

# GERONTOLOGY

## Mission:

We develop knowledge and inspire future leaders to positively influence the aging process and to advocate for older adults, their caregivers, and the communities in which they live.

## General Information

### Overview of Degree Programs

#### Bachelor of Science in Gerontology

The Bachelor of Science in Gerontology requires completion of 120 credit hours with a cumulative GPA of 2.0. Admission into the program requires a 2.50 GPA. The Bachelor of Science in Gerontology can be completed online with an Administration or Healthy Aging concentration or with certain minors.

#### Double Major or Double Degree in Gerontology

Due to the multidisciplinary nature of Gerontology, a double major or double degree may be applicable to many programs. Admission into the program requires a 2.50 GPA. A double major requires 42 credit hours.

#### Double Degree in Gerontology

Students must complete all general education, college requirements and major requirements for two programs with a minimum of 150 credit hours. Students will receive two diplomas and must meet the University Double Degree requirements outlined in the catalog.

#### Maximum/Minimum Credit Hours

Bachelor of Science in Gerontology – 120 credit hours  
 Certificate in Gerontology – 18 credit hours (15 credit hours of coursework, 3 credit hours of practicum)  
 Minor in Gerontology – 18 credit hours (at least 9 credits must be upper division)

#### Residency Requirement

*Bachelor of Science in Gerontology:*

Thirty out of the last thirty-six credit hours must be taken within the University of Nebraska System.

Twenty-one credit hours of Gerontology Core and Gerontology Electives must be taken at UNO or UNL.

#### Transfer Credit Policy

Transfer courses from other institutions must be a “C-” or higher.

Transfer coursework will only be accepted from regionally accredited institutions.

#### Bachelor of Science in Gerontology:

Sixty-four credit hours from regionally accredited two-year institutions may be applied toward the degree.

Twelve credit hours of military training can be applied to the degree.

#### Unacceptable Credits

Gerontology coursework from UNO, UNL and other institutions over 10 years old will be reviewed on an individual basis. Depending on current course content and updated research, older courses may not be applicable to the program.

Credit from technical programs such as Certificate Nursing Assistant (CNA) and Medical Assistant (MA) do not apply to Gerontology programs. Clinical hours from Nursing programs (RN, BSN & LPN) do not apply. Students with these types of transfer credits should consider the Gerontology concentration in the Division of Continuing Studies as an alternative.

#### Quality of Work

A 2.50 GPA is required for admission to any program.

A 2.5 GPA is required to enroll in a practicum.

#### Bachelor of Science in Gerontology:

All Gerontology coursework must be completed with a “C-” or higher.

Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA to be in good academic standing with the University.

#### Certificate in Gerontology:

All Gerontology courses must be completed with a C- or higher and a combined C (2.0) average.

#### Minor in Gerontology:

All Gerontology courses must be completed with a C- or higher and a combined C (2.0) average.

#### Completion of Incomplete Grade

Coursework must be completed by the end of the following semester, per University guidelines.

#### Repeating Courses

Allowed with no limit.

#### Administration of the Program

The Bachelor of Science is available on the UNO campus only (or online). The minor is available on the UNL and UNO campuses.

The UNO Department of Gerontology administers the Certificate in Gerontology program for all campuses of the University of Nebraska under an agreement approved by the Board of Regents in 1977. Students at UNL, UNO, UNK, and UNMC are thus able to earn the certificate as part of their academic work at the University of Nebraska.

In addition to undergraduate and graduate courses, the Department of Gerontology conducts research, community service, and provides educational programming for the community.

Student Group

Sigma Phi Omega

#### Academic Advising

Academic advising is provided for all students. The program recommends advising each semester to ensure degree completion. The academic advisor assists students with degree planning, course scheduling, addressing any questions or concerns regarding major/minor/certificate, academic performance, and/or policies and procedures. To contact an advisor, visit CPACS 210A, email [hford@unomaha.edu](mailto:hford@unomaha.edu) or call 402.554.2114.

## Contact Information

Department of Gerontology  
 211 CPACS  
 402.554.2272  
[unogero@unomaha.edu](mailto:unogero@unomaha.edu)

Gerontology Department Website (<http://www.unomaha.edu/gero/>)

## Admission Requirements

All undergraduate Gerontology programs require a 2.50 GPA to be admitted. Students should consult with their academic advisor on the best program to fit their needs. To set up an appointment, students should contact the academic advisor directly.

