

Ph.D in Gerontology
Handbook

2021/2022



USC Leonard Davis
School of Gerontology



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Welcome to the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology. I am pleased that you are joining our community, and I am certain that you will find the Ph.D. program challenging and rewarding. It has been designed to provide you with the basic knowledge and research experience needed to address the complex issues and problems of an aging society.

The Ph.D. program will provide you with the skills for securing an independent career in the field of aging. The



USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology and the USC Andrus Gerontology Center offers the opportunity to work closely with faculty on research and publications, participate in colloquia, present your research at meetings of national organizations, acquire teaching experience, learn from your fellow students, serve on policy and planning committees, and to

develop your academic network through summer internships or research opportunities. Our experience suggests that the most successful students, those who become leaders in the field, take initiative and engage themselves broadly in these activities.

This handbook has been written to help you move smoothly through the program. It will provide basic information about the curricula, policies, procedures, and the faculty. We hope that it will answer many questions, and we encourage you to keep it and refer to it often. There are always

revisions to the policies and procedures as we are constantly improving processes: we will do our best to quickly communicate changes to you. Although revisions may be made to the program during your tenure, degree requirements as published in the University catalogue for your year of program entry define your requirements until your graduation, and the catalogue is the official document for these purposes.

There are three offices that will be important in the administration of your educational program. I am the chair of the faculty committee for the Ph.D. Program. My office is room 346, my phone number is (213) 550-6725 and my email is zelinski@usc.edu. The USC Leonard Davis School Student Services Office is located in Room 102; the phone number is (213) 740-5156. You will have regular contact with Jim deVera (213-740-1729 / edevera@usc.edu); he is the student advisor. The USC Graduate School is located in the Student Union (STU), Room 301. The phone number there is 213-740-9033.

I wish you great success in this academic endeavor and look forward to getting to know you.

— Elizabeth Zelinski, Ph.D.



The Ethel Percy Andrus Gerontology Center was established in 1964 as a major research institute for the study of aging. Since 1975, when the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology opened to students, the Center has had two operating units: the School, which carries out the instructional mission of the Center and the Gerontology Research Institute, which is responsible for the research and research training role.

The Andrus Gerontology Center is a multidisciplinary, research and educational institution with faculty members representing the major professional and disciplinary fields related to gerontology. Instruction and training will be performed by experts in sociology, psychology, biology and policy.

The USC Leonard Davis School was the nation's first school of gerontology and offers instruction at three levels. Besides doctoral training, the USC Leonard Davis School provides undergraduates with a liberal arts education that culminates in a Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Aging. At the master's degree level, the USC Leonard Davis School provides professional preparation solely in gerontology or in conjunction with other fields such as business, health administration, or social work. The undergraduate and master's degrees prepare students for work in public and private organizations, which serve the needs of the aging population.

Faculty at the USC Leonard Davis School conduct basic and applied research across several disciplines, which provides graduate and postgraduate training in the biological, social, policy, and behavioral

Ph.D. students in other departments at USC, as well as a limited number of post-doctoral fellows, conduct their research at the Andrus Gerontology Center in preparation for research and academic careers in specialized areas of gerontology.

sciences. Specific areas of study include the molecular biology of aging, neuroscience, cognitive development, social organization, the family, health care delivery, human service delivery, housing, demography, and social policy. The USC Leonard Davis School offers a multidisciplinary research training program in gerontology. Ph.D. students in other departments at USC, as well as a limited number of post-doctoral fellows, conduct their research at the Center in preparation for research and academic careers in specialized areas of gerontology. Drawing from these many Ph.D. programs at USC, over 300 doctoral degrees have been awarded to students specializing in gerontological research.

In addition to the USC Leonard Davis School, the Andrus Center includes the Gerontological Research Institute, which houses the USC/UCLA Center in Biodemography and Population Health, the Center for Global Aging, Center for Digital Aging, Family Caregiver Support Center, and the Fall Prevention Center of Excellence. The research institute also houses many individual research projects.

There are opportunities to take courses in other areas of the university including the medical campus; you may also attend lectures and seminars at UCLA and the RAND Corporation.

The USC Leonard Davis School is a dynamic, exciting, and highly respected institution.

Welcome to our community!



Aging is a complex phenomenon that affects individuals, families, and society. It is an important policy focus at all levels of government, affecting the delivery of both public and private sector programs. Aging is influenced by health, economic, political, and social factors. Aging concerns are an integral facet of many policy areas including health care, social services, income, long-term care, housing, and work and retirement. Understanding of the individual and social changes associated with aging is critical to making effective public policies for our aging society. It is increasingly important for gerontologists to understand basic research as well as the specific areas of social policy affecting the elderly.

The purpose of the Ph.D. in gerontology is to provide quality, multidisciplinary education in gerontology. The program is designed to train students to conduct high-quality basic and applied research and evidence-based analysis and produce the next generation of professionals in the field of gerontology. The Ph.D. in gerontology provides: (1) an excellent multidisciplinary education in the basic fields most pertinent to gerontology, (2) an understanding of individual aging, and in-depth exposure to familial, social, economic and public policy conditions that affect older individuals and groups; (3) rigorous training in basic research design and

methods; (4) opportunities to work closely with faculty mentors on research; (5) access to public lectures on gerontological research; and (6) internships in policy or research which provide work experience in prominent organizations. Upon completion of the program, our graduates are expected to assume prominent roles in teaching, research, and administration, where they will make significant scholarly and professional contributions to the field of gerontology.

The program began in 1989 as the first doctoral degree program in gerontology. Since then, 52 students have been awarded Ph.D.s in Gerontology and 20 students are currently completing coursework or doing dissertation research. The select number of students accepted into the program allows an excellent opportunity to receive personal attention from faculty as well as benefit from collaboration with student-colleagues.

This is a dynamic program that cultivates experts in aging. The program is loosely structured in order to facilitate each student's experience. Each student's program will provide both a broad base of gerontological knowledge and areas of in-depth expertise. Students must be active participants in their educations, seeking faculty guidance and opportunities. Whether or not a student succeeds is largely dependent on the student's initiative.



Before beginning the program, students are encouraged to initiate contact with a faculty member whom they wish to have as an individual advisor and mentor. As soon as a faculty advisor relationship is established, the student should notify the chair of the Ph.D. Committee, of this arrangement. Alternatively, Ph.D. Chair will appoint a faculty advisor for a new doctoral student. The faculty advisor will be a primary resource person for the student throughout the program. The student is responsible for consulting with the advisor regarding his or her academic program, course selections, screening, and preparation for the qualifying examination. Because gerontology is a multidisciplinary field, recommended courses and research experiences may vary across students. The faculty advisor will also aid in the student's professional development by encouraging the pursuit of appropriate research and publishing opportunities. After a student has developed relationships with other faculty members through courses and research, the student may request a change of advisor.

Students should meet with their faculty advisor at the beginning of each semester to discuss course selection and general progress in the program. The student should also schedule regular meetings during the semester to discuss educational and research goals, and facilitate individual development. Student success in the

The student is responsible for consulting with the advisor regarding his or her academic program, course selections, screening, and preparation for the qualifying examination.

program is related to the relationship they develop with their faculty advisor. Students who have difficulty selecting an advisor or wish to change advisors should consult the Ph.D. Chair. The Ph.D. Chair can assist with selecting a new advisor or mediate the relationship with the current advisor.

In addition to the faculty advisor, the Ph.D. Chair is accessible as a general advisor for the Ph.D. program. The Ph.D. Chair meets with incoming students in the fall and can also meet students individually by appointment to help plan their progress in the program, clarify what is expected of students, give advice on research opportunities, or discuss particular problems or issues.

A record of courses completed by each student is kept by the USC Registrar, and an unofficial transcript can be obtained from OASIS at <http://www.usc.edu> by viewing the STARS report. An official file is also maintained in the USC Leonard Davis School office, including all student records from admission to graduation. A copy of the Ph.D. student advisement sheet is included in Appendix A.

The Graduate School provides all of the official forms necessary for documenting the doctoral degree progress; most are on the internet at www.usc.edu/schools/GraduateSchool/. All final approvals come from the Graduate School but only after recommendations from the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology. Any forms or documents going to the Graduate School should first be reviewed by the student advisor. It is the student's responsibility to see that a copy of all such forms and correspondence from the Graduate School is included in the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology file.

Course Requirements

Students must complete a minimum of 60 units of course work (with at least 24 of these units being completed in residency at USC), as well as additional dissertation units (at least 4 units) as required. The courses are organized into three areas: a set of required core courses, research courses, and elective courses. Students will be advised about course selection during the first year by the Ph.D. committee and the Student Advisor. As soon as a student has selected a specialization (e.g., biology, psychology, sociology/demography, policy) and a faculty advisor, the faculty advisor will help the student in selection of courses and a research agenda. The Ph.D. Committee will continue to monitor the student's progress and to insure the student has taken the appropriate courses to prepare for the qualifying examination.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

During the first two years of the program, the minimum expected units to be completed per year is 24. Approval from your faculty advisor and the PhD Committee chair is required for a reduced course load within the first two years. In general, the PhD Committee expects that the majority of units will be completed by the end of year three.

Requirement to Maintain Good Academic Standing

All students enrolled in the Graduate School of the University of Southern California must maintain an overall grade point average, for all graded courses taken at USC, of 3.0 or better ('B' or above) in order to remain in good academic standing. Students whose overall graduate GPA falls below 3.0 will automatically be placed on academic probation. At the discretion of the Graduate School, such students may be allowed a maximum of three semesters from the date of entry into the program in which to meet this 3.0 minimum overall graduate GPA requirement. Maintaining a minimum 3.0 GPA is a condition for continued financial support, and students whose GPA falls below 3.0 may be denied further support. Students who fail to achieve and maintain the minimum 3.0 graduate GPA will be subject to expulsion from the Ph.D. program.

In addition, students in the Gerontology Ph.D. Program must achieve grades of 3.0 or higher ('B' or above) in each one of the following graded required or scientific core courses GERO 610, GERO 613, GERO 620 and Gero 645, the research core courses, GERO 593, and

GERO 640, and the research seminar GERO 592. Students must also receive passing grades in independent study, GERO 790.

Basic Scientific Core

The core for the Ph.D. in Gerontology stresses the physiological, psychological, sociological, and policy dimensions of individual and population aging.

