

# AGHE 4T 1a Brief

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## APPROACHES TO ENGAGEMENT AND EVALUATION

Majeski, R. A., & Stover, M. (2018). [Contemplative pedagogy in hybrid and asynchronous online undergraduate aging services/gerontology courses](#). *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 39(1), 75–85.

The rapid aging of the U.S. population has brought with it the challenge of preparing effective leaders in aging services/policy. These leaders need a fresh cognitive and empathic understanding of the complex needs of older adults and those who work with them. With its experiential and integrative approach, contemplative pedagogies are ideally suited for preparing aging services leaders. Contemplative pedagogies help learners interact with course material in ways that deeply engage students, disrupt habitual ways of thinking, and encourage innovative approaches to aging services/policy issues. Given the increasing popularity of hybrid and online courses, contemplative pedagogies could enhance learners' satisfaction with and the quality of learning in these courses. This article provides a description of contemplative pedagogies and embodied cognition research and theory as a theoretical framework for them. The article discusses the ways in that contemplative pedagogies have been incorporated in two undergraduate management of aging services courses. Student responses to the use of contemplative pedagogies and directions for future research are presented.

Mehrotra, C. M., & Fried, S. B. (2002). [Assessment of an online course on adult development, aging, and diversity](#). *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 23(1), 49–57.

We describe a project evaluating the academic effectiveness of an online psychology course entitled 'Adult Development, Aging, and Diversity.'

Course evaluation was conducted by monitoring students' participation in group discussions, examining the quality of their work on written assignments, tracking their retention and engagement in the course, and assessing their performance on two exams. In addition, we used two online surveys to obtain students' feedback regarding the course, what they learned, and how it affected them. Preliminary findings include: (a) study questions and case studies are highly effective in engaging students in active learning; (b) students appreciate the convenience and flexibility of the course; (c) students' continuing participation in active learning promotes high rates of course completion; and (d) students learn not only about aging and diversity, but also about their families and themselves.

## ENGAGING STUDENTS IN RESEARCH

Silverstein, N. M., Pitheckoff, N., & Dugan, E. (2019). [Introducing students to healthy aging within their own communities: An online applied research experience](#). *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 1–13. Online first.

Engaging gerontology students in research that hits "close-to-home" can have lasting benefits for them and their communities both professionally and personally. Since 2016, cohorts of undergraduate/certificate students in an online applied research in aging course have explored healthy aging in their Massachusetts' (MA) communities. The students utilized both primary and secondary data sources. First, they extracted data from the 2014–2015 healthy aging data report (HADR) community profiles of 367 MA communities. Then they conducted in-person interviews with a diverse set of stakeholders in their respective communities. The interviews were designed to examine the profiles, identify challenges and/or strengths, and highlight community resources and intervention strategies. Over three academic semesters, a total of 67 interviews were conducted in 13 communities. The top three health indicators of concern raised by the stakeholders, that the students learned about, were the high rates of Alzheimer's disease or related dementias, congestive heart failure, and diabetes. Other non-health related challenges were transportation, affordable housing, wellness/prevention, and the built environment. The student reflections on their research experience highlight the value of providing opportunities to collect and analyze data, to learn about a substantive issue, and the needs of local older adults.

O'Connor, M. L., Fuller-Iglesias, H., Bishop, A. J., Doll, G., Killian, T., Margrett, J., & Pearson-Scott, J. (2016). **Engaging graduate-level distance learners in research: A collaborative investigation of rural aging.** *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 37(1), 29–42.

Online educational programs pose challenges to nonresidential graduate students for whom research is a key professional development experience. In this article, the authors share their pedagogical approach to engaging graduate-level online distance learners in research. Five students enrolled in an online master's degree program participated in a directed research course designed to facilitate a semester-long, collaborative, hands-on research experience in gerontology. As such, students recruited participants and conducted phone interviews for a multisite study examining aging in place in rural areas. Several strategies were used to facilitate student engagement and learning, including: regular meetings with faculty mentors, creation of a research team across institutions, interactive training, and technological tools to aid in communication. The authors discuss the process of implementing the project, challenges that arose, strategies for dealing with these issues, and a pedagogical framework that could be used to guide future endeavors of this type.

