

USC Leonard Davis School Plan for Excellence in Teaching

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USC Leonard Davis School Plan for Excellence in Teaching

USC's Leonard Davis School of Gerontology provides education for undergraduate, masters and PhD students. Training in each program is tailored to match student career trajectory based on the stage of student development (undergraduate, masters, PhD) and student choice of specialty (social services, medicine, research). Training is guided to develop skill sets and a philosophy of thinking that set our students apart to become leaders in the field of aging.

The Leonard Davis School plan for Excellence in Teaching outlines below principles of course preparation, student-instructor interaction, and assessment of learning which apply to all programs. The field of Gerontology has long appreciated the importance of blending social, psychological and biological perspectives in understanding the cultural diversity of aging. Gerontology education thus provides students understanding of diverse influences that interact over a life time, which are key to interpreting the unique course of aging experienced by groups and individuals. Gerontology faculty are trained to educate using this diversity perspective, to adapt their course delivery to be informative and at the same time, to be sensitive to the varied cultures of students taking their courses.

The Leonard Davis School Plan for Excellence in Teaching includes 1) process of Developing Leonard Davis Statement of Excellence in Teaching and Assessment, 2) a Leonard Davis School-Specific Definition of Excellence in Teaching, 2) a Davis School Program for Faculty Development for Teaching Excellence, 3) an outline of how teaching will be Evaluated, and 4) a Program in place for Rewarding Excellence in Teaching within the Davis School.

1. Process of Developing Leonard Davis Statement of Excellence in Teaching and Assessment.

The process for developing the Leonard Davis School Plan for Excellence in teaching began in June 2018 with the Davis School Assistant Dean for Education, John Walsh, and representatives from every other school at USC attending a meeting run by Assistant Provost Ginger Clark. The meeting focused on how to engage faculty in developing a customized teaching plan and along with guidelines for plan development. Dr. Walsh then went in July to Ginger Clark's office for an hour-long, one-on-one session to discuss Gerontology's plan. Dr. Walsh then took the materials made available by Assistant Provost Clark and his notes from their sessions to develop the Leonard Davis School-based plan for Excellence in Teaching. Dr. Walsh presented the plan to the Davis School Faculty Council and the Faculty Council discussed, edited and approved the plan. The Davis School Faculty Council then presented the document to Dean Pinchas Cohen of the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology and the Dean then presented the document to tenure track, tenured and RTPC faculty. The entire Gerontology faculty received a copy of the plan, reviewed the document, and discuss possible edits or changes. A vote was taken by the faculty at a later faculty meeting on whether to approve the document. The Davis School faculty were unanimous in their vote to approve the document and the dean's office presentation of the document to USC's Office of the Provost. The dean's office submitted the final, approved version of the Leonard Davis School Excellence in Teaching Plan to the Provost Office in May of 2019. The provost office reviewed the Davis School Excellence in Teaching Plan and sent the Dean of Gerontology a form containing a number of recommendations to improve the Gerontology Excellence in Teaching plan. The provost's office review recommended the Davis School form a task force to consider and implement their

recommendations for the schools plan. The Davis School formed a task force consisting of Assistant Dean John Walsh, the Davis School's CET Faculty Fellow Professor Elizabeth Zelinski, and Professor Katherine Wilber to consider the recommended changes made by the provost's office. The recommended changes were taken under advisement by the task force and instituted as deemed appropriate to the Davis School plan.

Communication of changes made to the Leonard Davis School Excellence in Teaching Plan

The task force-revised Excellence in Teaching Plan was submitted to the Davis School Faculty Council, submitted to the provost office and uploaded into the Davis School web portal of "Teaching Resources" for all faculty to access <https://gero.usc.edu/about/for-employees/teaching-resources/>.

2. Leonard Davis School-Specific Definition of Excellence in Teaching

The USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology is committed to excellence in teaching. The Leonard Davis School practices collaboration between colleagues who come from different disciplines and cultures to provide students with the knowledge, skills, relationships, and values that are necessary to succeed in a rapidly changing world. Our focus on aging by necessity brings together training in politics, business, society, family, psychology, biology, biodemography and medicine. USC's Leonard Davis School of Gerontology trains its students to embrace the perspective of aging when considering the diversity of experiences and trajectories seen in all segments of society. The diversity of skills our students acquire help them to improve the lives of all older people from all cultures. Training our students across the multiple dimensions of politics, business, society, family, psychology, biology, biodemography and medicine teaches them to see problems and create solutions from multiple viewpoints. Expected student knowledge and skill sets in these gerontology competencies can be found in the handbook developed the Accreditation for Gerontology Education Council (AGEC) <http://www.geroaccred.org/agec-handbook.html>. The Leonard Davis School of Gerontology's undergraduate and master's degree program was reviewed the AGEC accreditation body and all programs were successfully accredited (<http://www.geroaccred.org/accredited-programs.html>).