The core courses include:

GERO 610	The Aging Society	4 units
GERO 613	Health and Aging	4 units
GERO 620	Psychology and Aging	4 units
GERO 645	Politics and Policy in an Aging Society	4 units

Research Core

A second core area focuses on development of research skills. For social scientists this includes research design, methods, and statistics. Students are required to take GERO 593, GERO 640 and at least one additional statistics course generally from another department, on the student's research focus.

Students also are required to take two to four semesters of GERO 592, a research seminar in which participants will develop independent publications of their own research. This course is generally taken after the first year.

Elective Core

A third core involves electives which allow students to create a concentration in a particular area of focus or analytic field of inquiry. Students should select courses in consultation with their advisor. Courses should be selected to provide in depth knowledge in the specialized area or general knowledge in the field of Gerontology. A number of Gerontology courses can be taken as electives.

Students should note that Gerontology courses at the 600 level are usually offered only every second year. Students are encouraged to review the course schedule to determine how to best complete these courses in a timely manner. Successful completion of the required course work does not complete the educational experience of the student. Students are expected to enhance their exposure to research by attending the colloquium lecture series, working on research with a faculty member, and presenting original research at the annual meeting of the Gerontological Society of America and other professional meetings.

COURSE SELECTION AND REGISTRATION

Summer Enrollment

Although students are not required to register for the summer session, most will find it advantageous to do so. Gerontology PhD students are expected to be conducting research and building their dissertation studies over the summers. It is, therefore, entirely appropriate to register for 3 units of GERO 790 – Directed Research during the summer session. Alternatively, students may wish to take a 3-4 unit academic course during the summer. Students may well find taxes taken out of your Research Assistantship stipend are lower if you do register for the summer session. Please note that this comment should not be construed as tax advice. The University encourages you be mindful of your tax situation, and to speak with a financial advisor as necessary, since neither the University nor the student services office is equipped to offer you tax counselling. If you do wish to register for GERO 790, or other USC courses for the summer term, contact the Leonard Davis School student advisor.

Time and Effort Commitment and Stipends:

Students are expected to be studying, researching, and working in the program year-round. Students are not specifically required to register for the summer session, but it is strongly recommended that they do so. Regardless of registration status, students are expected to be conducting research for most of the summer months. Reasonable requests for short vacation periods will be honored by most faculty members, but students must request permission before departing. Students who decide to take lengthy vacations of several weeks may be required to repay all or part of their stipends.

Foreign Language Requirements

There is no foreign language requirement for the Ph.D. program.

Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from OSAS. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in GFS 120 and is open 8:30 am – 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Website for OSAS :<http://>

osas.usc.edu and contact information: (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-8216 (FAX), osasfrontdesk@usc.edu (Email).

International Students:

International students will need to complete Passport Verification (PPV) with the Office of International Students (Student Union Building, Room 300) prior to the start of the fall semester.

General Assistance:

Students who have questions about procedures should take them to the Student Services Office. The student advisor can answer questions about how to register, complete petitions, secure financial aid, work with the Graduate School, find housing, arrange for campus parking, and access counseling and recreational facilities.

Financial Aid:

The USC Leonard Davis School will attempt to provide a minimum level of financial aid for students without other forms of assistance during their first year in the program. Students are encouraged to seek other forms of financial aid such as research assistantships, traineeships, teaching assistant positions and scholarships. Receipt of such a fellowship provides financial support during your Ph.D. career as well as recognition and distinction that will serve you well during your future career.

COURSE SELECTION AND REGISTRATION

Registration for the fall semester begins in July for new students and in May for returning students, and registration for the spring semester begins in early November. Registration continues until the day before classes begin, at which time tuition and all fees must be settled. Students should consult the online schedule of classes at www.usc.edu for the latest information on courses. Copies of course syllabi for gerontology classes are kept in the USC Leonard Davis School office. Students are welcome to review the syllabi from previous semesters.

New students are expected to attend a Graduate School orientation at which time a registration packet will be provided. Returning students will receive updated information on the program as it becomes available. Students should consult with their faculty advisor and/or the student advisor before registering for any courses.

Registration

On the university website, www.usc.edu, students can register by selecting the Web Registration quick link at the bottom of the page. Registration instructions for the system are included in Appendix B. Courses that have a “D” after the five-digit class code in the schedule of classes require departmental clearance; those with an “R” are open registration. For classes taken outside of Gerontology requiring “D” clearance, students must obtain that clearance in the school or department offering the course.

Evaluation Procedures

USC uses a traditional grading system for courses which includes the plus and minus: A = 4, A- = 3.7, B+ = 3.3, B = 3.0, B- = 2.7, C+ = 2.3, C = 2.0. A C grade is a minimum passing grade at the Ph.D. level. Ph.D. students must maintain a 3.0 GPA throughout their studies and for graduation.

Incomplete (IN) Grades

A grade of incomplete is given only under unusual circumstances occurring at the end of a semester. It is not to be used for non-emergency situations. Course work must be completed and the IN changed to a letter grade within one year. Failure to finish an incomplete within the time limit will result in the grade being changed to IX, which counts as an “F” grade on transcripts.

Full-Time Student Status

The Graduate School and financial aid policies determine that full-time Ph.D. student status is six units of graduate credit (generally two classes). The USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology encourages students to enroll in 8-12 units (two-three classes, depending on research responsibilities in any given semester) in order to facilitate movement through the program within a reasonable time period. Continuous registration is required throughout the program. If a student fails to register for any (fall or spring) semester without prior approval, re-admission to the program and the University is required. The University carefully monitors continuous registration. Students are expected to be full time students for the duration of the Ph.D. program, whereas 50% of their time is doing research and 50% on their academic studies.

Students who have completed all of the required courses must continue to register until completing all degree requirements. During the semester when the Qualifying Examination is taken, students register for GRSC 800, which is considered full time registration. Once the Qualifying Exam is passed and the student is doing dissertation work, registration in GERO 794 (abcd) is required in fall and spring semesters only, and is also considered full time registration.

Length of Program/Leave of Absence

It is anticipated that the Ph.D. program will take four to five years for most students to complete. Students who need to take time away from the University may request a leave of absence (LOA). A maximum of two one-year LOAs are permitted. However, the degree must be completed within a 10-year time frame. Students who take more than two years leave of absence or whose program lasts longer than 10 years will need to be readmitted to the University and re-evaluated for appropriateness to the program.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Required Courses (some core courses are only offered every other year):

GERO 610 The Aging Society (4, Spring)

The interaction of demographic and economic processes, with emphasis on how the contemporary nature of these interactions influence public policy response to an aging population.

GERO 613 Health, and Aging (4, Spring)

Examination of changes in health related to age, changes in health in populations over time, and the key health issues facing older persons.

GERO 620 Psychology of Aging (4, Fall)

Overview of topics in the psychology of aging. Includes research and theory bearing on cognitive, personality, adaptive, and social processes throughout the adult life span. Open only to doctoral students. Recommended preparation: undergraduate course work in psychology.

GERO 645 Politics and Policy in an Aging Society (4, Fall)

Dynamics of the policy-making process in the context of aging policy in the United States; focus on the political system and its social dynamics.

GERO 593 Research Methods (4, Fall)

An introduction to research methods and their application to gerontology including problem formation, research design, data collection, descriptive and analytical statistics, interpretation, and report preparation.

GERO 640 Data Analysis Strategies (4, varies)

Hands-on experience in developing and testing hypotheses using various types of databases, data management and analysis strategies and written presentation of findings.

Prerequisite: GERO 593

Gerontology Courses that can be used as Electives

GERO 592 Multidisciplinary Research Seminar in Aging (2, max 8, FaSp)

Multidisciplinary perspectives on current research in gerontology, including physiology, neurobiology, health and medicine, psychology, sociology, and public policy. Topics will change each semester. Recommended that students take at least for two semesters.

GERO 626 Current Research in Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (4, Spring)

Seminar course comprised of a series of lectures from researchers who are currently at the forefront of research in Alzheimer disease and related disorders.

GERO 655 Research Training Grant Proposal Development in Gerontology (4, Fall)

Integrative grant writing and development of collaborative, interdisciplinary projects in gerontology as studied by biomedical, psychological, and social scientists.

GERO 790 Directed Research (1-12)

Dissertation research leading to the doctorate. Maximum units that may be applied to the degree is 8 unless special permission is received from the Ph.D. Committee. Graded CR/NC.

Suggested Electives or Research Courses from Other Departments

The following is a list of courses from other departments that students have taken as electives in the past, as well as some other suggested electives. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of possible electives, and students should not feel constrained to the courses on this list. Students should pursue courses in their area of interest in consultation with the faculty advisor.

SOCI 620 Advanced Methods - Qualitative Research (4, Fall)

Seminar and practicum in conducting and interpreting original qualitative research. Prerequisite: SOCI 520.

SOCI 621 Advanced Social Statistics II (4, Spring)

Multiple and partial correlation analysis, regressions analysis; introduction to latent structure analysis. Lecture and laboratory.

SOCI 523 Advanced Methods - Quantitative Research (4, Spring)

Advanced research methodology in survey technique, measurement and structured modeling, and longitudinal analysis.

PM 511abcL Data Analysis (4-4, a: Fall, b: Spring, c: varies)

a: major parametric and nonparametric statistical tools used in biomedical research, computer packages including SAS. Includes laboratory. Lecture, 3 hours; laboratory, 1 hour. Prerequisite: PM 510L.

b: Exploratory data analysis, detection of outliers, robust methods, fitting data with linear and nonlinear regression models, computer packages including BMDP. Includes laboratory. Lecture, 3 hours; laboratory, 1 hour. Prerequisite: PM 511aL.

c: Methods and applications for modeling longitudinal, time-to-event and multi-level data. Includes laboratory using R package. Lecture 2 hours; laboratory 2 hours. Prerequisites: PM 511bL.

PROGRAM STAGES

PM 512 Principles of Epidemiology (4, Fall)

Terminology/uses of epidemiology and demography; sources/uses of population data; types of epidemiological studies; risk assessment; common sources of bias in population studies; principles of screening.

PMEP 539 Economic Assessment of Medical Care (4, Fall)

Principles of cost-benefit analysis and medical cost-effectiveness analysis with applications in medical care and the pharmaceutical field.

POSC 540 Law and Public Policy (4, varies)

National and comparative approaches to law and politics in organized societies; law as a policy science; administration of justice; political forces influencing legal change.