## Degrees Offered

- Gerontology, Bachelor of Science (<http://catalog.unomaha.edu/undergraduate/college-public-affairs-community-service/gerontology/gerontology-bs/>)

## Writing in the Discipline

Students must complete a writing in the discipline course to demonstrate further development of the writing skills learned in foundational composition courses, to engage the major discipline's research practices, and to demonstrate command of the major discipline's discourse practices, vocabulary, and style. Approved writing in the discipline course are MKT 3200 Managerial Communication, ENGL 2400 Advanced Composition, ENGL 3050 Writing for the Workplace, and GERO 3250 Research Methods Gerontology.

## Double Major in Gerontology

Students who choose a double major in gerontology will earn one diploma and will complete all general education, college requirements and major requirements for one program, while completing only Gerontology major coursework for their second major.

## Minors Offered

- Gerontology Minor (<http://catalog.unomaha.edu/undergraduate/college-public-affairs-community-service/gerontology/gerontology-minor/>)

## Certificates Offered

- Gerontology Certificate (<http://catalog.unomaha.edu/undergraduate/college-public-affairs-community-service/gerontology/gerontology-certificate/>)

Gerontology is the study of the physical, psychological, and social aspects of aging. It also includes the built environment such as homes, buildings, streets, open spaces, and infrastructure. The field of aging is multidisciplinary. Because of this, the gerontology degree allows students to have flexibility with coursework and is tailored to each student's needs and goals. Students will choose a concentration within the major including pre-health, administration, or healthy aging. Students will complete a practicum in the community, providing students with invaluable real-world experience to prepare them to work with aging adults and their families. A degree in Gerontology can also easily be integrated with majors and minors in other disciplines to expand into many various career opportunities.

- Adult Day Program Director
- Aging Services Administrator
- Program Specialist/Director
- Social Services Coordinator
- Life Enrichment Coordinator
- Activity Director
- Information and Referral Specialist
- Volunteer coordinator/manager
- Geriatric Case Manager
- Long Term Care Administrator
- Adult Protective Services worker

- Advocate/Ombudsman
- Research/Data Analysis
- Professional programs including nursing, medicine, physical therapy, occupational therapy, law, interior design, etc.

### GERO 2000 INTRODUCTION TO GERONTOLOGY (3 credits)

An introduction to social gerontology and human development in later life; emphasis is on important elements of aging, such as socialization, family interaction, retirement, physical and psychological aging, and perceptions of older persons in contemporary society.

**Distribution:** Social Science General Education course and U.S. Diversity General Education course

### GERO 3000 COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR OLDER ADULTS (3 credits)

This course is designed to introduce the student to community resources for older adults, to identify the organizations and individuals in the public and private sectors that help support aging in place, and to examine the impact of the efforts on older adults at the national, state and local levels.

**Prerequisite(s):** Completion of GERO 2000. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

### GERO 3070 DEATH AND DYING (3 credits)

An interdisciplinary survey of literature in the field of thanatology, with an emphasis on working with the older patient and his or her family. (Cross-listed with PHHB 3070).

### GERO 3250 RESEARCH METHODS IN GERONTOLOGY (3 credits)

This course will introduce undergraduate students to basic methodologies used in social and gerontological research. Students will explore the fundamentals of research methods, including learning how to formulate a research question, discuss and distinguish between multiple methods of data collection, perform various techniques used in quantitative and qualitative data analysis, and identify the ethics involved in social research. This course is intended for students in gerontology and in other fields who are interested in a humanistic approach to understanding significant issues which affect the lives of older people.

### GERO 3500 BIOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES OF AGING (3 credits)

The Biological Bases of Aging Course provides a survey of the primary topics in the biology of aging field for undergraduate students. This a required course for the Gerontology major. By the end of the course, students will understand major theories, biological methods, and seminal research studies in the biology of aging field. Furthermore, students will learn how to critically analyze and interpret primary research about biological aging. This course provides preparation for students considering graduate school in gerontology or biology, geriatric nursing and social work, geriatric medicine, neuroscience, psychology, and exercise science. (Cross-listed with BIOL 3500, NEUR 3500)

**Prerequisite(s):** Sophomore/Junior/Senior Standing. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

### GERO 4050 ADVANCED BIOLOGY OF AGING (3 credits)

This course covers biological aging topics at an advanced level, and is designed for undergraduate and graduate students who have some prior knowledge about biology or aging. The course will be interdisciplinary in nature and focus on topics relevant to gerontology, biology, psychology, and exercise science. Students will learn how to think critically about primary research in the biology of aging. Furthermore, they will apply their knowledge of the biology of aging field by creating a handbook of healthy aging for older adults. (Cross-listed with GERO 8056, NEUR 4050).

### GERO 4100 EDUCATIONAL GERONTOLOGY (3 credits)

An introduction to the field of education for and about the aging. The institutions and processes of education will be analyzed to determine their relationships and value to persons who are now old and those who are aging. (Cross-listed with GERO 8106).

