates in research, we encourage you to think about ways they can be included. Students who have taken our GERON 600 course have really enjoyed it (see related story). In the spring semester 2009 the Center on Aging will be accepting applications for the **Dr. Rick Scheidt Scholarship for Research in Aging** – awarded to a Graduate or Undergraduate student affiliated with the Center on Aging and engaged in research on aging. Other gerontology scholarships are also available. An announcement will be distributed in January and the application deadline will be in early February for a fall 2009 or spring 2010 award. You might note that the Gerontological Society of America, the American Society on Aging, and the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education sponsor student research awards. There may be other organizations within your area of specialty which also offer student research competitions. Check organization websites for details and application deadlines.



Seminar in Gerontology

GERON 600 Seminar in Gerontology is the capstone course for our Secondary Major in Gerontology, taught by Gayle in the spring semester. Effective in fall 09 the class will be offered both spring and fall semesters, which should eliminate some student scheduling conflicts. Gayle uses an applied approach, requiring that the students select and complete a project either working with a community organization or a gerontology faculty member. Last spring a number of faculty received valuable student help while the students learned more about the research process through joint collaboration. Jessica Drugg worked with Migette Kaup in developing floor plan models for Meadowlark Hills households. Kylie Bullock and Michaela Kryzer helped Jane Garcia in a study to explore the effect of culture change on dietary feeding practices. Kelly Flanders and Rebecca Hutchison worked with Joy Kozar in her study on older women's perceptions of older models. Brad Radatz worked with our office to develop curricula on sexuality in nursing homes. Students are expected to contribute approximately 20 hours to their assigned project. If you have a research project which might benefit from this type of student assistance, please contact Gayle at gdoll@ksu.edu or 785-532-5945.



Mark Your Calendar – Please join us!

Dr. Maria Glymour, Dept. of Society, Human Development and Health, Harvard School of Public Health, will give a presentation on November 14, 9-10am in Leasure Hall 112. The title of her presentation is "Does childhood schooling affect old age memory or mental status? Using state schooling laws as natural experiments."

The association between schooling and old age cognitive outcomes such as memory disorders is well documented but, because of the threat of reverse causation, controversy persists over whether education affects old age cognition. Changes in state compulsory schooling laws (CSL) are treated as natural experiments (instruments) for estimating the effect of education on memory and mental status among the elderly. Changes in CSL predict changes in average years of schooling completed by children who are affected by the new laws. These educational differences are presumably independent of innate individual characteristics such as IQ.

Dr. Glymour was awarded a pre-doctoral Fellowship with the National Institute on Aging and also completed a summer institute on aging research with the National Institute on Aging. Her research interests include how social factors experienced across the lifespan (such as educational opportunities and socioeconomic conditions) influence cognitive function, dementia, stroke and other health outcomes in old age.

New DVD's in our Library

- Caring for your Aging Parents
- The Brain Fitness Program
- Adapting to Change
(PBS series, Life Part 2)
- Aging and Fear
(PBS series, Life Part 2)

