

Department of Applied Gerontology

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The primary objective of the degree programs in the Department of Applied Gerontology is to provide preparation for professionals in the field of gerontology. Programs prepare students to be administrators of long-term care and retirement facilities, home health care agencies and therapeutic day care centers; to participate in the planning, coordination and administration of public and private programs in gerontology; and to hold aging-related positions in business and industry.

University library holdings in gerontology are extensive as a result of systematic acquisitions beginning in the early 1960s. In addition, the nationally recognized Gerontological Film Collection, available through the Media Library, holds more than 400 titles.

Opportunities for research assistantships for qualified graduate students are available.

Students in other fields may minor in applied gerontology at the master's or doctoral level.

Research

Research at the Department of Applied Gerontology is concerned with various social, psychological and policy aspects of aging. Faculty members currently are investigating accessibility of the health care delivery system for vulnerable populations, images of aging in film and literature, ethical issues in geriatric service delivery, sustainable senior communities, senior reengagement and volunteerism, aging services and policy, healthy lifestyle in the aged, aging and developmental disabilities, mediation and conflict resolution, and integrating community-based and residential programs for the aged.

Degree Programs

The department offers graduate programs leading to the following degrees:

- Master of Arts,
- Master of Science, both with majors in long-term care, senior housing and aging services; and
- Doctor of Philosophy with a major in applied gerontology.

Master of Arts, Master of Science

Admission Requirements

Applicants for admission must meet all general admission requirements of the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies. GPA requirements are described in the Admission section of this catalog. Application also must be made to the Department of Applied Gerontology. A competitive score on the general test of the Graduate Record Examination must be submitted.

No specific undergraduate major is required. However, 3 hours of social gerontology are a prerequisite for all master's degree candidates. This prerequisite may be taken concurrently with courses applying to the master's degree.

General Degree Requirements

All majors require completion of 45 graduate hours. Students must complete a capstone course, Proseminar on Applications in Practice, for 3 hours credit. One of the requirements of this course is the production of a major written project.

Master's degree candidates must pass an oral comprehensive examination.

Candidates for the MA degree must demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language (normally French, German or Spanish). See the "Foreign Language Requirement" heading in the Master's Degree Requirements section of this catalog for further details.

Master of Arts, Master of Science

Long-Term Care, Senior Housing and Aging Services

Degree Requirements

Required courses: AGER 5300, 5400, 5600; AGER 5750 or AGER 5700 and 5860; AGER 5710, 5740, 5780, 5790, 5810, 5940; plus 3 hours of internship (AGER 5840).

Electives in applied gerontology (AGER 5250, 5350, 5500, 5560, 5770, 5800, 5880 and 5890) or in business administration. Students seeking licensure as long-term care administrators must take ACCT 5020, BLAW 5050 and MGMT 5140.

Requests for course substitutions are considered on an individual basis and may be approved if warranted by the student's academic background and/or professional experience. Students earn 3 hours of credit by completing a required 500-clock-hour supervised internship in a suitable aging services organization. Students seeking licensure as long-term care administrators must serve a 1,000-clock-hour internship, for 6 hours of credit, in a licensed long-term care facility. Internship placements are available nationwide under the preceptorship of experienced professionals.

Licensed long-term care administrators may be allowed to substitute additional course work for the internship.

Doctor of Philosophy in Applied Gerontology

The University of North Texas grants the Doctor of Philosophy degree in applied gerontology. Applied gerontology involves the application of knowledge from the field of gerontology to the identification, development, provision and evaluation of products and services responsive to the special needs of older people. All students in the doctoral program master the gerontological theories, knowledge and research techniques needed both to make policies consistent with such applications and to be advocates for these policies.

The program's curriculum includes required courses on theories of aging, formal organization of aging services, health and aging, research methods, statistics and policy in aging. Additionally, students must select from groups of related courses in gerontology, planning and administering services, and policy issues in aging.

Admission Requirements

Students must initially apply to and meet the general admission requirements of the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies at UNT. Applications of students who satisfy the graduate school's admission standards are forwarded to UNT's Department of Applied Gerontology for review. The department is responsible for recommending acceptance into the doctoral program to the graduate school. The following requirements must be met for admission.

1. For admission to the PhD program in applied gerontology, the applicant must have a master's degree; have completed a minimum of 9 graduate hours of gerontology and at least 3 graduate semester hours in research methods; have at least a 3.4 GPA for master's courses; and have competitive scores on the verbal and quantitative sections of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). See the department's web page or contact the Toulouse

School of Graduate Studies for information concerning admission test scores. The department also requires three letters of recommendation and the submission of a five-page, double-spaced essay. At least two of the letters of recommendation must be from the applicant's past professors. Contact the department for an outline of the required essay.