**Prerequisite(s):** Students must have a junior, senior or graduate student status.

**GERO 4200 VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT (3 credits)**

The purpose of this course is to equip managers of volunteers in aging services to develop, maintain, assess impact and evaluate a sustainable volunteer program that will provide reliable and necessary services to older adults and further to be embraced as a valuable asset by professionals working in the field of aging. (Cross-listed with GERO 8206).

**Prerequisite(s):** Junior or Senior Standing

**GERO 4350 ISSUES IN AGING (3 credits)**

This course is intended for students in gerontology and in other fields who are interested in a humanistic approach to understanding significant issues which affect the lives of older people. (Cross-listed with GERO 8356).

**GERO 4420 RECREATION FOR THE AGING (3 credits)**

Role of leisure services as related to understanding and working with elders. Emphasis on recreation programming as a mode of intervention. Analysis and study of the phases of aging, with reference to psychomotor, affective, and cognitive changes; introduction to the theories of aging and how they relate to the lifestyle of this population; recreational therapy intervention, activity adaptation and program design; leisure education and issues and trends. (Cross-listed with GERO 8426, RLS 4420, RLS 8426).

**GERO 4440 SOCIOLOGY OF AGING (3 credits)**

This course will introduce students to important theories and concepts in the sociological study of aging and give deeper understanding of the experiences that people encounter as they grow older, including retirement, disease and disability, and long-term care. In addition to exploring the challenges faced by older adults, this course will focus on factors that contribute to successful aging. (Cross-listed with GERO 8446).

**GERO 4460 PSYCHOLOGY OF ADULT DEVELOPMENT AND AGING (3 credits)**

The focus of this course is on the major social and psychological changes that occur as a function of aging. Both normal and abnormal patterns of developmental change are examined, along with their implications for behavior. (Cross-listed with PSYC 4460, GERO 8466).

**Prerequisite(s):** Junior or senior.

**GERO 4470 MENTAL HEALTH AND AGING (3 credits)**

The goal of this courses is to survey the mental health needs of older adults. Consideration is given to identifying both positive mental health and pathological conditions. Treatment interventions effective with older adults and their families are also discussed. (Cross-listed with GERO 8476, PSYC 4470, PSYC 8476).

**Prerequisite(s):** Junior or Senior

**GERO 4480 GLOBAL AGEING (3 credits)**

The study of ageing around the world by a comparative method in a cross-cultural and cross-national framework. An explanation of some practical experiences and developments in Europe, Asia and Africa will be examined. (Cross-listed with GERO 8486).

**GERO 4500 LEGAL ASPECTS OF AGING (3 credits)**

This course centers on the legal concerns likely to arise as people age. We will discuss the American legal system with an emphasis on underlying legal concepts and issues of special importance to older persons. Some of the topics include guardianship, finances in retirement, abuse and neglect, Social Security, and Medicare and Medicaid. Consideration of the legal concerns which are likely to arise as people age. Includes introduction to American legal system, and emphasis on underlying legal concepts and issues of special importance to older persons. (Cross-listed with GERO 8506).

**GERO 4510 LONG-TERM CARE ADMINISTRATION (3 credits)**

An investigation of the broad range of policy issues, theoretical concerns and practical management strategies influencing the design, organization and delivery of long-term care services. (Cross-listed with GERO 8516, PA 4510, PA 8516).

**GERO 4520 SENIOR HOUSING (3 credits)**

The senior housing course is designed to provide students with an in-depth understanding of the various housing options available to older adults including aging in place to hospice. At the end of the course students will have a working knowledge of the needs of older adults and how this is used in making decisions about housing. (Cross-listed with GERO 8526).

**Prerequisite(s):** Junior/Senior Standing

**GERO 4550 HEALTH ASPECTS OF AGING (3 credits)**

This course emphasizes health promotion for older adults. Special health needs of older Americans are compared and contrasted with health needs for other age groups. Prevention or delaying of chronic diseases and disorders are emphasized. (Cross-listed with GERO 8556, PHHB 4550, PHHB 8556, WGST 4550).

**GERO 4560 NUTRITION AND AGING (3 credits)**

The goal of this course is to provide an understanding of the relationship between nutrition and successful or usual aging. This course will review the basics of good nutrition and relate them to the usual food intake of older adults. It will identify the impact of poor nutrition. This course will also look at the role nutrition plays in various disease processes that are associated with aging. It will provide information about support services that are available to assure good nutrition into old age for those living independently. (Cross-listed with GERO 8566).