POSC 556 Seminar in Disability and Rehabilitation Policy (4, varies)

Examination of physical disability as a policy issue from a cross-national and multidisciplinary perspective; attitudes toward disability; income maintenance, health care, and related programs.

POSC/SWMS 560 Feminist Theory (4, varies)

History of feminist theory and major perspectives of current feminist theory: liberal feminism, socialist/ Marxist feminism, radical feminism, psychological feminism, spiritual feminism, and ecological feminism.

POSC 622 Seminar in Political Attitudes and Behavior (4, varies)

Determinants, nature, and consequences of political attitudes and behavior exploring psychological-sociological models, political socialization and learning, and factors affecting trends in attitudes and behavior.

Prerequisite: Departmental approval

PSYC 524 Research Design in Developmental Psychology (4, varies)

Review and practice in the analysis and design of experimental and quasi-experimental paradigms for research on ontogenetic age changes and generational differences in behavior.

PSYC 578 Workshop in Quantitative Methods (4, max 8)

Practical, hands-on experience in the application of selected quantitative methods to empirical data.

Includes training in use of relevant computer software.

Prerequisite: PSYC 501 and either PSYC 502 or PSYC 503.

PPD 558 Quantitative Analysis II (4, Spring)

Empirical literature in management and policy analysis; application of analytic tools and quantitative methods to management and policy problems; case studies.

SOWK 760 Introductory Social Work Statistics (3, Spring)

Foundation course covering univariate and bivariate descriptive and inferential statistics. Required lab covering basic computer skills and utilization of statistical software

SOWK 761 Multiple Regression for Social Work Research (3, Fall)

Multivariate statistical methods including descriptive and inferential statistics, parametric and non-parametric tests of hypothesis; correlation, analysis of variance, multiple regression, and factor analysis; utilization of computer programs for statistical analysis

SOWK 764 Advanced Multivariate Statistics (3, Fall)

Introduction to single equation statistical modeling using limited dependent variables. Models are drawn from statistics and econometrics.

SOWK 770 Introduction to Qualitative and Mixed Research Methods (3, Spring)

Overview of the use of qualitative and mixed methods in social, clinical, and health services research.

Stages of the Ph.D. Program

Admission	Prior to First Year
Enrollment in courses (16 - 24 units)	1st Year
Petition to transfer outside credit	During Screening; Fall, 2nd Year
Screening Process	Fall, 2nd Year
Enrollment in courses (prior to quals)	Fall or Spring, 2nd Year, or Fall 3rd Year
Form Guidance Committee	Spring, 2nd Year
Completion of Empirical Paper	Spring, 2nd Year
Written Qualifying Exam	Fall or Spring, 3rd Year
Oral Qualifying Exam	Within 60 days of passing Written Qualifying Exam
Ph.D. Candidacy	Spring, 3rd Year or Fall, 4th Year
Form Dissertation Committee	Fall or Spring, 4th Year
Ph.D. Defense	Spring, 4th Year or Fall/ Spring, 5th Year

PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

Admission

Formal admission to the program involves submission of a full application that is reviewed by the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology and the USC Office of Admission. Upon approval from both units, an admission is entered into the university system, which generates letters of admission from both the Gerontology School and the Office of Admission.

Ph.D. Committee

Under the general oversight of the USC Davis School faculty, the Ph.D. Committee is the governing body of the Ph.D. program. The Committee typically consists of 4-5 standing members representing the constituent disciplines of the program. Occasionally, faculty outside the Committee are consulted on issues relevant to their specific disciplinary expert. The Chair of the Committee is Dr. Elizabeth Zelinski. The Committee is responsible for all aspects of the instructional program including curriculum review, admission recommendations, petitions, screenings, qualifying examinations, and academic standards. The Committee generally meets bi-monthly with an agenda established by the Chair.

Formal Petitions

A student may petition for a deviation from the approved, published program of classes for the Ph.D. in Gerontology or for a transfer of courses from another university. The petition process is initiated by the student who may acquire petition forms in the USC Leonard Davis School Student Services Office.

Petitions involving transfer of courses taken elsewhere must be accompanied by a syllabus of the course and the name of the instructor, the university, when taken, and the grade received. The course must gain the approval of the USC Office of Admission on a Graduate Admission Credit Evaluation as being eligible for use at USC. Such approval is necessary before it can be reviewed by the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology.

Petitions should be submitted to the Student Services Office in the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology for consideration.

Students will be notified in writing of the Committee's decision. If the petition is denied, the packet will be returned to the student. If the petition is approved, the request will be acted on in the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, or may be forwarded to the Graduate School by the USC Leonard Davis School for

final review by the appropriate Associate Dean. If approved there, a copy of the approved petition will be sent to the student and the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology.

Suggestions for improving the chances of a positive decision include: discussing the request with the faculty advisor, presenting the form in typed format, being specific and reasonable about the requests, limiting the number of petitions submitted at any one time, and recognizing that the maximum units permitted from another university is 20.

Screening

The purpose of the screening process is to examine the student's progress in the Ph.D. program. Screening can help students to evaluate their progress and goals, and identify opportunities as well as problems. The screening process takes place when students have completed a minimum of 16 but not more than 24 units of Ph.D. course work. Screening usually occurs early in the third semester of study. The student should have completed at least two required courses before screening. Passing this screening process is a prerequisite to continuation in the Ph.D. program. Failure to undertake the screening process before completion of 24 units of course work may jeopardize additional units. A form to request screening can be obtained from the Student Services Office. The screening process is typically done in early/mid fall semester of the second year in the program. The student advisor will email submission information approximately one month before they are due.

The screening process is meant for the student to demonstrate competence in key fields, formally plan for the efficient completion of course work, clarify his or her research interests, and confirm his or her relationship with a faculty mentor. Students should prepare a file for the Screening Committee that consists of:

- a transcript of courses taken and a graduate credit statement showing available transferred credits. (Students should verify shortly after admission that both documents are accurate.) Unofficial transcripts are available from the Transcript Office in JHH, or online in OASIS (Completed Course Summary).

PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

- written statements from at least two course instructors that include an overall assessment of the student's intellectual capabilities as they relate to the Ph.D. studies including strengths and weaknesses. A letter from the faculty advisor should also be provided.
- a statement that describes the student's field of specialization and preliminary ideas about the research questions or issues that may serve as a dissertation topic. Guidelines for the screening statement are included in Appendix C.
- continue in the program

During the Screening Process, the Ph.D. Committee will review and decide on the transfer of graduate course work completed elsewhere. Students should ensure that a "graduate credit evaluation" is done in the university's Degree Progress office during the first semester after admission.

The Screening Procedure is carried out by the Ph.D. Committee during the fall semester. The committee will make a recommendation as to whether students:

- continue in the program
- must drop out of the program
- under very unusual circumstances, re-enroll in certain courses
- In addition, the recommendation of the committee to continuing students may include advice to pursue particular courses, internships, or research opportunities.

The recommendation of the Ph.D. Committee is furnished in writing to the student. Appeals may be submitted to the Dean of the School. A student also may use the University appeals process as outlined in SCampus.

Empirical Project and Paper

Prior to taking the Quals, you must complete an empirical research project and paper under the supervision of the chair and at least one other internal member of your guidance committee. This committee is collectively known as your empirical paper committee. The requirement is meant to give you research and writing experience prior to commencing your dissertation. Evaluation of this paper is based on your ability to:

- Formulate (an) important research question(s) in

your relevant area of interest

- Translate your question(s) into an operational research design that is appropriately implemented
- Analyze and interpret data in light of your research question(s)
- Write a research paper that successfully communicates your findings to a professional audience and contributes knowledge to the field of gerontology
- Present the core of your findings to an audience of interested professionals in a setting that invites critical commentary and response.

The paper is designed to follow the format, content, and length of a professional peer-reviewed research journal article, though it may vary slightly based on your disciplinary background. It is important that you reach an understanding with your committee about the goals, direction, and feasibility of your research early in the development of your project.

The paper should, at minimum, be of sufficient quality to be considered publishable in a peer-reviewed journal in your specialty area. While it is not a formal requirement to submit the paper for publication, you are strongly encouraged to do so after consulting with your committee.

The following procedures will apply to the development, submission, and evaluation of the empirical paper requirement:

(1) The process begins in the third semester of study (the beginning of the second year), with you forming your empirical paper committee consisting of the chair and at least one other internal member of your guidance committee ("internal" is defined by the rules governing guidance committee appointments). While your full five-member guidance committee need not be fully formed at this time, you need to establish the participation of at least these two members. In the event that an empirical paper committee member ultimately does not serve on the guidance committee, the student must request approval from the Chair of the Ph.D. Committee.

In collaboration with your empirical paper committee, you will develop a proposal for the research in the form of an extended 2-3 page abstract. Before the paper can begin, the committee members must provide their approval of the title and abstract of the intended research by signing the Empirical Paper Approval Form, Section I indicating (1) their willingness to serve on the empiri-

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cal paper committee, and (2) their approval of the research topic, purpose, and design as represented in the abstract. The signed form with the abstract should be submitted no later than the end of the third semester of study to the Chair of the Ph.D. Committee. It is advised that the student begin developing ideas for the research and start reviewing literature as early as possible in the third semester.

(2) The research is mainly conducted and the manuscript prepared during the fourth semester and the summer (or winter break) prior to the fifth semester. As this is an iterative process, you will periodically consult with members of your empirical paper committee who will oversee your progress. Frequency of meetings and level of supervision will be at the discretion of the committee; however it is strongly advised that you remain in regular contact with the committee in order to receive feedback on your research-to-date, guidance on research strategies, and comments on written drafts.

You are permitted to use data provided by a faculty member (including an empirical paper committee member), publicly available national datasets, or data derived from a larger project on which you are already working. However, the student should be the originator of the ideas and thematic elements of the paper, should be solely responsible for implementing and performing the analysis, and in all other ways qualify as primary author of the completed manuscript.

Both members of the empirical paper committee must agree that the manuscript is of publishable quality. As stated previously, this may require several revisions before the manuscript is approved.

(3) When the final manuscript of the empirical paper is approved, the two empirical paper committee members will sign the Empirical Paper Approval Form, Section II. The form should be submitted to the Chair of the Ph.D. Committee and a copy submitted to the student advisor before the beginning of the fifth semester. A copy of the approved manuscript will be provided to the Chair of the Ph.D. Committee to be kept on file.