The structure of USC's Leonard Davis School of Gerontology and its approach to education has long been recognized as a model for success by global gerontology academic and research communities, including the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE, <https://www.aghe.org/>) and the Accreditation for Gerontology Education Council (AGEC, <http://www.geroaccred.org/>). Principles used to evaluate Gerontology education programs across the US were developed through close consultation with the Leonard Davis School, including "Core Competencies" outlined by AGHE as indicated above. Our students are consistently recognized for their innovative approach to aging in their diverse professional trajectories that range from being primary care physicians to holding prominent positions in local, state and federal government. Our students are also valued outside the United States for their training in education and the many varied research in disciplines practiced within the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology.

We further the cause of Gerontology through education by:

1. Being Respectful and Professional as instructors

Gerontology instructors are expected to convey their subject material with enthusiasm. They are expected to maintain professional instructor-student behavior and, in doing so, model and train ethical and responsible behavior that each student will carry forward into their own professional development.

2. Creating a Challenging and Supportive learning atmosphere for student professional development.

Gerontology instructors are expected to clearly communicate learning objectives and how the classroom experiences in their course will achieve these learning objectives. Assessments of student learning need to capture critical/analytical/creative thinking by the students, and students need to be prepared in advance with the rubric of the assessment to ensure their success in demonstrating their knowledge. Gerontology instructors need to create a culture that includes all learners. Courses need to be stimulating to advanced students as well as being supportive to those who struggle by providing encouragement, reinforcement of ideas and support that is in accordance with university support services and university policy. Gerontology instructors are also asked to incorporate the essence of “Core Competencies” in Gerontology education as outlined by the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE, <https://www.aghe.org/>).

3. Offering Inclusive and Diverse education approaches that are appropriate for all learners

Gerontology instructors will create a learning environment that implements traditional and modern education approaches that are responsive to differences in student strengths. For example, some students learn best from reading and writing, while other students do better with visual-spatial, auditory or hands-on (kinesthetic) approaches. Updating courses with modern resources that include interactive exercises and videos as well as open access readings should be done to create an inclusive environment for learning. Gerontology is particularly well positioned to provide experience and perspectives that reflect the diversity of aging issues being experienced worldwide. The Leonard Davis School of Gerontology recognizes that differences exist between undergraduate, masters and PhD education and that differences exist in approaches to social, political, psychological and biological instruction. These education-level and discipline-specific issues will be addressed when evaluating the effectiveness of instruction.

4. Instructor use of Relevant and Engaging learning resources

The field of Gerontology changes rapidly and instructors need to use content that is current, rigorous, and informed by theory, research, evidence, and application. Instructor use of modern, up-to-date resources will help to enhance active learning strategies that promote mastery of the subject and problem-solving skills for students to address real-world challenges in aging. Instructors will take advantage of tools found in Blackboard, USC’s Learning Management System, that enable open discussions and peer-to-peer collaboration and to use these Blackboard-based tools to enhance in-class and online instruction. All instructors receive training in the use of distance learning technologies including ZOOM, Adobe Connect and Mediasite. The Davis School of Gerontology’s Information Technology Staff assists and trains all faculty in the use of these technologies.

5. Instructors need to Prepare a Purposeful instructional plan aligned with course learning objectives

Gerontology instructors need to use an instructional plan aligned with the course learning objectives. Instructors need to assess student knowledge to guide their instruction. Non-exam, non-consequential assessment of student knowledge should be used to help to guide starting points of instruction and to help to ensure students are keeping up with new material on a lecture by lecture basis. Instructors can achieve this goal by encouraging broad student participation in their assessment of whether learners are keeping up. They can then use this information to manage course pace and planning in a way that reflects outcomes from this important form of formative assessment. All Gerontology instructors will be expected to utilize Blackboard to provide up-to-date access to course materials, grades, and assessment feedback (why you got the grade you got on the assignment).

6. Instructors need to use Fair and Equitable learning objectives and forms of learning assessment

Gerontology instructors will outline clear expectations and learning objectives in their syllabi and openly discuss them in class. Instructors will use assessments of learning that are transparent (this is what you need to know and what you need to do to perform well) that fit into the learning objectives of the course as outlined above. Gerontology instructors are expected to provide prompt feedback on assessment performance by students (grades and feedback) and they need to be consistent in their grading and feedback to all students. Students should be asked about the fairness of the assessment to inform the development of future assessments in present and future classes (formative and summative assessment). Student evaluations developed by the instructor, school or by CET can be used for this purpose.

7. Instructors need to update curriculum and assessment practices based on student feedback and peer review (Evidence-Based).

