Comprehensive Program Review
Gerontology Institute
Georgia State University
November 2021

The following programs are critical to the institutional mission and thus MEET the institution's criteria for retention.

Undergraduate Programs
At present, undergraduates interested in learning about aging and older adults and enrolling in gerontology, have two program options (1) the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies (B.I.S.) in Gerontology or (2) an Undergraduate Certificate.

The BIS major requires 27-29-credit hours of undergraduate coursework in Gerontology-related courses that are designed to draw on a variety of disciplines and expose students to the current issues, knowledge, theories and research about the aging process, older people, and the complex needs of our rapidly aging and increasingly diverse society. Students interested in pursuing the BIS in Gerontology major can select either the Behavioral and Social Sciences or Health and Health Services Allied Field allowing students to tailor their gerontology-based undergraduate degree to meet their career and education goals.

The Undergraduate Certificate in Gerontology prepares students for advanced study in Gerontology and for beginning careers in the aging field. The certificate curriculum requires 18-credit hours of coursework that provides basic knowledge of biological, psychological, and sociological aspects of aging; health care and social service programs available to older adults; and contemporary aging policy issues. The certificate program offers students an opportunity to combine their major field of study with an emphasis in Gerontology and is available to any student enrolled in any undergraduate degree program in the university.

Credit hours for Gerontology are difficult to interpret because most of our faculty teach cross-listed class which results in a significant discrepancy between the credit hours per department faculty and credit hours by prefix. The total credit hours for undergraduate core courses by full-time faculty were 126 (Fall 2017), 276 (Fall 2018), and 180 hours (Fall 2019). During Fall 2019, part-time instructors taught 105 credit hours for undergraduate core courses. The total credit hours for undergraduate upper courses by full-time faculty were 352.5 (Fall 2017), 369 (Fall 2018) and 378 (Fall 2019). The credit hours by part-time instructors in undergraduate upper courses were 178.5 (Fall 2017), 96 (Fall 2018), and 216 (Fall 2019). Finally, graduate teaching assistants in undergraduate upper-division courses taught 69 credit hours (Fall 2019). Online- and hybrid-courses represent an important and necessary area of growth. During the reporting period, Gerontology faculty had ongoing conversations about such instruction methods and we began to offer "Introduction to Gerontology" online which is listed in the core curriculum. In Spring 2019, we also offered "Special Topics in Gerontology: Reframing Aging the Global Economy" to both graduate and undergraduate students as an online course. Enrollments in entirely online courses were: 42 (Fall 2017), 58 (Fall 2018), and 60 (Fall 2019). New undergraduate enrollment data showed 5 new enrollees over the reporting period.

Goal 2 with three objectives and six action steps are oriented toward growing and improving the undergraduate programs.

Graduate Programs

The Gerontology Institute offers a Graduate Certificate and a Master of Arts (MA). The Graduate Certificate is designed for students preparing for careers in the aging field and professionals already working in areas such as health care, social services, recreation and leisure, government, and business. It involves an 18-semester-hour graduate curriculum and may be earned concurrently with a graduate degree or independently by those who hold a bachelor's or advanced degree. The MA program is designed for students preparing for leadership positions in the field of aging and those interested in becoming gerontological researchers and scholars. Our 36 semester-hour program has two different concentrations: Administration and Research. The *Administration concentration* prepares students to work in aging services or other professions addressing the needs of older adults. The *Research concentration* prepares students to enter doctoral programs in gerontology, sociology, psychology, policy studies, family studies, or related fields and for beginning careers with organizations engaged in aging research. Students in both concentrations receive key gerontological knowledge tailored to their professional goals.

Credit hours for Gerontology are difficult to interpret because most of our faculty teach cross-listed class, which results in a significant discrepancy between the credit hours per department faculty and credit hours by prefix. Our best assessment indicates that credit-hour production increased during the reporting period for the MA program: 304 (Fall 2017), 385 (Fall 2018), 403 (Fall 2019). For the Graduate Certificate program, credit hours were reported as 30 (Fall 2017), 24 (Fall 2018) and 12 (Fall 2019). The Gerontology Institute recently experienced an increase in the number of graduate certificate students that begin the certificate program, do well, and transfer to the MA program, which may partially explain the opposing credit-hour trends. Overall, we see steady increases in credit-hour production in the graduate program over the reporting period.