**Prerequisite(s):** Junior Standing.

**GERO 4570 REHABILITATIVE DESIGN (3 credits)**

The purpose of this interdisciplinary course is to provide students with a greater appreciation and understanding of impairment as a platform for professional activities. This course will also provide an understanding of how Rehab Engineering, Universal and Inclusive Design and the implementation of Assistive Technology allow for greater levels of independence and quality of life for all members of our community, with an emphasis on the applications in the aging process. (Cross-listed with GERO 8576).

**GERO 4600 MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF AGING PROGRAMS (3 credits)**

This course is designed to give students a broad overview of theories, models, issues and approaches related to the administration of services and programs for older adults. (Cross-listed with GERO 8606).

**Prerequisite(s):** Junior/Senior Standing

**GERO 4670 PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR OLDER ADULTS (3 credits)**

This course is provided to give the student an historical overview of programs for older adults; examine the national policy process as it relates to the older American; and review the principles and practices relative to the existing national programs for the aged. (Cross-listed with GERO 8676, PA 8676).

**Prerequisite(s):** Junior or senior. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

**GERO 4690 WORKING WITH MINORITY ELDERLY (3 credits)**

This course is designed to provide the student with knowledge of the differing status, attitudes, and experiences of older adults who identify as members of minority groups in the U.S. This course examines various social policies, service systems, and practice models in terms of their relevance and effectiveness in meeting the needs of an increasing and diverse aging population. (Cross-listed with GERO 8696, SOWK 4040, SOWK 8046).

**GERO 4720 BABY BOOMERS AND THE 21ST CENTURY (3 credits)**

Marketing decisions and strategies apply to all businesses and are influenced by the target market. The economic realities and the character of America will change due to shifting demographics of baby boomers. Businesses that understand the power of the baby boomers will succeed; failure to understand that power may lead to economic consequences. Students from many disciplines will benefit from this cross-referenced course blending the realities of gerontology with the predictions of baby boomer behavior and the resulting impact to all businesses. (Cross-listed with GERO 8726).

**Prerequisite(s):** Junior, Senior or Graduate Level Standing.

**GERO 4750 MID-LIFE, CAREER CHANGE, PRERETIREMENT PLANNING (3 credits)**

This course is designed to involve candidates in the exploration of the developmental tasks of mid-life, myths and realities related to career change as well as the implication of preretirement planning. Factual information, as well as model examination and evaluation are presented to aid the candidate in becoming better equipped to understand some of the forces which affect the well-being of middle aged persons as they prepare for the later years. (Cross-listed with COUN 8756, GERO 8756).

**Prerequisite(s):** Not open to non-degree graduate students.

**GERO 4850 HOSPICE & OTHER SERVICES FOR THE DYING PATIENT/FAMILY (3 credits)**

This course examines the hospice concept and other related services available in the community. The student will learn that hospice is an alternative to the traditional medical model. (Cross-listed with GERO 8856, SOWK 4850, SOWK 8856.)

**GERO 4920 SPECIAL STUDIES IN GERONTOLOGY (1 credit)**

Special studies designed around the interests and needs of the individual student in such areas as the psychology, sociology, economics, biology, or politics of aging, as well as operation of various service systems. This independent study may include a literature review or a field project in which experience is gained in the community, identifying and analyzing needs and services related to older people.

**Prerequisite(s):** Instructor permission.

**GERO 4940 PRACTICUM (3 credits)**

This course provides the opportunity to students to share field experiences; to obtain guidance concerning various relationships with agency, staff and clients; and to develop a broadly based perspective of the field of aging.

**Prerequisite(s):** Nine hours in gerontology and permission. Students must be enrolled in the GERO program and have a minimum GPA of 2.5. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

**GERO 4950 PALLIATIVE CARE: MENTORING A HEALTHCARE APPROACH OF PATIENT-CENTERED CARE WITH FOCUS ON WELL-BEING (3 credits)**

This course provides a foundation for the recognition of the need to implement palliative medical care. Using current texts and literature, video and podcast lectures by colleagues, and review of cases and topics, a student will understand the definitions, purposes, and benefits of palliative medical care. The student will learn the avenues and ways to implement palliative care to provide care that promotes well-being. (Cross-listed with GERO 8956).

**Prerequisite(s):** Junior, senior, graduate standing

**GERO 4970 SENIOR HONORS PROJECT/THESIS (3 credits)**

An independent research project supervised by gerontology department/school faculty. The senior honors project must be approved by the University Honors Program.

**Prerequisite(s):** Senior in the University Honors Program.

**GERO 4980 COUNSELING SKILLS IN GERONTOLOGY (3 credits)**

This course is intended to help develop basic counseling skills for application in gerontology. (Cross-listed with COUN 8986, GERO 8986).

**Prerequisite(s):** Not open to non-degree graduate students.