Gerontology instructors will use results obtained from formative and summative peer assessments and student teaching evaluations to inform teaching practice to improve their teaching and course design.

3. Davis School program for faculty Development for teaching excellence

John Walsh provided training in the 2018/2019 academic year based on information received from Assistant Provost Ginger Clark's office during the summer of 2018, by his interpretation of materials provided by the CET and based on Gerontology specific metrics developed during this process. Dr. Elizabeth Zelinski was appointed by the Davis School to be a Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET) Faculty Fellow for summer 2019 and she completed the rigorous CET-run course run during summer of 2019.

All faculty were sent copies of this Davis School Plan for Excellence in teaching and associated attachments referred to in the text for the categories listed below in May of 2019. Dr. Walsh provided faculty development modules at this time during Davis School of Gerontology Faculty meetings. He began by outlining the chronological details of the expected six-year cycle of peer and student teaching evaluations. Subsequent faculty meetings provided insight into developing 1) teaching reflection/philosophy statements, 2) developing syllabi in the Davis School of Gerontology, 3) optimal and consistent use of Blackboard Learning Management by Davis School Courses, 4) developing fair and effective methods of assessment of learning d) what to expect during the "in class" observation phase of peer faculty review, and Gerontology use of USC and Gerontology-specific student evaluations of teaching.

CET Fellow Professor Elizabeth Zelinski began formal instruction in teaching practices and evaluation for the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology faculty during the “faculty profile” section of Davis School’s Faculty meeting’s in spring of 2021. The Davis School began using the “faculty profile” component in their faculty meetings in 2018 as a chance to learn about each faculty member’s research and best practices in teaching.

The Leonard Davis School developed “checklists” to acts as guides for designing syllabi and to help faculty structure their Blackboard sites. These checklists and a sample syllabus were sent as an email attachment to all faculty members and they are posted in our “Teaching Resources” site in our web page <https://gero.usc.edu/about/for-employees/teaching-resources/>.

Additional checklists on assessments and the process of peer review are also found in the appendix section of the revised Leonard Davis School Excellence in Teaching Plan posted in the same “Teaching Resources” website.

4. Outline of how teaching will be Evaluated

This document outlining a schedule for teaching evaluation by the Davis School of Gerontology was developed through review of materials and recommendations provided by USC’s Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET). The document was then reviewed and approved by the Davis School Faculty Council, the Davis School General Faculty and the Davis School Dean, Pinchas.

List of Criteria to be used by the Davis School Faculty Council in its annual review of faculty:

- a. Teaching Philosophy Statement
- b. Course Syllabi
- c. Evaluation of assessments
- d. In-class peer review of approach to teaching
- e. USC Learning Experience Evaluations (student surveys)
- f. Davis School Teaching Evaluations (student surveys)

The schedule of use for the above criteria will depend on what point the faculty member is in their career.

Teaching Philosophy Statement:

Each faculty member (tenured/tenure track/RTPC/part-time) will provide a “Teaching philosophy statement” to the Dean’s office during the recruitment/hiring process. This statement will cover their overall philosophy for teaching and not be required on a course by course basis.

Each faculty member will be asked to update their teaching philosophy statements as part of their dossier used for consideration of promotions. This policy will apply to tenured, tenure-track and RTPC faculty.

Course syllabi:

The Davis School faculty were all sent course syllabi and Blackboard use checklists and a Davis School template for designing their syllabi as an email attachment. These materials are also found in the “Teaching Resources” site in the Davis School web page. This template is offered as a guide for revising all syllabi. Each faculty member’s syllabus is sent to committee for review. The Davis School Undergraduate Committee evaluates all undergraduate course syllabi, the Davis School Master’s Committee evaluates all Master’s degree course syllabi and

the Davis School PhD Committee review all PhD program course syllabi. Each committee makes recommendations of change for each syllabus that are deemed necessary for the course to comply with the Davis School education plan.

Syllabi are reviewed at the time of course development and as part of dossier review used for consideration of promotions.

Evaluation of assessments:

Assessments of learning for each course are to be listed in each syllabi and they will be evaluated as described in each syllabus by each Davis School Curriculum Committee (Undergraduate, Master's, PhD). Instructors will also provide copies of each assessment (exams, paper assignments and grading rubric). Each curriculum committee will make recommendations on assessments at the time of submission.

In-class peer review of approach to teaching

Each faculty member (tenured/tenure track/RTPC/part-time) will be evaluated the Davis School CET Faculty Fellow Professor Elizabeth Zelinski at the time of hiring/start of their USC teaching career and at critical times in their career trajectory. Peer review of the faculty member's teaching will be included as part of their dossier used for consideration of promotions. This policy will apply to tenured, tenure-track and RTPC faculty. Criteria used during peer review are publically available to all faculty (see appendix). The peer evaluator attends a class in person or views prerecorded lectures obtained from Gerontology video capture classrooms and now, from ZOOM.