Enrollment increased over the reporting period for the MA students and is roughly equal across the research and administration concentration. Forty-eight students enrolled over the reporting period as compared to 40 in the previous three years. Enrollment for our graduate certificate for the reporting period was 12 new enrollees. We conferred a total of 16 Graduate Certificates during this reporting period. We also conferred 33 MA degrees. This number is significantly larger than the cumulative total for the last reporting period (n=14) – roughly double. Retention and graduation rates are generally higher than College of Arts and Sciences averages for graduate students. For example, following the cohort that began Fall 2017, 93% were retained in year 1 (Fall 2018) and 60% graduated by year 2 (Fall 2019). 100% of those not graduating were retained in year 2 (Fall 2019).

Goal 3 with four objectives and seven action steps are oriented toward maintaining and strengthening the graduate programs.

Provost/VPAA Signature and Date_____

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Provost/VPAA's Designee Signature and Date_*Michael Galchinsky*_____11/10/2021_____

Appendix: 2021 Gerontology Institute APR Action Plan
Georgia State University

Major Findings of the 2020 APR Review:

The Gerontology Institute is a vibrant unit that makes important contributions to Georgia State University (GSU) and the field of Gerontology across the domains of teaching, research and service. The Gerontology Institute is a small unit with a big impact. As of Fall 2021, we have six full-time faculty including two Professors, two Associate Professors, one Assistant Professor and one full-time and one half-time Lecturer within the Gerontology Institute. In terms of teaching, we have a strong, diverse and well-regarded Master of Arts program with two tracks – administration and research. The Gerontology Institute has a relatively new Bachelor's of Interdisciplinary Studies with a Concentration in Gerontology in addition to our traditional undergraduate certificate. Gerontology Institute faculty have a national and international reputation for high quality research. Our faculty have funding from a variety of federal, state and foundation sources and have made a name for the Institute in our four major areas of research: 1) Housing and Formal Long-Term Care, 2) Social Relationships, Families and Caregiving, 3) Diversity and Aging, and 4) Health and Aging. Gerontology faculty strive to live up to the Institute tagline, *Leading the Way in an Aging Society*. Gerontology Institute faculty serve in leadership roles in community, state, regional, national, and international organizations and collaboratives. We pride ourselves on our exceptionally collegial departmental climate and work hard to amplify the voices of both students and those we study.

According to the external review team, the Gerontology Institute's identity as a small Institute making a big impact is well deserved. Strengths of the Gerontology Institute include: a strong faculty, capable leadership, growing and well-funded graduate student body, strong affiliate faculty, and an exceptional level of externally funded research. The Gerontology Institute also has challenges which include: slowly growing undergraduate enrollment, separated office spaces and meeting spaces in need of updates, lack of adequate support for pre and post award aspects of research and a lack of online certificate programs.

Action Plan for the Coming Cycle
This action plan uses clear targets to assess success at the end of every academic year, while leaving some of the annual SMART goal setting to the committees in charge of the goals. We feel that this strategy allows for a continuous quality improvement mindset and provides committees with autonomy at the implementation level to plan for and react to barriers and facilitators that they encounter in planning, assessment and data gathering. See appendix for timeline. At the end of the academic year (at the start of the Fall semester), targets will be systematically assessed.

Goal 1 - Strengthen the Research Base
Objective 1.a: Create, resource and maintain individual mentoring plans for all core faculty. TARGET: All core faculty will have draft mentoring plans by the end of Year 1, which will be updated yearly for peer review and input.

Action step 1.a.1: The Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) will resource all core faculty with information and support to create their own mentoring plans (e.g. information sharing with internal experts, invited brown-bags, peer mentoring resources, faculty discussions and support). (YEARS 1-6)

Objective 1.b: Support and retain core faculty. TARGET: All core faculty receive additional professional development funds*

Action Step 1.b.1: The FEC will provide additional professional development funds to all core faculty to support development and dissemination of aging-related research projects. (YEARS 1-6)

Objective 1.c: Support and retain engaged affiliate faculty. TARGET: Identify 5 affiliate faculty to receive additional professional development funds to support aging-related research or dissemination*

Action Step 1.c.1: The FEC will set up a process to provide additional professional development funds to up to 5 affiliate faculty to support development and dissemination of aging-related research projects. (YEARS 1-6)

*Funds will come from department accumulated indirect monies as available based on the discretion of the director.

Goal 2 - Enhance Undergraduate Gerontology Experience
Objective 2.a: Increase numbers of undergraduate students declaring the BIS in Gerontology as their major program of study. TARGET: 7-10 additional undergraduates enrolling each academic year

Action step 2.a.1: The Undergraduate Committee (UC) will create strategies to market the BIS program to undergraduate students. For example, the UC will provide recruitment information to instructors of Gerontology courses, Honors College, signature experience courses, signature experience related activities as well as collaborate with the Center for the Advancement of Students and Alumni, and Black Student Achievement to engage undergraduates.