(4) You are required to make a presentation of the core findings of the research paper to an audience of interested professionals in a setting that invites critical commentary and response. This requirement should be fulfilled before submitting the Request to Take the Qualifying Exam form, and may be satisfied in several

ways, including a paper or poster presentation at a professional meeting—such as the Gerontological Society of America, the American Society on Aging, the American Sociological Association, the American Psychological Association—a presentation at one of USC's research centers or colloquia, or a presentation at another forum that the committee deems appropriate for satisfying this requirement. Students who wish to take their Qualifying Examinations (Quals) in the fifth semester of study may fulfill the requirement by having a first-authored paper or poster based on the empirical paper accepted for presentation at a professional meeting. The chair of the empirical paper committee will note that this requirement has been satisfied by signing the Empirical Paper Approval Form, Section III.

Any variation to the timetable noted above must be approved by the Chair of the Ph.D. Committee.

Note that students are not permitted to submit the Request to Take the Qualifying Exam form until all requirements noted on the Empirical Paper Approval Form are fulfilled as indicated by signatures of relevant committee members, and the completed form is properly submitted.

Qualifying Exams and Admission to Candidacy

The Qualifying Exam (Quals) process will usually take place during the third year in the Ph.D. program and is composed of several steps outlined below. Key components are the formulation of the guidance committee, empirical paper, written examination, and preliminary dissertation proposal.

Guidance Committee

In the semester prior to taking Quals, students choose a Guidance Committee composed of five faculty members. If the faculty member chosen as the Chair was not previously the student's faculty advisor, then the Chair becomes the student's new faculty advisor. A minimum of three members must be full-time faculty from the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology. The student should select members with concern for subject matter specialization, methodological expertise, and compatibility as well as have a professional profile demonstrating significant and measurable impact on the field of specialization (e.g., significant publication record and/or grant funding). The Appointment of Committee form to register the committee should be obtained from the Student Services office, completed, and returned to

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the student advisor, during the semester prior to the start of the semester in which the exam will be taken.

The Guidance Committee is responsible for supervising the student's program of studies, offering guidance concerning preparation for Quals, and administering and evaluating the oral parts of the exam. The committee serves until Quals has been passed, the dissertation topic approved, and the student is admitted into candidacy.

Examination Process

To be eligible to take Quals, the student must have completed at least 24 units applicable toward the degree in residence at USC; must have achieved a GPA of at least 3.0 on all USC course work available for graduate credit; and have the recommendation from his/her Guidance Committee Chair that he/she is prepared to take the examination. A student must enroll in GRSC 800 during the semester in which Quals is taken. Clearance to register for GRSC 800 may be obtained through the Graduate School.

When the Guidance Committee has determined that Quals can be taken, the student should obtain the Request to Take the Qualifying Exam form, have it completed and signed, and return it to the Student Services Office the semester before, but in no case less than 30 days prior to the beginning date of the examination. The student advisor will normally send an email with details regarding the exam (dates of exam, prior exam questions, etc.) at least one month prior to the exam. Specific exam rules will be emailed the week prior to the exam.

The oral examination must be completed within 60 days of the written in-house exam. Written exams are typically scheduled the 4th week of the fall semester (spring exam dates may be arranged under special circumstances); exact dates will vary. Quals take place upon completion of all or most of the required course work. Quals are comprehensive in nature, partly written and partly oral, and designed to test whether the student has sufficient knowledge in the most central areas in gerontology and is ready to undertake independent, Ph.D.-level research. Quals are a multidisciplinary exam consisting of five areas: biology of aging, psychology of aging, sociology of aging, and policy relevant to aging.

The four areas are not mutually exclusive; questions may integrate information from multiple areas. However, all questions will reflect core course readings and syllabi topics. Students are advised to review the readings on

these syllabi in preparation for the examination. Copies of past exam questions are available in the Student Services Office as an aid to studying. The knowledge base required for Quals may necessitate reading research literature beyond course content. The Ph.D. Committee will help the student develop a self-directed plan of study.

Written Examination

The written in-house exam covers content areas relevant to aging: biology, psychology, sociology, and policy. The exam is given on two days. The exam is evaluated by a Faculty committee, and the results are reported to the student's Guidance Committee Chair. If the written examination or empirical paper is failed, the examination is reported to the Graduate School as failing. If performance on the written exam is marginal, faculty members on the committee may require an oral examination prior to giving a final grade on the exam.

If the written examination is failed, it may be retaken once. A student must retake the exam within 6 months of the failed exam. Students may only be required to take the failed section(s) of the examination. A second failure disqualifies the student from candidacy.

Oral Examination - Marginal Quals Performance

Students receiving a marginal pass on the written Quals examination may need to complete an oral examination to determine if they have adequate knowledge of the topic area(s) to satisfactorily complete the Quals examination process. This oral examination is conducted with members of the Ph.D. Committee and other faculty involved in the grading of the written Quals exam or the particular topic area(s) scored as marginal. Faculty will then query the students to elaborate on responses or expand the discussion on the topic area(s). This process generally will be completed within an hour. The faculty in attendance will make an immediate decision on the student's performance and inform the student of the result of the oral exam. Students failing the oral examination must retake the written Quals within six months of the original exam date. Students passing this process will then move to the oral examination involving their Guidance Committee.

Oral Examination - Quals Passed

An oral exam is part of Quals and must be completed by all students. The oral exam can cover topics presented in the written examination; however, if the written exami-

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nation is satisfactory, most of the oral exam will focus on the student's preliminary dissertation proposal which must be submitted to all Guidance Committee members at least two weeks prior to the date of the oral exam unless other arrangements are approved. The student is responsible for scheduling the meeting and arranging for a room for the oral exam with the five member guidance committee. Finding a day and time when all 6 people can be in a room can be a challenge. Students are advised to arrange this meeting as soon as possible.

A preliminary proposal outlining the planned dissertation should be delivered to the committee members at least two weeks before the oral exam. The proposal should be between three to five pages and should include a brief overview of the importance of the study, research questions and hypotheses, and a brief overview of proposed methodology (eg, data source, variables, analysis plan). Students are expected to present the proposed research orally, ideally using a brief PowerPoint (or similar) format. All members of the Guidance Committee must be present during the oral examination, and must render a judgment on the entire Quals. Students are informed at this time whether they have passed Quals.

Candidacy

Students enrolled in the Graduate School are officially admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree when they have completed the residency requirement and passed the Ph.D. Quals. Upon passing both written and oral sections of the Quals, the Results of the Quals form (provided on the day of the oral exam to the Guidance Committee Chairperson) must be submitted to the student advisor as soon as possible. Admission to candidacy is dependent on submission of the Results of Quals form. The Graduate School informs students in writing whether or not they have been admitted to candidacy.

Dissertation

The culmination of the Ph.D. program is the writing of a dissertation. A dissertation is an original contribution to current knowledge in the field and a demonstration that the Ph.D. candidate has achieved sufficient mastery in the field to pursue independent research. The dissertation is to be prepared and written according to USC publication guidelines. The student must be enrolled in

GERO 794 Doctoral Dissertation during fall and spring semesters after admission to candidacy until all degree requirements are completed. Registration during summer is not required, unless completing final dissertation

requirements.

Research involving human subjects needs to be approved before any research project can be undertaken. The University Park Institutional Review Board has the responsibility to the federal government to assure compliance for all research (faculty, staff, and student), which involves the use of human subjects. "Human subject" is defined as a living individual about whom an investigator conducting research obtains (a) data through intervention or interaction with the individual or (b) identifiable private information. (Secondary data analysis may require clearance.) Students are encouraged to obtain information on research involving human subjects from the Office of the Vice Provost for Research in ADM 300 (MC 4019). This publication provides information on how to go about obtaining approvals and must be done before the research is started.

Dissertation Committee

After successfully completing the Quals, students pursue their dissertation research under the guidance of a Faculty Dissertation Committee. The Dissertation Committee includes at least three members, some of whom may be from the Guidance Committee. At least two members must be full time faculty of the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology. Committee members must have a professional profile demonstrating significant and measurable impact on the field of specialization (e.g., significant publication record and/or grant funding. Students may also add additional members to their Dissertation committee. No maximum number is set. The form to report the formal committee is available online and must be submitted through the school office to the Graduate School. A new Appointment of Committee form must be submitted by the end of the semester when Quals have been passed.

Dissertation Proposal

Prior to undertaking Ph.D. research, the Dissertation Committee must approve the candidate's formal dissertation proposal. A written proposal of the dissertation (typically 20-30 pages in length) must be completed and orally presented to the Dissertation Committee within six months of passing Oral Quals. If needed, the student should also prepare a request for approval of research involving human subjects.

The formal proposal must include: (1) A comprehensive, critical literature review indicating how the research will add to current gaps in the literature. This requirement is

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meant to give candidates research and writing experience while undertaking the initial phase of the dissertation process. The review allows candidates to demonstrate proficiency in organizing and formulating research in one area relevant to a critical issue in gerontology. The literature review should clarify the contribution of the proposed study to knowledge in the area. (2) A concise set of research questions and hypotheses stating the specific aims and expectations of the research. (3) A detailed presentation of the research materials (sample, measurement), empirical design, and statistical method to be used, including a discussion of strengths and weaknesses thereof.

The formal proposal should be submitted to the Dissertation Committee at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

The student is responsible for scheduling the meeting and arranging for a room for the discussion of the formal dissertation proposal with the committee. Once the committee has approved the proposal, the student should obtain a form from the Student Services Office, to be signed by the chair indicating approval of the proposal. The student should also consult the online dissertation guidelines of the USC Graduate School (http://graduateschool.usc.edu/current_thesis_dissert.html) for dissertation guidelines, required forms and documents, and dissertation formatting instructions.

Dissertation Defense

The last step in completing the Ph.D. is completion of the dissertation. A student should consult regularly with their Dissertation Committee Chairperson (and possibly other Committee members) in conducting the research and preparing the manuscript and be prepared to write multiple drafts of the dissertation before the formal defense. The dissertation defense consists of a formal presentation by the student and a question/answer session and discussion with the Dissertation Committee to assess the written manuscript and the student's ability to defend it.

Upon notification that the Committee considers the dissertation ready to be defended, the student must orally defend the dissertation. The oral defense is completed

in an open meeting of the committee, which should be announced to the USC community. The student is responsible for scheduling the meeting and arranging for a room. At least one month prior to the oral defense,

written notification of the date, time, and place is to be submitted to the Graduate School.