### ENGAGING STUDENTS IN GERIATRIC TRAINING

Garside, M. J., Fisher, J. M., Blundell, A. G., & Gordon, A. L. (2018). **The development and evaluation of mini-GEMs – short, focused, online e-learning videos in geriatric medicine.** *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 39(2), 132–143.

Mini Geriatric E-Learning Modules (Mini-GEMs) are short, focused, e-learning videos on geriatric medicine topics, hosted on YouTube, which are targeted at junior doctors working with older people. This study aimed to explore how these resources are accessed and used. The authors analyzed the viewing data from 22 videos published over the first 18 months of the Mini-GEM project. We conducted a focus group of U.K. junior doctors considering their experiences with Mini-GEMs. The Mini-GEMs were viewed 10,291 times over 18 months, equating to 38,435 minutes of total viewing time. The average viewing time for each video was 3.85 minutes. Learners valued the brevity and focused nature of the Mini-GEMs and reported that they watched them in a variety of settings to supplement clinical experiences and consolidate learning. Watching the videos led to an increase in self-reported confidence in managing older patients. Mini-GEMs can effectively disseminate clinical teaching material to a wide audience. The videos are valued by junior doctors due to their accessibility and ease of use.

Lunsford, B., & Posey, L. (2018). **Geriatric education utilizing a palliative care framework.** *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 39(2), 183–192.

The dramatic growth of persons older than age 65 and the increased incidence of multiple, chronic illness has resulted in the need for more comprehensive health care. Geriatrics and palliative care are medical specialties pertinent to individuals who are elderly, yet neither completely addresses the needs of older adults with chronic illness. Interprofessional faculty developed Geriatric Education Utilizing a Palliative Care Framework (GEPaC) to teach an integrated approach to care. Interactive online modules use a variety of instructional methods, including case-based interactive questions, audio-visual presentations, reflective questions, and scenario-based tests. Modules are designed for online education and/or traditional classroom and have been approved for Continuing Medical Education. Pre- and posttest scores showed significant improvements in knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Participants were highly satisfied with the coursework's relevance and usefulness for their practice and believed that GEPaC prepared them to address the needs of older adults for disease and symptom management, communicating goals of care, and supportive/compassionate care.

Mendoza De La Garza, M., Tieu, C., , D., Lowe, K., & Tung, E. (2008). **Evaluation of the impact of a senior mentor program on medical students' geriatric knowledge and attitudes toward older adults.** *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*. 39(3):316-325.

Medical schools throughout the country struggle with how best to train students to provide quality, patient-centered care to the burgeoning population of older adults. The Senior Sages Program (SSP) is a longitudinal Senior Mentor Program (SMP) that offers students the opportunity to learn about the aging process and core geriatric medicine concepts through the eyes of an aging expert: their Senior Sage. The SSP marries a robust electronic curriculum with an SMP and online discussion board. The aim of this program evaluation was to measure the impact on students' geriatric knowledge and attitudes toward older adults. This asynchronously facilitated course improved students' geriatric knowledge and facilitated stability of positive attitudes toward older adults. The majority of students felt that their SSP interactions were meaningful and valuable to their clinical development. The combination of SMP and electronic curricula offer a feasible, practical way to bridge the geriatric training chasm.

## ENGAGING OLDER LEARNERS

Carcavilla, N., Meilán, J. J. G., Llorente, T. E., Martínez-Nicolás, I., & Tamayo-Mortera, O. (2019). **The impact of international videoconferencing among older adults and secondary students.** *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 1–15. Online first.