Objective 2.b: Increase opportunities and supportive structures for diverse undergraduates to participate in undergraduate research events. TARGET: 3-5 undergraduates will be involved in presenting, writing or conducting research with core or affiliate faculty doing aging-related research each academic year.

Action step 2.b.1: The UC will create strategies to extend and encourage research opportunities to undergraduate students participating in the following: Gerontology courses, Honors College, signature experience courses, signature experience related activities, Center for the Advancement of Students and Alumni,and Black Student Achievement. Example: Develop and disseminate a resource aimed at prospective undergraduate gerontology students that describes Gerontology Institute and Affiliate Faculty research projects, intern responsibilities, and skills learned.

Action step 2.b.2: The UC will document the number and diversity of undergraduate students involved in research annually, including but not limited to GSU events.

Action Step 2.b.3: The UC will develop an application process to provide resources* to support undergraduate students to present at university, state, regional and/or national gerontology conferences as appropriate.

Objective 2.c: Support student learning of key competencies by systematically including Academy of Gerontology in Higher Education competencies harmonized with NACE's college-to-career competencies into the core coursework of the BIS program.

Action step 2.c.1: The UC will revise student learning objectives in one or two courses to emphasize awareness of career competencies, connection of those competencies to the work of the major and demonstration of their proficiency in those identified transferable skills. (YEAR 1, 3, 5).

Action step 2.c.2: The UC will revise student learning objectives in one or two courses to emphasize diversity, inclusion, and cultural competency in ways that support students to recognize and appreciate the value of diversity in leadership and aging. (YEAR 2, 4, 6).

*Funds will come from department accumulated indirect monies as available based on the discretion of the director.

Goal 3 - Continue the Strong Graduate Program
Objective 3.a: Continue incremental growth in graduate program. TARGET: Enroll 15-20 MA students per academic year.

Action step 3.a.1: The Graduate Committee (GC) will continue to employ strategies that increase recruitment of students from key groups. For example, we will continue outreach to social science or health related undergraduate programs in the state of Georgia, to aging services professionals who could benefit

from a master's degree and use our international alumni network to promote chains of MA students globally. (YEARS 1-6).

Objective 3.b: Maintain reduced time to degree. TARGET: 80% of MA students graduate within two academic years (e.g. six semesters including summers)

Action step 3.b.1: The GC will continue to document progress to degree and intervene (e.g. graduate chair counseling) for students identified as at-risk for longer tenure that is not supportive of student employment or graduate education goals.

Objective 3.c: Support student learning of key competencies by systematically including Academy of Gerontology in Higher Education competencies into the core coursework of the MA program.

Action step 3.c.1: The GC will revise student learning objectives in one or two courses to emphasize ethics training and demonstration of their proficiency in those identified transferable skills. (YEAR 1, 3, 5).

Action step 3.c.2: The GC will revise student learning objectives in one or two courses to emphasize diversity, inclusion, and cultural competency in ways that support students to recognize and appreciate the value of diversity in leadership and aging. (YEAR 2, 4, 6).

Objective 3.d: Create an online graduate certificate. TARGET: Launch online graduate certificate in 2024

Action step 3.d.1: The GC will propose the creation of an online graduate certificate.(YEAR 1)

Action step 3.d.2: The GC will develop at least one gerontology class central to the certificate to deliver online (YEAR 2)*.

Action step 3.d.3: The Gerontology Institute will offer the new course and at least one other online graduate gerontology course each year (YEAR 3, 4, 5).

Goal 4 – Improve Strategic Planning

Objective 4.a: Integrate commitment to diversity and inclusion (see statement Spring 2020) through elaboration of both student-led and faculty-led strategies. TARGET: Document and assess one strategy per year for impact

Action step 4.a.1: The FEC, with the support of the core faculty, will identify one to two strategies per year to put into place to support and empower Black and Brown students. For example, the Institute will continue to engage students through listening sessions, student organizations and events with diversity, equity and inclusion themes to inform strategies.

Objective 4.b: Strengthen affiliate faculty engagement in service of the Institute's mission. TARGET: Document and assess at least one strategy per year for impact

Action step 4.b.1: The FEC, with the support of the core faculty, will identify one to two strategies per year to highlight, document and engage affiliate faculty in service of the Institute's research, education and service mission. For example, the FEC could use an online platform to support harvesting of affiliate impact (e.g. google scholar, research gate, LinkedIn, other GSU-sponsored product) or convene an affiliate faculty working group to identify strategies to support increases to affiliate engagement in research, teaching and service with the Institute.