Students should follow Graduate School instruction and create a profile in the Thesis Center system (http://graduateschool.usc.edu/current_thesis_dissert.html). Beginning 24 hours before your defense, you may go to the Checklist page in Thesis Center to generate the electronic Approval to Submit form. Your action will prompt Thesis Center to send an email containing a link to the form to all of your dissertation committee members.

The candidate must defend the dissertation in such a manner as to determine to the unanimous satisfaction of the dissertation committee that the candidate has attained the stage of scholarly advancement and power of investigation demanded by the University for final recommendation to the doctorate. While the oral examination is open to the general university community, only the members of the dissertation committee shall have the authority to recommend acceptance of the dissertation, which must be unanimous.

Students should be aware: The defense of the dissertation may need to be repeated if the document is not satisfactory. It is very unusual for the version of the dissertation submitted for defense to end up as the final version. Usually, recommendations of further changes result from the defense. These may require several months of work but does not typically require a new defense. Upon successful defense and completion of the dissertation, the student must upload the dissertation in the Thesis Center system. Your dissertation committee members must indicate their approval of the defense on the electronically generated form sent through the Thesis Center system.

Dates for final dissertation submission and formatting edits and a schedule of deadlines are listed in the University Catalogue, the schedule of classes, and on the USC Graduate School website (http://graduateschool.usc.edu/current_thesis_dissert.html). Upon completion, the student must provide a digital copy of the dissertation to the Gerontology Student Advisor.

The degree is posted after a degree check and the submission of all documents, forms, and dissertation corrections. Degrees are posted about a month after all required documents have been submitted. The diploma is printed and mailed to the student within six to eight weeks of posting of the degree.

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health

(213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP)

(213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)

(213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment

(213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

(213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support and Intervention

(213) 821-4710

campussupport.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC

(213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency

UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety

UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

PH.D. PROGRAM COMMITTEES

Ph.D. Committee

Under the general oversight of the USC Leonard Davis School faculty, the Ph.D. Committee is the governing body of the Ph.D. program. The Committee consists of members representing the constituent disciplines of the program and the Associate Dean, Maria Henke. Occasionally faculty outside the Committee are consulted on issues relevant to their specific disciplinary expert. The Chair of the Committee is Dr. Elizabeth Zelinski.

The Committee is responsible for all aspects of the in

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structional program including curriculum review, admission recommendations, petitions, screenings, qualifying examinations, and academic standards. The Committee generally meets bi-monthly with an agenda established by the Chair.

Qualifying Exam Committee

The Quals Committee is composed of faculty members who teach required and upper level courses, and the Ph.D. committee.

COLLOQUIUM SERIES IN MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH ON AGING

Students are expected to attend invited lectures by nationally and internationally recognized scholars in the field of aging. There are generally 5-6 lectures per semester given in this series.

INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH, ANN ARBOR, MI

A number of students have participated in the summer series of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. This program often provides opportunities to learn sophisticated research methodologies and provides experience with new data sets. Summer programs are offered by the Institute's Survey Research Center (SRC) as well as the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) (USC is a member institution which entitles students to reduced tuition on ICPSR courses). More information is available at <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu> and <http://www.isr.umich.edu/src/si/>. It is a good idea to look into these courses early in the spring.

PH.D. STUDENT MEETINGS

The Ph.D. Roundtable is a monthly informal meeting during the academic year covering a variety of topics of interest to students. It is usually held around lunch time or at a time that is convenient for the majority of Ph.D. students. Students are expected to take advantage of this opportunity to learn interactively and share their research in an informal setting. In many ways, the Roundtable acts as a support group for Ph.D. students. Topics covered have included input from the Ph.D. Chair, statistical methods and application, research conducted by faculty and students, current topics in gerontology, career related issues, computer software application, program requirements, and degree progression. The meetings are organized by students and can be expanded to include a wide range of topics. The incoming student

representatives are charged with helping to develop the meetings. At the end of each academic year, students elect the new Ph.D. student representatives and GSA Emerging Scholar and Professional Organization Campus Ambassadors. Check with veteran Ph.D. students on who currently holds these positions.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

At the end of each academic year, students elect a representative. Following are the responsibilities of the student representative:

Ph.D. Committee

- Solicit student input regarding the program to report to the Ph.D. Committee Chair, inform students of any policy changes in the program, and generally serve as a liaison between the student body and the Ph.D. Committee.
- In consultation with the Ph.D Committee Chair, arrange GSA at Andrus, which is a practice session for students presenting at the November GSA meeting

Ph.D. Students Committee

- Solicit ideas for presentations from students and faculty
- Ensure that a variety of speakers from within and outside the department are scheduled to speak (a list of potential speakers and topics should be developed and added to each year)
- Notify students of roundtable schedule
- Ensure that rooms are booked for presentations, that an overhead machine is brought for presenters who desire one, and that speakers (particularly those from outside the center) receive introductions

Other

- Hold an election for the next year's student representative at the end of each academic year
- Ensure that a meeting is held between the Ph.D. Committee Chair and the students every academic year.
- Monitor the "Gero Ph.D." website: ensure that the seminar schedule is posted, encourage faculty and students to post scholarship and career opportunities, remove outdated material
- Inquire whether changes in the membership Qualifying Exam Committees have taken place at the end of the spring semester, and notify students
- Compile and distribute a directory of Gerontology Ph.D. students early in the fall (get file from outgoing student representative)
- Facilitate peer-to-peer mentoring of first year students.

LEONARD DAVIS SCHOOL OF GERONTOLOGY PH.D. FACULTY

Jennifer Ailshire, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Gerontology and Sociology.

Berenice Benayoun, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Gerontology and Biological Sciences

Pinchas Cohen, M.D., Dean, USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, Center, William and Sylvia Kugel Dean's Chair in Gerontology, Professor of Gerontology, Medicine and Biological Sciences.

Eileen Crimmins, Ph.D., AARP Chair in Gerontology, University Professor

Sean Curran, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Gerontology, Molecular and Computational Biology, Associate Dean of Research.

Kelvin Davies, Ph.D., D.Sc., Executive Vice Dean, USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, James E. Birren Chair in Gerontology, Professor of Molecular Biology and Biochemistry.

Teal Eich, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Gerontology.

Susan Enguidanos, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Gerontology, Assistant Dean of Diversity and Inclusion

Caleb Finch, Ph.D., ARCO/Keischnick Professor of the Neurobiology of Aging, University Professor.

Jessica Ho, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Gerontology.

Andrei Irimia, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Gerontology, Biomedical Engineering and Neuroscience.

Mireille Jacobson, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Gerontology.

Changhan David Lee, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Gerontology.

Valter Longo, Ph.D., Edna M. Jones Professor of Gerontology, Professor in Biological Sciences.

Mara Mather, Ph.D., Professor of Gerontology and Psychology, Assistant Dean of Faculty and Academic Affairs.

Christian Pike, Ph.D., Professor of Gerontology.

Jon Pynoos, Ph.D., UPS Foundation Professor of Gerontology, Policy and Planning

Joseph Saenz, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Gerontology.

Edward L. Schneider, M.D., Professor of Gerontology, Medicine and Biological Sciences.

Reginald Tucker-Seeley, M.A., Sc.M., Sc.D., Assistant Professor of Gerontology.

Marc Vermulst, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Gerontology.

John Walsh, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Gerontology, Assistant Dean of Education.

Kathleen Wilber, Ph.D., Mary Pickford Foundation Professor of Gerontology, Professor of Health Services Administration.

Elizabeth Zelinski, Ph.D., Rita and Edward Polusky Chair in Education and Aging, Professor of Gerontology, and Psychology

OTHER INFORMATION

Health Service

Part of each student's fees cover the cost of the Student Health Center. Contact the center if you require medical attention. All new students are required to submit immunization records. You may find additional information here: <https://studenthealth.usc.edu/immunizations/>

International Students

International students should contact the Office of International Students (Student Union Building, Room 300) prior to the start of the fall semester.

General Assistance

Students who have questions about procedures should take them to the Student Services Office. The student advisor can answer questions about how to register, complete petitions, secure financial aid, work with the Graduate School, find housing, arrange for campus parking, and access counseling and recreational facilities.

PH.D. PROGRAM ALUMNI

Class of 2021

Gerson Galdamez, BS, University of Southern California, Human Development and Aging

DISSERTATION: Developing a Better Understanding of Elder Abuse Multidisciplinary Teams: Addressing Gaps for Research, Policy, and Practice

POSITION: Program Associate, Fundamental Incorporated

Deborah Hoe, BS, University of Iowa, Math; MA, Ball State University, Digital Storytelling; MS, University of Hong Kong, Gerontology

DISSERTATION: Palliative Care: Breaking the Knowledge Barrier Among Community-Based Older Adults

POSITION: Post-Doc, University of Southern California

Class of 2020

Stephen Frochen, BS, California State University Pomona, Urban and Regional Planning; MA, California State University San Diego, Rhetoric and Writing Studies

DISSERTATION: Residential care in Los Angeles: Policy and planning for an aging population

POSITION: Post-Doctoral Fellow, Center on Innovation, Los Angeles Veteran's Administration

Catherine Perez Garcia, BS, University of California, Los Angeles, Sociology; MS, Florida State University, Sociology

DISSERTATION: Raíces de Salud: How Sociocultural, Cohort, and Contextual Factors Influence Health among Older Latinos in the United States

POSITION: Assistant Professor, Syracuse University

Laura Rath, BS, University of Southern California, Gerontology; MS, University of Southern California, Gerontology

DISSERTATION: Family Caregiver Well-being: generational differences and coping strategies

POSITION: Senior Program Officer, Archstone Foundation

Julia Rowan, BS, California State University Northridge, Literature

DISSERTATION: "What is Success?": An Exploration of Innovative Intervention of Complex Elder Mistreatment

POSITION: Post-Doctoral Fellow, Keck School of Medicine at University of Southern California

Hyunju Shim Heineke, BA, Busan University of Foreign Studies, English Literature; MS, Washington University, Gerontology and International Development

DISSERTATION: Internet communication use, psychological functioning and social connectedness at older ages

POSITION: GME Research Coordinator, HCA Healthcare

Class of 2019

Jeanine Yonashiro-Cho, BSBA, University of Southern California, Gerontology and Biology; MS, University of Southern California, Gerontology

DISSERTATION: Forensic Markers of Physical Elder Abuse in Medical and Community Contexts: implications for Criminal Justice Interventions

POSITION: Post-doc Fellow, Keck School of Medicine at University of Southern California

