

**PROGRAM GOALS AND BENEFITS**

The Certificate of Graduate Study in Gerontology program is designed to meet the educational needs of a variety of students who wish to pursue a career in the field of aging. Students who successfully complete the program develop/strengthen their knowledge and skills in a number of areas, to include:

- Psychological aspects of aging in the context of human development.
- Aging in a political and economic context.
- Biological and physiological aspects of aging.
- Provision of services to older adults in a variety of settings.
- Communication with older persons.
- Public policy and administration of programs for older adults.

By acquiring the certificate, students can greatly enhance their career opportunities and options. Students come from a variety of backgrounds, including social work, public health, public administration, and business and marketing, and they use their learning to focus on the rapidly growing area of gerontology.

**APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

- Application Fee
- Bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution
- Résumé
- Letters of Recommendation
- All official post-secondary transcripts
- GRE scores (if applicable)
- TOEFL or IELTS (international applicants whose native language is not English)
- Statement of the applicant’s past experience, including purpose for seeking this certificate and career goals

Students currently enrolled in other graduate programs at USC may submit concurrent enrollment form. There is a reduced fee for this type of application.

Students may apply to transfer up to 9 credits for graduate work completed in another program. Transfer credits must be reviewed and approved by certificate director.

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**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

**College of Social Work**

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The University of South Carolina is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer.
A. The Core Curriculum (4 courses required)

1. SOWK 771/PSYC 700 (3-credit hours):
   Psychosocial Approaches to Gerontology—An introduction to gerontology from the fields of demography, psychology, sociology, social welfare, and economics.

2. SOWK 772 (3-credit hours): Programs and Services for Older Adults—An examination of the policy/planning issues relating to older adults, including current trends in services, base for social service development, and evaluation of services for older adults.

3. MEDI 700 (3-credit hours): Health Aspects of Aging—An overview of the bio-physiological processes that occur during aging and their health implications, especially as they relate to medical/clinical care.

4. Practicum/Field Instruction or Supervised Research (3-credit hours): Students can meet the 4th requirement through a departmentally approved residency, field instruction, or supervised research course. Social work students may apply one semester of field instruction in an approved aging agency setting to meet the requirement. Health administration students may complete the practicum through a public health residency. The practicum requirement for students in all disciplines must be jointly approved by the student’s academic advisor and the program’s graduate director.

B. Elective Courses (3 courses selected)

Students will complete 9-credit hours of elective course work. Generally, elective courses are semester-long, 1 to 3 credit-hour courses at the 700 level or above. However, under special circumstances, 1 of the 3 elective courses may be taken (a) at the 500 or 600 level, (b) as an independent study, or (c) outside the University of South Carolina. Students should refer to the Certificate of Graduate Study in Gerontology manual for more details.

When choosing their elective courses, students must take into consideration any specific regulations of the academic department, college, or school of record in which their degree originates. To ensure that students choose elective courses that satisfy the certificate requirements, they are strongly encouraged to discuss their choices with and seek prior approval from the program director.

Students are also encouraged to choose elective courses carefully with their respective advisors in relation to specific career goals.

Note: All courses may not be offered each semester. Students should always contact the program director in writing, by phone, or by e-mail to discuss any course choices.