Why is There a Need for the Program?

By 2020, there will be 52,067,000 persons over age 65 (17.7% of the population), and the 85+ population will have reached 6,651,000 (2.3%). Because of this increase, full- and part-time career opportunities that deal with aging populations are vast and growing.

Gerontologists are specialists found in every employment category: health and social service professionals, designers, architects, nutritionists, recreation leaders, educators, researchers, public policy advocates, doctors, and lawyers. Their commonality is sensitivity to and special understanding of the needs of the aging population.

What opportunities exist for Experiential Learning?

“Experiential learning” opportunities allow students to apply content presented in the classroom to work beyond the university. A variety of experiences can be arranged within Ithaca (e.g. through local health care facilities, senior centers, retirement communities, and Office for the Aging), or through the Cornell Elderly Partnership in the Cornell Public Service Center.

In addition, students interested in medical and health or law and policy careers in aging may be able to arrange aging-related experiences in New York City through Urban Semester or in Washington, D.C. through Cornell in Washington.

Undergraduates may also contact professors directly to assist in research projects. Junior and senior students can apply to work as teaching assistants for many of the gerontology courses if they meet the departmental qualifications.

How do I get started?

First, visit: www.blcc.cornell.edu/education_gerontology.html

On the website, you will find the Gerontology Minor Registration Form. The first step is to complete this form and send it electronically to

Nancy Wells: nmw2@cornell.edu
and Carrie Chalmers: cc284@cornell.edu

By submitting the form you indicate that you are interested in completing the minor and that you have a preliminary plan for coursework. You will then be added to appropriate email lists for relevant material.

Also on the website, you will find the gerontology course listing for the current and upcoming semester.

Gerontology Minor Advisory Board

Susan Ashdown - Fiber Science & Apparel Design
Ben Cornwell - Sociology
Bruce Halpern - Psychology
Paul Eschelman - Design & Environmental Analysis
Gary W. Evans - Design & Environmental Analysis
Nancy Wells - Design & Environmental Analysis
Brooke Hollis - Policy Analysis & Management
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Karl Pillemer - Human Development
Elaine Wethington - Human Development

Picture Captions: Cover: Student Christine Cheng with Lakeside Nursing Home resident. First panel: Resident and aide in the Lakeside garden, which was built with the help of CU Gerontology students. Inside center panel: Bob Orange with student Stephanie Cheng in the course “Furniture as a Social Art.”

For more information contact:
Professor Nancy Wells
Director, Gerontology Minor
Design & Environmental Analysis
MVR Hall
Phone: 607-254-6330
Email: nmw2@cornell.edu
What is Gerontology?

Gerontology is the study of the processes of aging. Although aging begins at birth, most people studying gerontology are concerned with changes in middle age and later life.

Gerontology is multidisciplinary; that is, it includes the perspectives of numerous disciplines concerned with the physical, mental, and social aspects of life.

What is the Gerontology Minor?

The Gerontology Minor is available through the College of Human Ecology in combination with any major offered by the university. During undergraduate study, students select 12 credit hours of gerontology-related coursework.

One of two (3-credit) core courses must be taken as well as nine additional credits to complete the minor requirements. Courses can be selected from the gerontology course listings. Courses explore aging through various perspectives including biology, psychology, sociology, economics, and design.

What is the Purpose of the Minor?

The Gerontology Minor is designed to develop your understanding of, and your competence in, dealing with the processes and issues of aging. Study in gerontology will enrich your practical experience and prepare you for professional work in this area.

You may draw on the resources of several departments and colleges at Cornell as well as Ithaca College to shape a curriculum suited to your professional goals and interests.

Sample Courses

**CORNELL UNIVERSITY**

- The Environment & Social Behavior
- Universal Design: Sensory & Cognitive Ergonomics
- Textiles, Apparel & Innovation
- Social inequalities in Physical & Mental health
- Psychology of Aging
- Health & Social Behavior
- Nutrition & the Life Cycle
- Economics of Social Security
- The U.S. Health Care System
- Health Care Services: Consumer & Ethical Perspectives
- Operations & Planning of Senior Living & Related Facilities
- Long Term Care & Lifestyle Alternatives
- Effects of Aging on Sensory Perception

**ITHACA COLLEGE**

- Psychology of Aging
- Death & Immortality
- Introduction to Gerontology
- Nutrition & Aging
- Aging Policies & Programs
- Aging & Culture

What Courses Are Offered?

In order to fulfill the requirements for a minor in gerontology, students must complete 12 credits of gerontology-related coursework. Many courses have prerequisites; please plan ahead so these are taken before enrolling in the gerontology minor courses.

Contact your departmental academic advisor and/or the director of the Gerontology Minor for recommendations.