Kylie Meyer, BA, Kalamazoo College, Sociology/Anthropology/French

DISSERTATION: New Directions for Family Caregiver Interventions

POSITION: Assistant Professor, School of Nursing at University of Texas - San Antonio

Yuan Zhang, BA, Central University of Finance and Economics, Finance; MS, University of Michigan Ann Arbor, Statistics

DISSERTATION: Social Determinants of Physiological Health and Mortality Among Middle-aged and Older Chinese

POSITION: NIA Post-Doctoral Fellow, University of South Carolina - Chapel Hill

Class of 2018

Lauren Brown, BS, University of Southern California, Health Promotion; MPH, Tulane University, Public Health

DISSERTATION: Is stress exposure enough? Race/ethnic differences in the exposure and appraisal of chronic stressors among older adults

POSITION: Assistant Professor of Health Management and Policy, San Diego State University

Mollie Grossman, BS, Georgetown University, Psychology and English

DISSERTATION: Lifting up Ourselves by Lifting up Others: Examining Cognitive-Affective Pathways Linking Generativity to Well-Being

POSITION: Graduate Student, University of California, Los Angeles

PH.D. PROGRAM ALUMNI

Diana Wang, BS, Brandeis University, Neuroscience and Biology

DISSERTATION: Psychological and physiological pathways from social support exchanges to health: A lifespan perspective

POSITION: Strategy Insights and Planning Associate Consultant, ZS

Class of 2017

Elizabeth Prickett, BA, Wake Forest University, English; MS, Virginia Commonwealth University, Anatomy and Neurobiology

DISSERTATION: Thinking Generatively Versus Acting Generatively: Exploring the Associations of Generative Self-Concept and Generative Activity With Cognitive Function Among Older Adults

POSITION: Health Program Specialist, National Institute of Health

Yongjie Yon, BA, Kwantlen College, Psychology; MA, Simon Fraser University, Gerontology

DISSERTATION: Systematic review and meta-analysis of elder abuse prevalence studies

POSITION: Technical Officer, Policy Implementation and System Transformation Division, Country Health Policies and Systems, World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe

Class of 2016

Mary (Alison) Balbag, BM, MM, DMA, University of Southern California, Harp Performance

DISSERTATION: Music Across the Lifespan

POSITION: Beaverton City Arts Commissioner and Gerontologist

Nicholas Pisca, BA, University of California Santa Cruz, Anthropology; MA, Santa Clara University, Counseling Psychology

DISSERTATION: Examining the Long-Term Psychosocial Effects of a Healthy Living Life Management Behavior Intervention Among Older Adults

POSITION: Bloomberg Fellow, Bloomberg American Health Initiative, Johns Hopkins and Research Analyst, Division of Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Allison Ponzio, BA, University of San Francisco, Psychology

DISSERTATION: The Impact of Emotion, Valence, and Arousal on Differential Memory Processes in Younger and Older People

POSITION: Honors Research in Science Program Head, Marlborough School

Nicholas Woodward, BS, University of California, Santa Barbara, Biopsychology

DISSERTATION: Neuroinflammation and the Behavioral Consequences of Air Pollution Over the Life Course

POSITION: Scientist of Human Health, Brightseed

Class of 2015

Marguerite DeLiema, BS, University of California, Los Angeles, Psychobiology

DISSERTATION: Using Mixed Methods to Identify the Characteristics of Older Fraud Victims

POSITION: Assistant Research Professor, School of Social Work, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

Seung-Youn Kim, BA, Korea University, Psychology; MA, Korea University, Psychology

DISSERTATION: The Effects of Wisdom-Related Personality Traits on Caregivers' Health: An Application of the Resilience Model

POSITION: Lecturer, School of Social Work, California State University, Los Angeles

Morgan Levine, BA, University of Southern California, Psychology

DISSERTATION: Statistical Algorithms for Examining Gene and Environmental Influences on Human Aging

POSITION: Assistant Professor, Department of Pathology, Yale University

Class of 2014

Shieva Davarian, BA, University of California Los Angeles, Psychology; MS, California State University Northridge, Biology

DISSERTATION: Health differences between the elderly in Japan and the United States

POSITION: Research Analyst and Case and Contact Interview Branch Internship Program Manager, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Alexis Coulourides Kogan, BS, Tulane University, Exercise and Sports Science

DISSERTATION: The Economic Security of an Aging Minority Population: A Profile of Latino Baby Boomers to Inform Future Retirees

POSITION: Assistant Professor of Family Medicine, Keck School of Medicine at University of Southern California

PH.D. PROGRAM ALUMNI

Zachary Gassoumis, BS, University of Durham, United Kingdom, Natural Science

DISSERTATION: The Economic Security of an Aging Minority Population: A Profile of Latino Baby Boomers to Inform Future Retirees

POSITION: Assistant Professor of Family Medicine, Keck School of Medicine at University of Southern California

Jeff Laguna, BS, University of Arizona, Family Studies and Human Development

DISSERTATION: Racial/Ethnic Variation in Care Preferences and Care Outcomes among US Hospice Enrollees

POSITION: Assistant Professor of Gerontology, Chaffey College School of Health Sciences

Joohong Min, BA, Seoul National University, Family/Child Studies, MA, Seoul National University, Family Studies

DISSERTATION: Intergenerational Transmission of Values and Behaviors over the Family Tree Course

POSITION: Associate Professor of Human Ecology and Welfare, College of Natural Sciences, Jeju National University

Felicia Wheaton, BA, University of California Berkeley, Integrative Biology and Anthropology

DISSERTATION: International age and sex differences in physical function and disability

POSITION: Assistant Professor of Aging Studies, Bethune Cookman University

Class of 2013

Carrie Donoho, BS, University of Maryland University College, Psychology; MS, Northern Arizona University, Health Psychology

DISSERTATION: Marital Quality, Gender, and Biomarkers of Disease Risk in the MIDUS Cohort

POSITION: Branch Chief of Population Data Science, Pentagon and Chief of Behavioral Epidemiology, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research

Class of 2012

Jessica Lendon, BA, Berry College, Psychology, MS, Middle Tennessee State University, Sociology

DISSERTATION: The Measurement, Life Course Patterns and Outcomes of Intergenerational Ambivalence Among Parent-Child Dyads

POSITION: Social Scientist, Long Term Care Statistical

Branch, Center for Disease Control/National Center of Health Statistics

Nichole Lighthall, BA, University of California Berkeley, Psychology

DISSERTATION: Mechanisms of Stress Effects on Learning and Decision Making in Younger and Older Adults.

POSITION: Assistant Professor of Psychology, University of Central Florida

Kaoru Nashiro, BA, California State University, East Bay, Psychology

DISSERTATION: How Emotional Arousal Influences Memory and Learning in Younger and Older Adults

POSITION: Research Assistant Professor, Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, University of Southern California

Class of 2011

Adria Emberson Navarro, BA, California State University Long Beach, Social Welfare, MSW, San Diego State University, Social Work

DISSERTATION: Improving Outcomes for Victims of Financial Exploitation: The Effect of an Elder Abuse Forensic Center

POSITION: Associate Professor of Social Work, Azusa Pacific University

Sarinnapha (Fah) Vasunilashorn

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BS, University of California Los Angeles, Psychobiology

DISSERTATION: Aging in a High Infection Society

POSITION: Assistant Professor of Medicine, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Harvard Medical School

Class of 2010

Caroline Cicero

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA, Davidson College Davidson NC, Anthropology & Sociology, MSW/MPL, University of Southern California Los Angeles, Social Work, Planning

DISSERTATION: The Costs, Consequences, and Demographic Characteristics of Fall-Related Injuries Among Older Adults in the Los Angeles Region: A Current Assessment, Public Health Projection, and Planning Response.

POSITION: Instructional Associate Professor, Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, University of Southern California

PH.D. PROGRAM ALUMNI

Bernard Steinman

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA, University of Washington
Seattle WA, English, MS, Mississippi State University
Starkville MS, Experimental Psychology

DISSERTATION: Older Adults with Visual Impairments:
The Role of Health Dimensions in Predicting Falls

POSITION: Assistant Professor of Human Development
and Family Sciences, University of Wyoming

Class of 2009

Kathryn Thomas Fike

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BS, University of Virginia, Systems
Engineering, NIS, University of Southern California,
Gerontology

DISSERTATION: Nursing Home Transitions: A New
Framework for Understanding Preferences, Barriers
and Outcomes

POSITION: Partner, Generator Ventures and Co-Founder,
Aging 2.0

Amber Watts

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA, University of Redlands, Psychol-
ogy and Performing Arts, MA, Wake Forest University,
Psychology

DISSERTATION: Predicting Cognitive Decline and De-
mentia in Elderly Twins from Indicators of Early Life
Oral Health

POSITION: Associate Professor, Department of Psychol-
ogy, University of Kansas

Tingjian (Jessie) Yan

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA, Shandong Normal University
P.R. China, Geography, MS, Renmin University of
China Beijing P.R. China, Demography

DISSERTATION: Translating Two Physical Activity Pro-
grams for Older Adults into Home- and Community-
based Settings: "Active Start" and "Healthy Moves for
Aging Well"

POSITION: Senior Principal Quantitative Scientist,
Roche

Jihye Yeom

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA, Korea University – Seoul,
Korea, Sociology, MA, Korea University - Seoul,
Korea, Sociology

DISSERTATION: The Effect of Body Mass Index on
Mortality: Different Countries and Age Groups

POSITION: Associate Professor, School of Social Science,
Department of Social Welfare, Jungwon University

Class of 2008

Echo Chang

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA, National Taiwan University,
English Literature, MA, Advertising, Michigan State
University, MS, California State University - Fullerton,
Gerontology

DISSERTATION: Childlessness and Psychological Well-be-
ing Across the Life Course as Manifested in Significant
Life Events

POSITION: Chief Executive Officer, AgeSafe

In Hee Choi

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA/BS Seoul Women's University -
Seoul Korea, English & Literature, Public Administra-
tion, MIPA University of Wisconsin - Madison, WI,
Public Affairs

DISSERTATION: Falls Among Older Adults: Characteris-
tics of Fallers, Co-morbidities of Falls and Their Impact
of Acute and Long-term Care Utilization

POSITION: Research Evaluation Team, Korean Women's
Development Institute, South Korea

Zhen Cong

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA, Xian Foreign Language Univer-
sity - Xian, China, English / International Economics,
MS, Xian Jiaotong University - Xian, Management
Science & Engineering

DISSERTATION: Children's Migration and the Financial,
Social and Psychological Well-being of Older Adults in
Rural China

POSITION: Associate Dean, Research and Faculty Af-
fairs, University of Texas - Arlington

Aaron Hagedorn

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BSG University of Southern
California, Gerontology, MSG/MHA University of
Southern California Los Angeles, Gerontology, Health
Administration

DISSERTATION: Longitudinal Change in Active Life
Expectancy: The Longitudinal Studies of Aging 1984-
2000

POSITION: Assistant Dean of Research and Faculty Af-
fairs, University of Texas, Arlington

Sarah Ruiz

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BS, University of Delaware - DE,
Family Research

DISSERTATION: The immediate and Long-term
Legacy of Relationships with Grandparents for the
Well-being of Grandchildren

PH.D. PROGRAM ALUMNI

POSITION: Associate Director of Research Sciences, Administration for Community Living, National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Center

Class 2007

Gretchen Alkema

PREVIOUS DEGREES: MSW, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Social Work, BA, University of Colorado, Boulder, Psychology.

