

Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate

MEMO

To: Faculty Senate

From: Colby Kervick, Co-Chair Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate

Date: 4/6/2023

Re: Approval of a proposal from the College of Education and Social Services and the Department of Counseling Human Development and Family Science for a new Undergraduate Certificate in Gerontology

The CAC unanimously approved a proposal (18-0) for a new undergraduate certificate in Gerontology submitted by the Human Development and Family Science (HDF) program within the Department of Counseling, Human Development and Family Science (CHDF) in the College of Education and Social Services (CESS) at our April 6, 2023, meeting. During the 30-day public comment period no comments were received.

Program Description and Rationale

The proposed Certificate emerges from a growing national and regional need to engage an aging population and to introduce the field of Gerontology and its implications for personal and work life in the College of Education and Social Services. The mission of the Undergraduate Certificate Program in Gerontology is to prepare students with knowledge and skills for promoting healthy aging among diverse aging populations and communities, and for addressing the challenges and seizing the opportunities of an aging society and of their own aging and the aging of their loved ones. Students who earn this certificate will be well-positioned to apply their knowledge of gerontology to address aging related challenges in their disciplinary fields and in their personal lives, to work in entry level positions in senior focused organizations, and to pursue advanced level education and training in the field of Gerontology.

Student learning outcomes for the proposed certificate include an expectation students will have the knowledge and skills to:

- Describe typical physical, cognitive, social, and psychological changes experienced by individuals in late adulthood and distinguish these from pathological age-related changes.
- Identify individual, social, and socio-cultural factors that lead to variability in late adulthood and that help to explain cumulative advantage or disadvantages in old age.
- Interrogate ageism where it appears, and challenge myths and stereotypes associated with late adulthood and aging.
- Identify and apply effective strategies, practices, and policies for promoting healthy aging; supporting people through the end of life; and responding to the challenges and opportunities of an aging society.

The development of this undergraduate certificate was initially approved in October of 2022 when Human Development and Family Science faculty agreed to house this Certificate in their program and received approval from the CESS interim Department Chair. The Certificate may serve as a supplement to HDF Majors and Minors who want to specialize in topics pertaining to the latter end of the lifespan and will provide students with the skills and competencies needed to promote healthy aging for others and for themselves. This proposal aims to provide an additional offering for students in the College of Arts & Science (CAS) since there is a planned de-activation of the Gerontology Minor offered through the Department of Sociology to occur during the 2023-2024 academic

school year. (De-activation is due to lack of capacity for offering the course and not to lack of student interest.) There are no minors or undergraduate certificate programs that are similar in title or content to the proposed certificate. Therefore, an organic collaboration emerged between the faculty of the Human Development & Family Sciences (HDFS) program and Associate Dean Abigail McGowan of CAS who proposed SOC 154 Sociology of Death & Dying, a popular course in the Department of Sociology as one of the required courses for the Certificate. This collaboration seeks to fulfill a niche in the UVM curriculum.

Curriculum

The proposed certificate consists of 15 credit hours with four 3 credit hours of required courses (including a course in Sociology) and one 3 credit hour elective. Three of the four required courses are existing courses; one course has been created for this Certificate and will be an additional course offering from the HDFS Program. This course, HDF 120 (expected to become HDF 2120), has been submitted to Courseleaf and approved by the Interim Chair. However, due to the Course Renumbering process, the course has been sent back until Courseleaf opens again. The capstone experience for this Certificate is expected to be an independent study Internship or Undergraduate Research project with the focus on Gerontology allowing students to integrate and deepen their knowledge while applying knowledge to practice.

Required Courses for the Certificate of Gerontology:

List of Required Courses (4 courses; total 12 credits)					
Course #	Course Title	# Credits	Anticipated Instructor	Anticipated Offering	Pre-Requisites
HDF/SOC 020	Aging: Change and Adaptation	3	Weinstock	Fall Semester	None
HDF 120	Adult Development & Aging	3	Proulx	Spring Semester	HDF/SOC 020 or HDF 005; and Sophomore Standing
SOC 154	Sociology of Death & Dying	3	Kellehear	Spring Semester	3 credits in SOC (HDF 20 also accepted); and Sophomore Standing
HDF 190 OR HDF 197	Internship Undergraduate Research	3 3	Weinstock TBD	Fall or Spring Semester	HDF/SOC 020, HDF 120, & SOC 154; and Junior Standing

List of Elective courses (1 course; total 3 credits)

Course	Course Title	# Credits	Anticipated offering	Pre-Requisites
SOC 054	Health Care in America	3	Spring semesters	None
HLTH 100	Biology of Aging	3	ON-LINE Fall and Spring	BIOL 004, ANPS 019 and ANPS 020, or Instructor permission. NOTE: Instructor has agreed to let in Gerontology Certificate Students by permission and believes they will be able to be successful in the course.
ANTH 189	Aging in Cross-Cultural Perspective	3	Approximately once every two years	ANTH 021 or ANTH 026 or ANTH 089.
NH 120	Health Care Ethics	3	Typically Fall and Spring	No pre-requisites listed.
NFS 143	Nutrition in the Life Cycle	3	Fall Semester	NFS 043
HDF 221	Psychology of Aging	3	Offered approximately once every two years	HDF 161 & 189, Research Methods course, and Junior Standing; Instructors have agreed to let in Certificate students who have successfully completed HDF 020 & 120
<p>Note: Other courses taught as special topics that focus on gerontology may be taken to fulfill this Elective required 3 credits, as may a course in a student's major that is not listed here but focuses on gerontology or that allows the student to focus their assignments on gerontology related issues. For example, PRNU 121: Introduction to Gerontology, is a required course for the B.S. in Professional Nursing (Pre-requisites PRNU 113 & 114) and would count as the elective course for students in this major seeking to pursue the proposed Certificate.</p>				