*Resources needed for course development could include investment of summer money for core faculty or application for College resources for online course development and will be negotiated as feasible with the Director.

Timeline (AY 21-26)

	YEAR 1 (21)	YEAR 2 (22)	YEAR 3 (23)	YEAR 4 (24)	YEAR 5 (25)
GOAL 1 Objective 1.a	All core faculty will have mentoring plans	Mentoring plans will undergo peer review and be revised	Mentoring plans will undergo peer review and be revised	Mentoring plans will undergo peer review and be revised	Mentoring plans will undergo peer review and be revised
GOAL 1 Objective 1.b	All core faculty will apply for and receive additional professional development funds	All core faculty will apply for and receive additional professional development funds	All core faculty will apply for and receive additional professional development funds	All core faculty will apply for and receive additional professional development funds	All core faculty will apply for and receive additional professional development funds
GOAL 1 Objective 1.c	A process will be established for affiliate faculty to apply for PD funds. Up to five affiliate faculty will apply for and receive PD funds	Up to five affiliate faculty will apply for and receive PD funds	Up to five affiliate faculty will apply for and receive PD funds	Up to five affiliate faculty will apply for and receive PD funds	Up to five affiliate faculty will apply for and receive PD funds
GOAL 2 Objective 2.a	Enroll 7-10 undergraduates to BIS program	Enroll 7-10 undergraduates to BIS program	Enroll 7-10 undergraduates to BIS program	Enroll 7-10 undergraduates to BIS program	Enroll 7-10 undergraduates to BIS program
GOAL 2 Objective 2.b	Engage 3-5 undergraduates in GERO research	Engage 3-5 undergraduates in GERO research	Engage 3-5 undergraduates in GERO research	Engage 3-5 undergraduates in GERO research	Engage 3-5 undergraduates in GERO research
GOAL 2 Objective 2.c	Integrate college to career (C2C) competencies in 1-2 BIS courses	Integrate DEI competencies in 1-2 BIS courses	Integrate college to career (C2C) competencies in 1-2 BIS courses	Integrate DEI competencies in 1-2 BIS courses	Integrate college to career (C2C) competencies in 1-2 BIS courses
GOAL 3 Objective 3.a	Enroll 15-20 MA students	Enroll 15-20 MA students	Enroll 15-20 MA students	Enroll 15-20 MA students	Enroll 15-20 MA students
GOAL 3 Objective 3.b	80% of MA graduate students graduate within six semesters	80% of MA graduate students graduate within six semesters	80% of MA graduate students graduate within six semesters	80% of MA graduate students graduate within six semesters	80% of MA graduate students graduate within six semesters
GOAL 3 Objective 3.c	Integrate ethics competencies in 1-2 MA courses	Integrate DEI competencies in 1-2 MA courses	Integrate ethics competencies in 1-2 MA courses	Integrate DEI competencies in 1-2 MA courses	Integrate ethics competencies in 1-2 MA courses
GOAL 3 Objective 3.d	Design and propose online graduate certificate	Develop online class(es) to support online graduate certificate	Launch online class(es) in support of online graduate certificate (MA or cert electives)	Launch online graduate certificate and assess	Maintain online graduate certificate and assess
GOAL 4 Objective 4.a	Implement 1-2 strategies to address DEI (FEC discretion)	Implement 1-2 strategies to address DEI (FEC discretion)	Implement 1-2 strategies to address DEI (FEC discretion)	Implement 1-2 strategies to address DEI (FEC discretion)	Implement 1-2 strategies to address DEI (FEC discretion)
GOAL 4 Objective 4.b	Implement 1-2 strategies to highlight, document and engage affiliate faculty (FEC discretion)	Implement 1-2 strategies to highlight, document and engage affiliate faculty (FEC discretion)	Implement 1-2 strategies to highlight, document and engage affiliate faculty (FEC discretion)	Implement 1-2 strategies to highlight, document and engage affiliate faculty (FEC discretion)	Implement 1-2 strategies to highlight, document and engage affiliate faculty (FEC discretion)

Gerontology Institute Action Plan (AY2021 – AY 2026)

Signatures
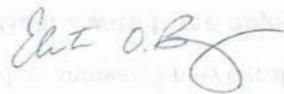
Elut O.B   8/27/21

Elisabeth O. Burgess, Director
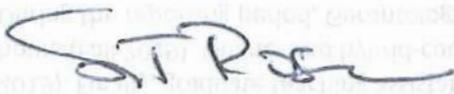
                                   8/27/21

Sara Rosen, Dean

                                   9/7/21

Wendy Hensel, Provost