DISSERTATION: Translating Research Into Practice: A Community-Based Medication Management Intervention

POSITION: Vice President, Policy and Communications, The SCAN Foundation

Daphna Gans

PREVIOUS DEGREES: MA, Michigan State University, Family Studies, BA, University of Haifa, Israel, Social Work.

DISSERTATION: Normative Obligations and Parental Care in Social Contexts

POSITION: Research Faculty, School of Medicine at University of California, Los Angeles and Adjunct Assistant Professor of Community Health Sciences, University of California, Los Angeles Fielding School of Public Health

Class of 2006

Dawn Alley

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BS, University of Southern California, Gerontology.

DISSERTATION: Elevated Inflammation in late Life: Predictors and Outcomes

POSITION: Chief Strategy Officer, Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation

Class of 2005

Alexis Abramson

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BS, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, Public Programs, MA West Georgia College Atlanta Georgia, Gerontology.

DISSERTATION: Sources of Aging Anxiety in the Non-Elderly Population: The Importance of Images, Perceptions and Social Resources.

POSITION: Journalist; Author; Consultant; Retirement Living Television, Vice President of Aging Research and Products

Jung Hyun Kim

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA, Ewha Womens University, Korea, Home Management, MS Ewha Womens University Korea, Household Administration, MSG University of Southern California, Gerontology.

DISSERTATION: The Effects of East Asian Values, Coping Styles, Social Support on Physical Health Among Korean American Caregivers.

POSITION: Assistant Professor, Department of Welfare for the Aged, Yong In University, South Korea

Class of 2004

Miae Chun

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BM, Johns Hopkins University, Music, MM, Johns Hopkins University, Music, MSW The Catholic University of America, Social Work.

DISSERTATION: Acculturation Effects in Sociocultural Stress and Coping among Korean-American Caregivers: A Comparison to Korean Caregivers.

POSITION: Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, Chongsin University, South Korea

Crystal Flynn-Longmire

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA, University of Michigan, Psychology, NIA Wayne State, Soc. Psychology

DISSERTATION: Cross-Cultural Examination of Mental Health Measures: Assessment of the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D) and the Zarit Burden Inventory (ZBI).

POSITION: Research Assistant Professor, Department of Neurosciences, Medical University of South Carolina

Melanie Johnston

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA, University of British Columbia, Psychology, MA, Simon Fraser University, Gerontology

DISSERTATION: SES and Race Differences in Biological Risk: Metabolic Syndrome and Allostatic Load

POSITION: Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Colorado

Christopher Kelly

PREVIOUS DEGREE: BA, University of Notre Dame, English

DISSERTATION: The Extent and Effectiveness of Nursing Home Regulation in the 50 States

POSITION: Professor and Chair, Department of Gerontology, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Christy Ann Nishita

PREVIOUS DEGREE: BA, University of Colorado, Psychology

PH.D. PROGRAM ALUMNI

DISSERTATION: Self-Care Strategies as Coping Mechanisms: Older Adult's Proactive Role in Managing Functional Limitations and Achieving Adaptational Outcomes

POSITION: Associate Specialist, Program and Evaluation, Center on Aging, University of Hawaii - Manoa

George Shannon

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA, Antioch University, MSG, USC, Gerontology

DISSERTATION: Evaluation of the Care Advocate Program: Bridging Managed Care and Home and Community Based Services

POSITION: Instructional Associate Professor, Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, University of Southern California

Frances Yang

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BS, University of Southern California, Gerontology

DISSERTATION: Filial Expectations and Social Support Exchanges among Older Taiwanese Parents and their Children

POSITION: Research Associate Professor, School of Nursing, University of Kansas

Class of 2003

Ross Andel

PREVIOUS DEGREE: BA, Southern California College

DISSERTATION: The Association Between Occupational Complexity and the Risk of Dementia: Results from Case-Control and Twin Analyses.

POSITION: Professor and Director, School of Aging Studies, University of South Florida

Patricia Housen

PREVIOUS DEGREE: BA, Pomona College, MA, Journalism, University of Southern California

DISSERTATION: Gender, Cohort and the Bump: An Investigation of the Reminiscence Effect in the Long Beach Longitudinal Study.

POSITION: Co-owner, Full Circle Pottery

Kristen Suthers Rumrill

PREVIOUS DEGREE: BA, Canisius College, MPH, New York University

DISSERTATION: The Relationship Between Depressed Mood and Cognitive Decline in Older Americans: A Longitudinal Analysis by Gender.

POSITION: Adjunct Associate Professor, University of Maryland

Class of 2001

Xuan (Grace) Chen

PREVIOUS DEGREE: Bachelor of Sociology, MS Gerontology, University of Southern California

DISSERTATION: International Social Support and the Psychological Well Being of Older Parents in China

POSITION: Senior Analyst, Kaiser Permanente of Southern California

Class of 2000

Jung-Ki Kim

PREVIOUS DEGREE: Master's in Gerontology/Social Work

DISSERTATION: Marriage and Health: The Effect of Marital Status on Health and It's Mechanisms Among Older Adults.

POSITION: Research Associate Professor, Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, University of Southern California

Susan Stewart

PREVIOUS DEGREE: Bachelor of Psychology, University of Manitoba, Canada

DISSERTATION: Out of Pocket Health Expenditures by Older Adults in Relation to Age, Race and Insurance

POSITION: Research Associate, National Bureau of Economic Research and Program for Health Systems Improvement, Harvard University

Melissa Tabarrah

PREVIOUS DEGREE: Master of Public Health, UCLA

DISSERTATION: The Measurement of Physical Functioning in a Longitudinal Study of Americans 70 Years of Age and Over.

POSITION: Research Assistant Professor, University of Pittsburgh

Hiroshi Ueda

PREVIOUS DEGREE: Master of Public Health, Master of Sociology (Applied Demography), New York Medical College

DISSERTATION: Heart Disease Among Middle-Aged and Elderly Persons in the United States: Trends and Multi-state Model.

POSITION: Associate Professor, Graduate School of Human Services, Osaka University

Kathleen Werle

PREVIOUS DEGREE: MS Nursing, California State University, Los Angeles

PH.D. PROGRAM ALUMNI

DISSERTATION: Education and Intelligence Test Scores: Predictors of Dementia?

POSITION: Vice President for Instruction, Saddleback Community College

Judy Yip

PREVIOUS DEGREE: Bachelor of Geography, University of Hong Kong

DISSERTATION: Using network Perspectives to Examine the Organization of Community-Based Elder Care Systems Across Four Communities

POSITION: Senior Healthcare Analyst, Health Services Advisory Group

Class of 1999

Debra Sheets

PREVIOUS DEGREE: BA California State University Northridge, Nursing

DISSERTATION: Secondary Health Problems and Change in Functional Limitations Among Persons Aging with Disability.

POSITION: Professor, University of Victoria

Class of 1998

Joseph Angelelli

PREVIOUS DEGREE: MS, Oregon State University, Human Development

DISSERTATION: An Analysis of Postacute Treatment and Outcome Differences between Medicare Fee-For-Service and Managed Care.

POSITION: Director, Health Services Administration, Robert Morris University

Brian Kaskie

PREVIOUS DEGREES: MA, Washington University, Clinical Psychology

DISSERTATION: The Formation of State Legislation Concerning Individuals with Dementia: An Evaluation of Two Competing Theories.

POSITION: Professor, Department of Health Management and Policy, College of Public Health, University of Iowa

Cecelia King

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BS, Spring Hill College, General Studies; MPH, Tulane University, Epidemiology

DISSERTATION: Measurement, Mediators, and Cognitive Impairment: Does Disease Affect Performance?

POSITION: Managing Director of the QNA Group

Ranyan Lu

PREVIOUS DEGREES: Bachelor of Medicine, Beijing Medical University, Preventative Medicine

DISSERTATION: Mechanisms of Linking SES to Hypertension: Findings from Three Longitudinal Studies Among the Pre-Retirement-Age and Older Populations.

POSITION: Director, Clinical Analytics, United Healthcare

Freddi Segal-Gidan

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA Reed College; BS John Hopkins University, Psychology/Biology and Health Sciences

DISSERTATION: Use and Cost of Health Care Resources

POSITION: Assistant Professor and Physician Assistant, Keck School of Medicine, University of Southern California

Class of 1996

Kerry Burnight

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA University of California at Los Angeles

DISSERTATION: Using Self-reported Memory Ability to Approximate Objective Memory Ability in Older Adults: A Meaningful Measure or Inappropriate Shortcut?

POSITION: Associate Clinical Professor, Health Sciences, Department of Family Medicine, University of California, Irvine

Carl Renold

PREVIOUS DEGREES: MA Claremont Graduate School, Political Science

DISSERTATION: Medical Ethics: Futility of Care from the Physicians Perspective for Disabled Patients with Life Threatening Illness

POSITION: Associate Professor, Department of Human Services, College of Health and Human Development, California State University, Fullerton

Sandra Reynolds

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA University of Connecticut, Sociology

DISSERTATION: Legislative Intent and Aging Policy in Los Angeles County: The Relative Effects of Age Versus Need in Public Conservatorship

POSITION: Associate Professor and Associate Director, School of Aging Studies, University of South Florida

CURRENT PH.D. STUDENTS

Class of 1995

Steven Lutzky

PREVIOUS DEGREES: MA Cornell University, Human Development in Family Studies

DISSERTATION: Understanding Caregiver Distress and the Decision to Place: Applying a Stress and Coping Model

POSITION: President, HCBS Strategies, Inc.