Exceptions to plan are triggered by below standard Gerontology Teaching Evaluations and/or USC Learning Experience Evaluations, midterm teaching evaluations administered through WuFu and direct student complaints made to the dean's office.

USC Learning Experience Evaluations (student surveys)

Quantitative measures of student learning experiences will be drawn from USC/CET administered online Learning Experience Evaluations and be used annually to evaluate each faculty member's teaching.

Davis School Teaching Evaluations (student surveys)

The Davis School began piloting the use of anonymous surveys administered through Blackboard in a number of courses. Students can complete these surveys as many times as they want and as often as they want and they can provide immediate feedback to the professor so the professor can pivot at any time in response to the feedback. These surveys are formative and will not be used by in the annual review of teaching effectiveness.

The Davis School is also developing its own end of semester summative student teaching evaluations that will measure 1) teaching effectiveness, 2) student engagement and 3) overall program value (5-point Likert scale). The Davis School teaching evaluations will include open ended forums for students to use their own words to describe their educational experience.

Quantitative measures of student evaluation of instructor teaching effectiveness will be drawn from Davis School of Gerontology developed teaching evaluations delivered through

Blackboard. Outcomes from Davis School teaching evaluations will be used annually to evaluate each faculty member's teaching.

5. Program in place for Rewarding Excellence in Teaching at the Davis School.

In keeping with new USC POLICY, teaching evaluations consisting of peer assessment and student input will be collected annually will be used by the Davis School Faculty Council to recommend annual adjustments in salary compensation for all faculty, by promotion committees and the dean for performing three-year mid tenure review, and for the evaluation of tenure-track professor dossiers and dossiers assembled for consideration of promotion to a tenured full professor. Teaching evaluations will be used for RTPC faculty for decisions on continued appointment, annual compensation (linked to provost office approval of the Davis School annual budget) and promotion.

The Dean of the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology will use the faculty council's reviews and recommendations, and his own personal review of the above indicated criteria for evaluation in his decision to compensate faculty through continued appointment, annual salary adjustments, assistant professor tenure decision and tenured professor promotion to full professor, and promotion from assistant, to associate to full professor in USC RTPC track. The impact made by annual teaching evaluations will depend on each faculty member's unique faculty profile (Research, Teaching and Service) that is agreed upon between the Dean of the Davis School of Gerontology and the individual faculty member.

Faculty member teaching performance will also be used in combination with recommendations made by the Student Gerontology Association (SGA) in choosing an annual endowed Alan Davis School Award for Teaching, which comes with a monetary award and a certificate.

Faculty peer assessment of excellence in teaching by CET Faculty Fellow Professor Elizabeth Zelinski will be performed as part of the "service" category of her faculty profile.

Appendix 1 – Davis School Faculty Evaluation Plan.

Evaluation

Annual evaluation of Leonard Davis School Instructors by the Davis School Faculty Council and the Davis School Dean will rely on both student assessments of teaching and peer evaluation. Outcomes from annual evaluations will be used to track teaching effectiveness for promotion as well.

Student Assessment of Teaching:

The Leonard Davis School will use quantitative measures obtained from 1) the USC Provost/CET Student Learning Experience Evaluations (4-point Likert scale) sent as a link to all USC students by the provost's office and 2) a Leonard Davis School Student Assessment of Teaching (5-point Likert Scale) administered through Blackboard. The Leonard Davis School Teaching Assessment will include open-ended questions for students to voice opinions and it will be tailored with questions that reflect the unique nature of the course (i.e. a course on the biology of cancer versus a course on business development).

Syllabus Review:

Davis School Faculty will be provided a template containing a checklist of key features of a complete syllabus that will be used when evaluating each of their course syllabi. Each instructor's syllabi will be evaluated during the first year of this process by the appropriate curriculum committee's presently found in the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology (Undergraduate Committee, Master's Committee, PhD Committee). Each of these curriculum committee's will provide feedback to the instructor's on improving their syllabi and inform the Faculty Council of the outcomes from syllabus evaluation. The curriculum committees will review all syllabi during the implementation of this process, and thereafter perform this duty as needed for promotion review.

Learning Assessment Review:

Davis School Faculty will be required to list all forms of assessment of learning in their syllabi. The learning assessment need to require learning goals and rubrics used to assess student learning. Davis School curriculum review committees will check for appropriate description of learning assessment in their syllabus reviews. Faculty will be asked to provide an example of their learning assessments (description of paper assignment with rubric for grading, copy of midterm exams, example of discussion questions and grading rubric) from each course they teach for review by appropriate curriculum review committees. Curriculum committee review of assessments will be performed during the first year of a faculty's hire and thereafter, during critical periods of review for promotion.