This study explores young adults' emotional affect and attitudes towards ageing, as well as older adults' emotional affect and self-esteem following participation in the intergenerational videoconferencing programme Smile Connect (SC). The sample consisted of 94 participants (46 older Spanish adults living in a care home in Spain and 48 young Italian adults -secondary students- learning Spanish at school in Italy). Each age group was divided into an intervention and control group. SC consists of twelve 30-minute chat sessions conducted via Skype between the target groups over six weeks. Pre and post evaluations were made to assess the affect level in both groups, self-esteem among older people, and the level of negative stereotypes about ageing among young adults. At the end of the SC, the intervention group of older adults recorded significantly improved scores in self-esteem compared to the control group. Young adults recorded a reduction in their negative stereotypes about old age after taking part in the SC programme compared to those who did not. These findings suggest that involvement in the SC programme helps to improve the emotional affect of older adults living in care homes, as well as change the negative stereotypes about ageing among young adults.

Hansen, R. J., Talmage, C. A., Thaxton, S. P., & Knopf, R. C. (2019). **Enhancing older adult access to lifelong learning institutes through technology-based instruction: A brief report.** *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 1–10. Online first.

The number of lifelong learning institutes serving older adults in the U.S. has increased in the last few decades. To date, these institutes have functioned primarily in traditional, in-person classroom, and seminar formats; however, technology-enhanced methods may help provide greater access to high-quality lifelong learning experiences. This research note reports the results of a cross-institutional survey of Osher Lifelong Learning Network participants. The survey participants' high levels of computer utilization and experience with modern distance education capabilities opens the possibility that Technology-Based Instruction (TBI) can augment or supplement in-person lifelong learning experiences. Specifically, TBI may be effective in expanding access for older adults who have mobility or other health limitations, as well as those who live far from the location of any such program. Example approaches are suggested for developing blended, hybrid in-person, and online lifelong learning environments, which may offer enriching intellectual engagement and meaningful socialization.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING ABOUT AGEISM

Barrett, A. E., & Pai, M. (2008). **Sketches in cyberspace: Using student drawings of elders in an online social gerontology course.** *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 29(1), 84–103.

Much of the literature on teaching gerontology derives from experiences in face-to-face settings. There is limited discussion of either the applicability of teaching techniques drawn from the traditional setting to the online environment or the development of novel strategies to engage distance students of aging. We developed and assessed an exercise designed to stimulate an online, asynchronous discussion of ageism in a Web-based social gerontology course. The exercise required students to analyze patterns found in sketches of elders drawn by themselves and their peers. The activity, which was favorably evaluated by our students, provided a springboard for discussion of the origins and consequences of ageism, as well as issues at the intersection of gender and age inequality.

## ENGAGING STUDENTS USING VISUAL ARTS

Eaton, J. (2016). **Aging and the arts online: Lessons learned from course development and implementation.** *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 37(3), 273–291.

With the recent move toward competency-based gerontology education, incorporating humanities and arts will be necessary for accreditation. This article describes the pedagogical approaches and lessons learned during 5 years of development and implementation of an asynchronous online course in Aging and the Arts. Fifty graduate and undergraduate students participated in the course over five semesters. Discipline diversity increased subsequent to designation as a fine arts general education course. Students expressed appreciation for multimedia resources, an initial fear of creating a wiki, and online redundancy was reduced through increased community engagement that also augmented application in real-world settings. The visual nature of arts and aging lends itself to a compelling and interactive online course experience that can be adapted to synchronous, hybrid, and face-to-face formats. Opportunities for community engaged learning will increase as art programs for older adults become more prevalent.

**GERONTOLOGY AND GERIATRICS EDUCATION SPECIAL ISSUE:  
DISTANCE EDUCATION AND GERONTOLOGY**  
*Foundational Perspectives on the Potential for Distance Learning*

- Carl L. Renold PhD & Alexander Bucur MS (2000) Introduction: Distance Education and Gerontology, *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 20:4, 3-5, DOI: [10.1300/J021v20n04\\_02](https://doi.org/10.1300/J021v20n04_02)
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