Adrienne Mihelic

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA St. Johns College, Liberal Arts

DISSERTATION: Patterns and Processes of Functioning Health Change in a Longitudinal Study of Americans 70 Years of Age and Older

POSITION: *Director of Medical Research, ING-Re, Denver

Tonya Parrott

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA University of California, Los Angeles, Sociology

DISSERTATION: Normative Expectations and Exchanges of Help and Support Between Adult Children and Their Parents

POSITION: Local Missions Coordinator, Austin Christian Fellowship

Linda Wray

PREVIOUS DEGREES: BA Mary Washington College, International Relations

DISSERTATION: Disability and Work in the United States

POSITION: Professor, Pennsylvania State University

Class of 1993

Valentine Villa

PREVIOUS DEGREES: MSG and MPA, University of Southern California, Gerontology and Public Administration

DISSERTATION: The Health Status of Hispanic Elders: An Examination of the Effect of Sociodemographic, Psychosocial, Disease, Health Practice, and Cultural Determinants

POSITION: Professor of Social Work and Director of the Applied Gerontology Institute, University of California, Los Angeles

Entered in 2015

Hyewon Kang, BA, Gyeongsang National University, Political Science; MA, Kyung Hee University, Area Studies Asia-Pacific, MPA, Cornell University, Public Administration

Entered in 2016

Carly Roman, BA, University of Pennsylvania, Psychology

Kristi Wisniewski, BS, University of Alabama, Psychology

Entered in 2017

Elizabeth Avent, BA, Georgia State University, Sociology; MS, Georgia State University, Gerontology

Haley Gallo, BS, University of California, Los Angeles, Psychobiology

Entered in 2018

Shelby Bachman, BS, University of Southern California, Neuroscience; MS, Humboldt University, Neuroscience

Valeria Cardenas, BA, Marquette University, Public Relations; MS, University of Southern California, Gerontology

Eunyoung Choi, BA, Yonsei University, Psychology; MA, Kyunghee University, Gerontology

Yujin Jeong, BA Korean National Sport University, Sports and Healthy Aging; MA San Francisco State University, Gerontology

Mekiayla Singleton, BA, University of South Florida Tampa, Gerontology/Psychology; MSW, University of South Florida Tampa, Social Work

Yu-Hsuan Wang, BS, National Taiwan University, Psychology; MS, National Taiwan University, Clinical Psychology

Yujun Zhu, BA, Shanghai University, Public Administration; MS, University of Southern California, Gerontology

Entered in 2019

Gillian Fennell, BS, Cornell University, Human Development

CURRENT PH.D. STUDENTS

Narae Kim, BA, Sogang University, Political Science/
Liberal Arts; MPH, Brown University, Public Health

Susanna Mage, BS, University of Delaware, Earth
Science; MA, Brown University, Environmental Studies

Margarita Osuna, Bach, Pontifica University Javeriana,
Sociology

Qiao Wu, BA, Capital Normal University, History;
MA, University of Southern California, Public Policy

Erfei Zhao, BA, Washington University Saint Louis,
Economics; MSW, Columbia University, Social Work

Entered in 2020

Erik Blanco, BS, California State University Los An-
geles, Sociology; MA, California State University Los
Angeles, Sociology

Lillian Estenson, BA, Scripps College, Gender Studies;
MSW, University of Michigan, Social Work

Kelly Marnfeldt, BA, Temple University, Music; MFA,
Indiana University, Theatre Arts; MS, University of
Southern California, Gerontology

Sheila Salinas Navarro, BBA, California State Long
Beach, International Business

Entered in 2021

Mariola Acosta Rullan, BS, Pontifical Catholic Uni-
versity, Puerto Rico, Psychology; MS, Ponce Health
Science University, Psychology; Ph.D., Ponce Health
Science University, Psychology

Chih-Yuan Chien, BS, Pennsylvania State University,
Psychology and Nutrition; MA, Brandeis Univ, Psy-
chology

Stephanie Rubinstein, BA, Loyola University Mary-
land, Psychology

Mengzhao Yan, BA and BBA, Beijing Foreign Stud-
ies University, English and International Business; MS,
University of Southern California, Gerontology

Mutian Zhang, BA, Hunan University Commerce,
Finance; MS, University of Southern California, Ger-
ontology

DOWNLOADABLE APPENDIX FORMS

All subsequent forms in the appendix section, includ-
ing a link to the most recent Ph.D. Committee form,
may be downloaded on the GERO department web-
site:

[https://gero.usc.edu/students/current-students/
ph-d-students/](https://gero.usc.edu/students/current-students/ph-d-students/)

APPENDIX A**GERONTOLOGY DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY ADVISEMENT RECORD**

Social, Behavioral, and Policy Track

Catalogue Year 19/20

Student Name: _____ Student ID #: _____

GERO SCIENTIFIC CORE

TITLE	COURSE	UNITS	SEMESTER	GRADE
GERO 610-The Aging Society		4		
GERO 613-Health and Aging		4		
GERO 620-Psychology and Aging		4		
GERO 645-Politics and Policy in an Aging Society		4		

RESEARCH CORE COURSES

Three research statistics courses	COURSE	UNITS	SEMESTER	GRADE
GERO 593-Research Methods		4		
GERO 640-Data Analysis Strategies		4		
Research Statistics Elective		4		

ELECTIVES

TITLE	COURSE	UNITS	SEMESTER	GRADE

QUALS / DISSERTATION

GRSC 800 during Quals / 4 UNITS minimum 794ab	COURSE	UNITS	SEMESTER	GRADE

TOTAL UNITS FOR PHD = 64

Screening Statement Guidelines

I. Talk about the course work you have completed, and courses you plan to take through quals.

II. Identify (with specifics) your research activities in the past year, including any information on publications, submissions or presentations. Discuss work with your faculty mentor, or who you envision as a mentor if you have not already chosen one.

III. Talk about strengths you've developed / weaknesses to be addressed.

IV. Write about your preliminary ideas for the quantitative paper for quals, as well as dissertation ideas. Try to pose research questions.

V. Write about your career goals.

No two screening statements are alike; you may want to add, focus on one area more than another, etc. You also want to have your faculty mentor, or a faculty member with whom you've worked closely, review it. Length averages from 500 to 1000 words (2 to 4 DS pages).

USC WEB REGISTRATION Instructions

There is a step by step tutorial on the Web Registration website but this will help get you started. There may be a day turnaround time each after submitting the Intent to Enroll form and activating your email account. International students will need to wait until they get here to the U.S. physically to register.

STEP 1

Log on to the Web Registration website through the myUSC portal: <https://my.usc.edu/portal/guest.php>. The login for myUSC and USC Web Mail are the same.

STEP 2

You may need to request for a registration appointment time. If this is the case, contact the Registration department at (213) 740-8500 or email them at register@usc.edu. Please have your 10 digit USC ID number handy.

STEP 3

Departmental clearance (D-clearance) or Departmental Authorization may be required. Typically online classes, practicum courses or directed research will require this action. Please email Linda Broder at lbroder@usc.edu with your request. Be sure to include your name, 10-digit USC ID number, the course name (i.e. GERO 500), and the section number (the 5-digit number associated with the course).

To view the Schedule of Classes, you may go here: <http://classes.usc.edu/>. The actual email that provides the login information to the Blackboard system (the system that will allow you to access the course information online) will not be received until about a week before classes begin so don't be alarmed if you don't get one until then.

If you have questions about what classes to register for or are having problems, please contact the Student Advisor, Jim deVera at edevera@usc.edu or (213) 740-1729.

FEE BILL SETTLEMENT

Information on settling your tuition and fee charges can be obtained online at:

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/finserv/sfs/>

TRANSFER CREDIT PETITION FORM

USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology / Buck Institute on Aging
Biology of Aging Ph.D. Program

I. Student completes this section. Please print or type.

Student ID # _____ Degree _____

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Request: _____

Reasons: _____

(attach additional page if needed)

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

Endorsements:

☐ Approved (recommended, not recommended, neutral)

☐ Not Approved

(Ph.D. Chair)

(Date)

b.) Comments: _____

Additional Endorsement (as necessary)

☐ Approved (recommended, not recommended, neutral)

☐ Not Approved

(Signature)

(Date)

(Title)

c.) Comments: _____

USC Graduate School

Request to Take the PhD Qualifying Examination

When signed by all parties, this form indicates approval to sit for the qualifying examination. Present the completed form to the dean's office at least 30 days prior to the first day of the exam. The original form is to be kept in the department and a signed copy provided to the student.

Student Name: _____ USC ID Number: _____
Last First

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Program: _____ Post Code: _____

I request permission to take the Qualifying Examination by my Qualifying Exam Committee in _____ semester of 20____. I understand that both written and oral parts of the Qualifying Examination must be taken on the USC Campus.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

The department or program verifies that the student has satisfactorily completed all pre-Qualifying Examination requirements: GPA: _____ (minimum 3.0) Units: _____ (minimum of 24 units in residence)

	Printed Name	Signature	Date
Committee Chair	_____	_____	_____
Program Chair	_____	_____	_____
Dean (if necessary)	_____	_____	_____

Students who have completed all coursework for the PhD and who are not otherwise enrolled during the semester in which the Qualifying Examination is to be taken enroll in GRSC 800: Studies for Qualifying Examination. D-clearance for GRSC 800 can be obtained by call the Graduate School at 213-740-9033.

Students may not enroll in 794A until the semester after having passed the Qualifying Examination. However, if a student passes the Qualifying Examination prior to the Add/Drop date of a given semester, then s/he registers for 794A in that semester.

USC Davis School of Gerontology
Empirical Paper Sign-Off Record

1. Agreement to Supervise the Student's Empirical Paper Project

_____ will receive guidance by the undersigned in the preparation of a research paper, which is a prerequisite for eligibility to take the qualifying examinations in Gerontology.

Briefly describe the project:

_____ Chairperson	_____ Date
_____	_____ Date

2. Approval of the Written Component of the Empirical Paper Requirement

This student has fulfilled the written component of the empirical paper requirement with a project entitled:

_____ Chairperson	_____ Date
_____	_____ Date

3. Satisfaction of the Presentation Component of the Empirical Paper Requirement

This student has fulfilled the presentation component of the empirical paper requirement in the following way:

_____ Chairperson	_____ Date
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