Peer Evaluation:

Peer Review will be performed during the first year of a faculty's hire and thereafter, during critical periods of review for promotion (third year review, tenure review, RTPC promotions), or when administrators become aware of problems. The Leonard Davis School of Gerontology has developed a checklist for the peer evaluator, including methods to be used in the assessment, to use when performing in-class evaluation of teaching (appendix 5). This entire document, including all checklists and templates used during the teaching evaluation process are available

to the faculty in advance of the evaluation process (<https://gero.usc.edu/about/for-employees/teaching-resources/>).

Faculty Council's charge of performing annual teaching evaluation:

The Faculty Council's annual evaluation of Davis School instructor's teaching effectiveness will use metric obtained from peer evaluation, committee evaluation of syllabi and learning assessments, the faculty members teaching philosophy statement, and USC and Davis School Student Evaluations. Professor Zelinski's effort for performing peer evaluations will be allocated in accordance with her percent effort for service to the university and reasonable burden by performing peer review during critical times in a faculty member's career (time of hire, third year review, tenure review and promotional review).

The Leonard Davis School of Gerontology Faculty Council performs an annual evaluation of its faculty where it measures individual performance in research, teaching and service against metrics of excellence in Gerontology. The report provided by the Faculty Council reflects the weighting of effort the faculty member and dean have agreed upon (faculty profile: percent effort in research, teaching and service). The Davis School Faculty council developed an on line portal where each faculty enters information about their annual effort. The portal calculates a score based on the percent effort entered. The faculty member and the Faculty council can download a pdf file of the information found within the on line form. Information is stored in the portal in the cloud so the faculty member and the Faculty Council can track performance over many years. A final evaluation metric is generated by the Faculty Council, through the use of the above-mentioned forms and rigorous discussion and a summary statement that reviews quantitative and qualitative aspects of the faculty members performance. The Dean's uses the Faculty Council review and the faculty members form to guide his annual discussion of the faculty performance in his office. The Dean takes all of this information into consideration in his annual decisions on promotions and raises.

Appendix 2 - Leonard Davis School Teaching Statement Template

Faculty of the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology will provide a Teaching Philosophy Statement when they are recruited to join the School of Gerontology. Each faculty's Teaching Philosophy Statement will be a statement that covers all of the courses they teach. The faculty of the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology will be asked to update this statement during their third year review (tenure-track and RTPC), and for their dossier used in consideration for promotion.

Suggested topics to be covered in their Leonard Davis School of Gerontology Teaching Philosophy Statement include 1) how their approach to teaching supports the program goal of educating in the field of Gerontology, 2) their instructional goals (how they will inform and motivate students in the area of Gerontology, how they will keep their curriculum current and applicable, the kinds of assessment they will use for student to demonstrate their mastering of the subject), 3) how they will use student performance to inform their teaching approach for improvement.

Appendix 3 - USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology Syllabus Template and Checklist for Syllabus Evaluation

There all thirteen items in the checklist:

1. Name, email address, office address and office hours for Instructors and Teaching Assistants
2. Course Description (Description of the field of study to be covered in class)
3. Course Objectives (A combination of content and method of delivery that matches desired learning outcomes for your specific course)
4. Program Objectives (How the content & course objectives fit within the overall educational goals of the Davis School education program = match learning goals and skillsets set forth by Association for Gerontology Higher Education – AGHE) (i.e. Core Competencies in Gerontology established by AGHE).
5. Statement and description on technical proficiency (Blackboard, Turnitin, Excel, etc.) needed to perform in course.
6. Course Readings – appropriate content, amount and calendaring
7. Description of Assignments and/or categories used for evaluation of learning. Due dates and late policy should be listed.
8. Description of weighting of each assignment or assignments within categories used to determine course grade (see example below of description of weighted total).

Midterm 1		15
Midterm 2		15
Final Exam		15
Discussion		10
Polling questions		10
Three Quizzes		5
Eight lab reports		30
TOTAL	0	100

9. Description of grading rubrics used to grade each assignments

10. Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	93-100
A-	90-92.99
B+	87-89.99
B	83-86.99
B-	80-82.99
C+	77-79.99
C	73-76.99
C-	70-72.99
D+	67-69.99

D 63-66.99
D- 60-62.99

11. COURSE IS CLEARLY STRUCTURED IN BLACKBOARD FOR EASY USE BY STUDENTS. Readings, lectures (PowerPoints and Video recordings), Quizzes, Exams, and Discussion Boards need to be well structured and parallel what is laid out in the syllabus. Access needs to be easy. Due dates need to be clearly indicated. Assignment descriptions and Rubrics need to be provided and they should be transparent.