Admission Requirements and Process

The sponsoring unit will create a web page containing the following information about the Certificate:

1. The coursework required for completion of the Certificate.
2. A complete list of prerequisites needed to take the courses required for the Certificate.
3. A description of integrative learning components.
4. A list of majors with which this certificate is not acceptable due to overlap with that major.

Anticipated Enrollment and Impact on Current Programs

Four courses were mentioned that may have impact on enrollment/student numbers, but these have been anticipated and do not present any issues:

- **HDF/SOC 020** (Aging: Change & Adaptation)-existing course offered in the Fall semester. It may see an increase in enrollment, and there is room for this; the course has been set for 50 or so students but has typically enrolled between 35-40 students since it started being offered by HDF faculty.
- **HDF 2200** (Adult Development & Aging)-required new course, developed for the HDF program as well as for this Certificate. It will be an additional intermediate level course that students minoring

in HDF may choose to take while also serving as a required course for the proposed Certificate.

Enrollment cap expected is 50 students. This course is expected to be offered once a year, in Fall or Spring (TBD).

- **SOC 154 (Sociology of Death & Dying)**-existing course offered in the Fall semester. It has a class size limit of 40. One quarter of seats will be reserved for Certificate students. The course is expected to fill, and since only about 1/2 of the seats have tended to be filled by Sociology Majors, this should not affect Sociology Majors' access to this course.
- **HDF 190 (Internship)** and **HDF 197 (Undergraduate Research)** are both already in the undergraduate catalog and each has been offered sporadically as an independent study. HDF 197 (Internship) will continue to be offered as an independent study by permission only; HDF 190 is expected to be offered as an independent study initially unless and until there are sufficient numbers of students to warrant offering it as a regular 3 credit course. Internships will initially be supervised by Certificate Director Weinstock. No students are expected to take this course in the first year of the Certificate, and after that, approximately 2 students per semester are anticipated for the next 4 years. As noted above, if the numbers warrant, this requirement will be converted from being offered as an independent study each semester to being offered once/academic year as a regular 3-credit course, most likely in the Spring Semester, with an estimated 10-15 students per course offering.

Advising

Dr. Jacqueline (Jackie) Weinstock, Associate Professor of Human Development and Family Science, will be the advisor for all students in the beginning. The Department will do advising as they have done for major advising- sending out invitations to meet during pre-registration and then checking in on course progression, meeting more as a student needs. Dr. Weinstock will also use the Intro course for the certificate as a way to introduce students to the Certificate.

Assessment Plan

To ensure that the Certificate is meeting the needs of our students and the University, it will be evaluated using several metrics:

- Satisfactory student progress in core and elective courses
- Student satisfaction with course offerings (e.g., mean course evaluations of 3.5 or better on a 1-5 scale)
- Faculty satisfaction with structure and course offerings
- Increased student enrollment over time, in courses and in the Certificate

An annual meeting of Core and Affiliate Faculty members will be employed as the means for regular assessment of program integrity and student progression through the Certificate.

Staffing Plan, Resource Requirements, and Budget

No additional faculty appointments are anticipated as all four required courses are to be taught by existing faculty. Elective courses in other departments will be offered as part of faculty workloads. Faculty teaching the required courses will make use of existing facilities and technology. No additional needs or funds are expected. Library resources are presently available to support the undergraduate certificate. No additional library resources are needed.

Evidence of Support for the Certificate-Letters of Support

1. Deborah Hunter, Interim Chair of the Department of CHDFS
2. William Falls, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences
3. Thomas Macias, Chair of the Department of Sociology, College of Arts & Sciences
4. John Green, Chair of Department of Psychological Science, College of Arts & Sciences
5. Noma Anderson, Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences
6. Michael LaMantia, Director, Center on Aging
7. Jan Fook, Chair of the Department of Social Work, College of Education and Social Services

Summary

This new Certificate has strong support and provides students with knowledge and skills for promoting healthy aging among diverse aging populations and communities, and for addressing the challenges and seizing the opportunities of an aging society. Students will be well-positioned to apply their knowledge of gerontology to address aging related challenges in their disciplinary fields and in their personal lives, to work in entry level positions in senior focused organizations, and to pursue advanced level education and training in the field of Gerontology. The Certificate also provides an additional offering for students in the College of Arts & Science (CAS) since there is a planned de-activation of the Gerontology Minor offered through the Department of Sociology to occur during the 2023-2024 academic school year. The CAC recommends approval of the Undergraduate Certificate in Gerontology.

If approved by the Faculty Senate and Board of Trustees, this program will be implemented starting Fall 2023.