



K-State Center on Aging

Gerontology Update

April 2009

www.humec.ksu.edu/aging/

Calendar

- Apr 18 University Open House, 9-3
- May 5 Meadowlark Hills Learning Center Open House
- May 8 Last day of spring semester
- May 11 Finals week
- May 15
- May 18 Intersession begins
- May 25 University holiday
- June 5 Intersession ends

A university should be a place of light, of liberty, and of learning.

~ Benjamin Disraeli ~

Note from the Director

May 5 marks the completion of goals that were set in place two years ago when the Center on Aging was awarded an Engagement and Community Development grant. On that date we will celebrate the opening of the K-State Learning Center at Meadowlark Hills.

This collaborative effort is threefold. The first is to develop an integrated internship program at the retirement community. Students from many disciplines are invited to take internships at Meadowlark. While there they will work together for part of their programs to learn how interdisciplinary teams solve problems in organizations.

The second part involves research. Meadowlark welcomes K-State faculty to bring their research problems to the community. Desk space is available and residents are willing to participate. Interested researchers should call the Center on Aging for contact information.

The third part of development is in education. Currently two K-State courses are being taught on the Meadowlark campus, combining traditional students with older adult residents. (See more about this in another article.) In addition, the Center on Aging staff will be working with Meadowlark Hills to create staff development opportunities for their own employees but also for participants from across the state and eventually, around the globe. Gerontology faculty are encouraged to think about offering courses at Meadowlark. The new Learning Center classroom seats 30 comfortably. Its location near the restaurant, pub and deli make it a fun and relaxing learning environment. Read further through this newsletter to find out what this collaboration can mean for you. Please plan to attend the open house on **May 5 at 2:30 p.m.**

KSU Open House will be here in a week, and like other departments we are planning the activities for our display. For the 2008 Open House we completed Aging simulation activities which our visitors really seemed to enjoy. Our theme for this year is "*Gerontophobic? We can help*". Visitors will test their aging IQ by taking a short quiz that helps dispel the myths of aging. Our display will feature images of older adults from the 1980's to the present which highlight the negative portrayal of the elderly in the media. We invite you or your students to stop by and get more information about our program. We look forward to a great Open House this year.





Creative Learning

A wrinkled hand shoots up in response to the instructor's question. The respondent begins her answer with "if you really want to know how it is..." The budding student gerontologists in the room really want to know how it is. This spring two K-State classes are meeting at Meadowlark Hills. Instructor Laci Cornelison takes her 51 students to the "field" and meets with Meadowlark Hills residents on Monday evenings for Introduction to Gerontology. The two generations are mingled at round tables and the class instruction includes a variety of styles including lecture, activities, video, and lots of discussion.

A second course, Seminar in Gerontology, taught by Gayle Doll, pairs each student with a Meadowlark Hills resident mentor. Students and their mentors work together on community projects and research activities that are meant to improve elders' lives. Gayle believes that once you have taught this way you will never want to go back. By having persons who have experienced aging taking part in the class it makes the course material real. She also reports that the changes in ageist attitudes are quite remarkable. "It works both ways. Not only do younger people appreciate the older adults more by the end of the semester but the older adults leave with a new respect for young people as well." Creating a mentoring system has been very rewarding. Many of these relationships last well beyond the one semester class and outside of the classroom. If you have an interest in instructing a course at Meadowlark, contact Gayle to learn more about it.



Meadowlark Hills Learning Center classroom





Welcome to our 100th student
Monica Khurana, Microbiology

100!!!

That is the number we had targeted as our goal – 100 students declared as Secondary Majors in Gerontology by the end of the Spring 09 semester. As of April 9 we have met our goal. We are aware that this number is a “moving target” since we will graduate 14 students this May. So our work continues! We thank all of you for sending these students our way, and hope that you will continue to do so.

KSU students who graduate with a gerontology background in a variety of disciplines have the potential to impact the lives of many older adults in our society. We will continue to do our part to ensure that skilled workers and services will be available in Kansas and nationwide into the future.

If you have questions about our student recruitment, want a “refresher” on the secondary major requirements, would like us to give a presentation in your class (5-50 minutes), or have other issues we can help with please let us know.

We must view young people
not as empty bottles to be
filled, but as candles to be lit.

~ Robert H. Shaffer ~