2. To be considered for conditional admission, requiring an appeal to the graduate school, the applicant must have a master's degree, at least a 3.0 GPA for all master's credit, competitive scores on the verbal and quantitative sections of the GRE (see the department's web page or contact the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies for information concerning admission test scores), the required letters of recommendation and essay, and substantial alternative evidence of potential success in graduate studies.

3. Outstanding undergraduates without the master's degree who otherwise meet all admission requirements may be considered for conditional admission into the doctoral program.

The dean of the graduate school will notify the applicant of admission to graduate studies and admission to the applied gerontology program. Prior to enrolling for the first term/semester of doctoral work, the student should consult with the director of the doctoral program to schedule courses for that term/semester.

Degree Requirements

1. The minimum program for the PhD in applied gerontology consists of 90 hours beyond the bachelor's degree, plus 9 hours of a tool-subject(s); or 60 hours beyond the master's degree, plus 9 hours of a tool-subject(s). Specific requirements include:

- a. 18 semester hours in foundation core courses covering theories of aging, formal organization of aging services, health aspects of aging, research methods, social statistics and policy in aging;
- b. 3 semester hours selected from designated courses in social gerontology, and 15 semester hours selected from designated courses in planning and administration of services, and policy issues in aging;
- c. 12 semester hours of approved electives;
- d. a minimum of 12 semester hours of dissertation; and
- e. 9 hours of a tool-subject (e.g., computer science, foreign language).

2. Students must complete a research tool requirement. The student must complete 9 semester hours of course work in computer science or other research tool subjects (the tool courses must be recommended by the student's committee and approved

by the chair of the department) or demonstrate language proficiency in French, German or Spanish. Substitution of another language may be approved by the graduate dean upon recommendation of the student's advisory committee. The advisory committee may require proficiency in a language when the dissertation research demands it.

3. A student must carry a full load of 9 hours for any two consecutive terms/semesters to fulfill the doctoral residence requirement.
4. The student must establish an advisory committee and prepare a degree plan approved by this committee. The advisory committee is composed of three to five members. At least two, including the major professor or chair, must be from the full-time gerontology faculty. The third faculty or committee member may be from outside the Department of Applied Gerontology. This committee is approved by the dean of the graduate school upon recommendation of the student, department chair and graduate advisor. In conjunction with approval of the degree plan, the advisory committee may administer a diagnostic review to assist the student in completing the program. The degree plan of the individual student should be completed during the first term/semester of the second year of graduate work or after completion of 18 semester hours in the program.
5. Qualifying examinations are required of all students. Examinations are written in theory, methods and an area of concentration. The theory and methods exams must be taken within or at the completion of the student's first 27 hours of PhD work. The exams are prepared and evaluated by an advisory committee composed of faculty from the College of Public Affairs and Community Service, the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Business and the College of Education. The concentration exam can be taken after the foundation courses and the 12-hour course requirement for a concentration have been completed. These exams are prepared and evaluated by members of the student's advisory committee, who may administer an oral examination upon successful completion of all written exams. Preparation for these exams includes, but is not limited to, course work, reading key literature and participating in study groups.
The successful completion of these examinations is a prerequisite for admission to candidacy for the degree. Admission to candidacy is granted by the graduate dean upon recommendation of the advisory committee and the chair, and also based upon the student's academic record and successful completion of the tool requirement.

6. Under the direction of the advisory committee, the candidate must write a dissertation representing original research. It must make a significant contribution to the discipline of gerontology in the student's area of concentration.

The student must defend orally a written dissertation proposal that meets with the approval of the advisory committee before the dissertation is written. The final written dissertation must be defended orally before the committee and approved by them.

Minor in Applied Gerontology

Students in other fields may choose applied gerontology for a minor. AGER 5700, 5710, 5780 and 5860 are required for minor students, with additional courses to be chosen in consultation by the student and minor professor.

Other Advanced Study

The graduate academic certificate, specialist in aging, is designed for health and human service professionals who wish to complement their existing knowledge and skills with an understanding of aging and services for the aged. Faculty of two- and four-year colleges and universities and doctoral candidates in other fields may also find the specialist certificate a valuable adjunct to their academic credentials. The 15-semester-hour program includes 12 semester hours of core courses covering social, physiological and psychological aspects of aging as well as government programs for the elderly, plus 3 elective hours of applied gerontology. For students who have successfully completed the Coalition for Leadership in Aging Services certification program jointly sponsored by the Department of Applied Gerontology and the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, the 3 elective hours will be waived.

Courses of Instruction

All Courses of Instruction are located in one section at the back of this catalog.

Course and Subject Guide

The "Course and Subject Guide," found in the Courses of Instruction section of this book, serves as a table of contents and provides quick access to subject areas and prefixes.