Program Features

The gerontology emphasis is a multi-disciplinary program designed to assist students planning to enter career-related areas directly involving older persons, and is open to undergraduate students in any major within the university. The study of gerontology will also help students prepare for their own aging as well as to develop a better understanding of and to seek enrichment for the lives of aging parents and our aging populations. While continuing with a major, the student will take additional credits from a wide variety of courses in economics, exercise and sport science, health education and promotion, philosophy, political science, psychology, therapeutic recreation, and sociology. The gerontology emphasis consists of 15 credits with at least 6 credits from the core and the remaining credits from the core, supportive courses, or other gerontology-related coursework (e.g., internships) approved by the program coordinators.

Occupational Outlook

As the nation's “Baby Boomers” age, the 65-plus will grow from the present 13 percent to 20 percent of the nation's population by 2030. This will mean a great demand for individuals with training and experience in working with older adults and aging issues in almost every field from advertising, health and fitness, health economics, human services, law, management, and public policy. Some say there is "gold in old" especially with gerontology and an MBA or law degree. Students may leave campus with a degree in a major such as therapeutic recreation plus the gerontology emphasis and immediately obtain employment working directly with older adults. Others use their degrees to work in research, planning, or management of services, and some pursue advanced degrees including the Ph.D. in gerontology.

Students also use gerontology to prepare for their own aging as well as help them to understand and enrich the lives of aging parents and others in their society.