12. Language on 1) communication with instructors and TA's, 2) University policies, 3) University assistance (support systems: health and personal issues), 4) Gerontology statement on assistance and inclusion, 5) USC and Gerontology Learning Evaluations: ALL GERONTOLOGY INSTRUCTORS CAN COPY AND PASTE THE BELOW LANGUAGE INTO THEIR SYLLABI.

GRADE APPEALS AND DISPUTED GRADES

As stated in the Academic Policies section of the University Catalogue, — A grade once reported to the Office of Academic Records and Registrar may not be changed except by request of the faculty member to the Committee on Academic Policies and Procedures (CAPP) on a Faculty Request for a Correction of Grade form. Changes should be requested only on the basis of an actual error in assigning the original grade, not on the basis of a request by the student or special consideration for an individual student. Students are not permitted to complete course work after the semester has ended.

Incompletes

In the case of a documented emergency that occurs after the withdrawal date and/or during the final exam period, students should consult the instructor about receiving a grade of Incomplete (IN) for the semester.

The Registrar's recommended definition of emergency "An unforeseeable situation or event beyond the student's control that prevents her from taking the final examination or final summative experience." Based on this definition, a student may not request an incomplete (IN) before the withdrawal deadline. The rationale is that the student has the option to drop the course until the withdrawal date. The grade of IN exists so there is a remedy for illness or emergency which occurs after the deadline to withdraw.

Communication

Talk with Dr. Walsh and Tim Lu in class, via an office appointment or via email. Please do not hesitate to contact us at any time. We encourage you to ask questions or to provide us with feedback about the course. We will try to respond to your questions within 24 hours.

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" <https://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, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own.

All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles, which are summarized online at <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/AcademicIntegrityOverview.pdf>. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS/COURSE CONTINUITY IN A CRISIS

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the university's site on [Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness](#).

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

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

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class.
equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to Julia Walsh at juliarwa@usc.edu as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in GFS 120 and is open 8:30 am – 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday. Website for DSP: <http://dsp.usc.edu> and contact information: (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-8216 (FAX), ability@usc.edu (Email).

Gerontology Inclusion Statement

The USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology is committed to creating an inclusive classroom environment that values the diversity of all its members. The School is committed to providing a purposefully inclusive community where all members and visitors are free from all intolerant behavior (including but not limited to harassment, verbal or written abuse, threats, ridicule, or intimidation). We encourage all members within our community to embrace and learn from the diversity within our classroom, school, and university.

Student Course Evaluations

Learning Experience Evaluations will be conducted at the end of the semester. This will be your opportunity to provide feedback about your learning experience in the class. This feedback helps the instructor determine whether students are having the intended learning experiences for the class. It is important to remember that the learning process is collaborative and requires significant effort from the instructor, individual students, and the class as a whole. Students should provide a thoughtful assessment of their experience, as well as of their own effort, with comments focused on specific aspects of instruction or the course. Comments on personal characteristics of the instructor are not appropriate and will not be considered. For this feedback to be as comprehensive as possible, all students should complete the evaluation.

We will also make available GERO-specific course evaluations within Blackboard at the end of the semester.

13. Example of Weekly Scheduling of content, learning goals, evaluations, holiday breaks.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

	Topics	Readings/Homework	Deliverable/ Due Dates
<i>Week 1</i> Jan 7 Jan 9	Jan 7 – Introduction to GERO 414 Jan 9 – Biological Aging and Nerve Cell Communication	Jan 7 – Discussion 1 on personal experience with head injury or brain disease Jan 9 – Aging and the Brain (R Peters)	Polling Question Polling Question
<i>Week 2</i> Jan 14 Jan 16	Jan 14 – Biological Aging and Nerve Cell Communication; Biological Aging & Protein Turnover and AGE Jan 16 – Protein Turnover and AGE; Calcium Overload to Free Radicals	Jan 14 - Oxidative stress, neurodegeneration, and the balance of protein degradation and protein synthesis, Part 1 Jan 16 - Oxidative stress, neurodegeneration, and the balance of protein degradation and protein synthesis, Part 2	Polling Question Jan 14 - Discussion 1 on personal experience with head injury or brain disease Polling Question Jan 16 - Aging and the Brain (R Peters)
<i>Week 3</i> Jan 21 Jan 23	Jan 21 – MLK Day Jan – 23 – Calcium Overload to Free Radicals	Jan 21 – MLK Day Jan 23 – Calcium, ATP, and ROS: a mitochondrial love-hate triangle, part 1	MLK Day Polling Question Jan 23 - Oxidative stress, neurodegeneration, and the balance of protein degradation and protein synthesis, Part 1 Oxidative stress, neurodegeneration, and the balance of protein degradation and protein synthesis, Part 2
<i>Week 4</i> Jan 28 Jan 30	Jan 28 - Apoptosis, necrosis, inflammation and stress.	Jan 28 - Free day Jan 30 - Calcium, ATP, and ROS: a mitochondrial love-hate triangle, part 2	Polling Question No Discussion Due

	Jan 30 – Apoptosis, Necrosis, inflammation and Stress.		<p>Polling Question</p> <p>Jan 30 - Calcium, ATP, and ROS: a mitochondrial love-hate triangle, part 1</p>
<p>Week 5</p> <p>Feb 4</p> <p>Feb 6</p>	<p>Feb 4 – Inflammation</p> <p>Feb 6 – Stress and cortisol</p>	<p>Feb 4 – Apoptosis and Caspases in Neurodegenerative Diseases, part 1</p> <p>Feb 6 - Apoptosis and Caspases in Neurodegenerative Diseases, part 2</p>	<p>Polling Question</p> <p>No discussion due</p> <p>Polling Question</p> <p>Feb 6 - Calcium, ATP, and ROS: a mitochondrial love-hate triangle, part 2</p>
<p>Week 6</p> <p>Feb 11</p> <p>Feb 13</p>	<p>Feb 11– Midterm 1</p> <p>Feb 13 – Stroke anatomy and hypertension</p>	<p>Feb 11– Midterm 1</p> <p>Feb 11 - Mechanisms Underlying Inflammation in Neurodegeneration, part 1</p> <p>Feb 13 - Mechanisms Underlying Inflammation in Neurodegeneration, part 2</p>	<p>Feb 11– Midterm 1</p> <p>Feb 11 - Feb 4 – Apoptosis and Caspases in Neurodegenerative Diseases, part 1</p> <p>Polling Question</p> <p>Feb 13 - Apoptosis and Caspases in Neurodegenerative Diseases, part 2</p>
<p>Week 7</p> <p>Feb 18</p> <p>Feb 20</p>	<p>Feb 18 – President’s Day</p> <p>Feb 20 – Stroke Anatomy and Hypertension</p>	<p>Feb 18 – Presidents Day</p> <p>Feb 20 - Type 2 Diabetes, Immunity and Cardiovascular Risk: A Complex Relationship, Part 1</p>	<p>Presidents Day</p> <p>Polling Question</p> <p>Feb 20 - Mechanisms Underlying Inflammation in Neurodegeneration, part 1 & 2</p> <p>Feb 13 - Mechanisms Underlying Inflammation in Neurodegeneration, part 2</p>
<p>Week 8</p> <p>Feb 25</p> <p>Feb 27</p>	<p>Feb 25 – Stroke, Cholesterol and triglycerides</p> <p>Feb 27 – Stroke, Cholesterol and triglycerides</p>	<p>Feb 25 – Type 2 Diabetes, Immunity and Cardiovascular Risk: A Complex Relationship, Part 2</p>	<p>Polling Question</p> <p>Polling Question</p> <p>Feb 27 - Type 2 Diabetes, Immunity and Cardiovascular</p>

		Feb 27 - Major Depressive Disorder, part 1	Risk: A Complex Relationship, Part 1
Week 9 Mar 4 Mar 6	March 4 – Arterial Calcification March 6 - Diagnosis of vascular disease & stroke	Mar 4 – Major Depressive Disorder, part 2 Mar 6 – No Discussion reading	Polling Question Mar 4 - Type 2 Diabetes, Immunity and Cardiovascular Risk: A Complex Relationship, Part 2 Polling Question Mar 6 - Major Depressive Disorder, part 1
March 11	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK
Week 10 Mar 18 Mar 20	March 18 - Diagnosis of vascular disease & stroke March 20 – Prevention & Intervention for stroke: antiplatelet, anticoagulant, tPA and surgeries	Mar 18 – The Two Faces of Thrombosis: Coagulation Cascade and Platelet Aggregation. Are Platelets the Main Therapeutic Target?, part 1 Mar 20 – The Two Faces of Thrombosis: Coagulation Cascade and Platelet Aggregation. Are Platelets the Main Therapeutic Target?, part 2	Polling Question Polling Question Mar 20 – Major Depressive Disorder, part 2
Week 11 Mar 25 March 27	March 25 – Prevention & Intervention for stroke: antiplatelet, anticoagulant, tPA and surgeries March 27 – Midterm 2	Just get the coagulation and platelet discussion done to prepare for the midterm!!!!	Polling Question Mar 25 – The Two Faces of Thrombosis: Coagulation Cascade and Platelet Aggregation. Are Platelets the Main Therapeutic Target?, part 1 March 27 – Midterm 2
Week 12 April 1 April 3	Apr 1 – Class Cancelled April 3 – Vision, aging and Disease	Apr 1 – class cancelled Apr 3 - Combination Therapies for Wet AMD:	Apr 1 – Class Cancelled Apr 3 – The Two Faces of Thrombosis: Coagulation Cascade and Platelet

		Latest Developments, full article	Aggregation. Are Platelets the Main Therapeutic Target?, part 2
<p><i>Week 13</i></p> <p>April 8 April 10</p>	<p>April 8 – Vision, aging and Disease</p> <p>April 10 – Hearing, Vestibular, taste and smell</p>	<p>April 8 – Discriminatory Disease</p> <p>Exploring the gender gap in multiple sclerosis, full article</p> <p>April 10 - New ALS Therapies Move Closer to the Clinic, full article</p>	<p>Polling Question</p> <p>Apr 8 - Combination Therapies for Wet AMD: Latest Developments, full article</p> <p>Polling Question</p>
<p><i>Week 14</i></p> <p>April 15 April 17</p>	<p>April 15 – Multiple Sclerosis & ALS</p> <p>April 17 – Parkinson’s and Huntington’s Disease</p>	<p>Apr 15 – Dementia syndromes: evaluation and treatment, part 1</p> <p>April 17 - Dementia syndromes: evaluation and treatment, part 2</p>	<p>Polling Question</p> <p>April 15 - April 8 – Discriminatory Disease</p> <p>Exploring the gender gap in multiple sclerosis, full article</p> <p>Polling Question</p> <p>April 17 - New ALS Therapies Move Closer to the Clinic, full article</p>
<p><i>Week 15</i></p> <p>April 22 April 24</p>	<p>April 22 – Alzheimer’s</p> <p>April 24 – other forms of dementia</p>		<p>Polling Question</p> <p>Apr 22 – Dementia syndromes: evaluation and treatment, part 1</p> <p>Polling Question</p> <p>Apr 24 – Dementia syndromes: evaluation and treatment, part 2</p>
<p><i>Final</i></p> <p>May 6</p>	<p>Final exam 2-4</p>		<p>Final Quiz due</p> <p>Final exam</p>

Appendix 4 - USC Leonard Davis School template for evaluating assessments used by instructors in the below indicated course

Faculty Name: **Your full name**

Course: **Identify the course in which the chosen assignment was assigned, including academic semester and section number (if relevant)**

Submitted Assessment Documents

- List the assignment descriptions provided to students.
 - List grading criteria provided to students, such as a grading rubric.
 - How assignment fits into course learning objective (what it would teach students).
 - **OPTIONAL:** Student work samples and feedback you provided.
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Grading Criteria

- Grading criteria used to evaluate evidence of learning. Does the assignment description (what students were asked to do) corresponds with what they were assessed on?

Appendix 5 - USC Leonard Davis School Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist to be used for the following stages of career development and evaluation:

- 1) The first semester of an instructor that has joined the Leonard Davis School

Follow-up classroom observation schedules will depend on the category of professor (tenured, tenure-track, Teaching Faculty).

Tenure-track professors

- 2) Prior to the third-year review of tenure-track professors
- 3) Prior the year of tenure decision

Teaching Faculty

- 4) a recommended three-year cycle (at the discretion of the Dean and Associate Dean of the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology).

Problems in Teaching

- 5) when administrators become aware of problems through administered student evaluation of instructors and complaints made to Leonard Davis School administrators.

The below example checklist was developed from evidence-based published work from our own school, supported by grants from the National Science Foundation, on teaching effectiveness and through review of government publications and societies devoted to evidence-based teaching practices and strategies.

https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/infographics/pdf/REL_SE_Evidence-based_teaching_practices.pdf

<https://www.evidencebasedteaching.org.au/evidence-based-teaching-strategies/>

Example of Checklist of questions observer will answer about the instructor (scoring will be done using a five-point Likert scale, examples at the end of this document):

Does the instructor inform the students of the “Learning Goal” of the lecture? How the lecture fits within the goals of the course?

Does the instructor review prior content to place the current lecture into context?

Are the PowerPoint slides appropriate and engaging? Do they support the message the instructor is trying to communicate in the classroom?

Does the instructor effectively use technology in support of their teaching goals?

Does the instructor interact with students during the lecture?

Does the instructor use any additional interactive exercises (group interaction, polling technology to test learning, etc.)?

Does the instructor demonstrate command of the classroom and the subject matter?

Evaluator:

CET Faculty Fellow Professor Elizabeth Zelinski is in charge of implementing peer evaluation at the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology. Outcomes from peer evaluation will be reported in written form and with discussion to the Dean's Office of the Leonard Davis School. The Dean's Office will then report the outcomes of the analysis and their interpretation to the faculty member. The peer evaluator will score the peer review session using a table like the one provided below and they will use open-ended comments in their evaluation as well.