SELF-STUDY REPORT:
THE GERONTOLOGY INSTITUTE
GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY
2010-2013

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The Gerontology Institute has developed into a vibrant program with strong research active faculty and a growing presence throughout Georgia State University (GSU). Although gerontology programs have existed at Georgia State since 1973, the scope and mission of gerontology shifted considerably in 2003-2004 with a change in status from a Center to an Institute (2003), the start of a new MA program in gerontology (2004), and a move to the College of Arts and Sciences. Over the past nine years, under the guidance from the College of Arts and Science, the Gerontology Institute has begun to function like a small department. Despite its size, the Institute offers rich experiences for undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty (both core and affiliate). These experiences are detailed in the following report, culminating in a list of goals and initiatives for the further advancement of gerontology at GSU.

Among the ten gerontology programs in the state of Georgia, GSU’s Gerontology Institute holds a unique position as the largest and most comprehensive. We offer the only terminal MA in Gerontology in the University System of Georgia (USG) and have more full-time faculty than the other programs (the University of Georgia comes close with three full time faculty, but their appointments are technically in Public Health, not in Gerontology). Other USG Institutions offer Certificates at the graduate-level (Georgia, Armstrong Atlantic, North Georgia) concentrations in Aging (Georgia Tech, Psychology; Georgia, MPH), undergraduate certificates (Armstrong Atlantic, North Georgia) or minors (Kennesaw State). In addition there are several programs that offer Continuing Education (CEU) programs (Kennesaw State, Clayton State). Two private institutions offer Gerontological training in Georgia. Brenau University offers an online Applied Masters in Gerontology, and Emory University has Geriatric and Gerontology training in their Medical School.

SECTION 1: THE GERONTOLOGY INSTITUTE AT PRESENT

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

The Gerontology Institute has a long history of educating undergraduate students and our gerontology courses are open to all GSU students. We are highly committed to growing our undergraduate program and enhancing the undergraduate experiences inside and outside of the classroom. Our goal is for the GSU Gerontology program to serve as a national model for undergraduate gerontology education. With very few undergraduate degree programs in gerontology nationwide, the GSU undergraduate program provides an important foundation in gerontology and is essential to preparing students for living and working in our rapidly aging society. At present, undergraduates interested in learning about aging and older adults and enrolling in gerontology, have two program options: (1) an Undergraduate Certificate or (2) the Interdisciplinary Minor.

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. The Interdisciplinary Minor requires 15 credit hours and is coordinated and administered through the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies program.

Quality of Undergraduate Students Attracted by the Gerontology Institute
Students attracted to the Gerontology Institute are generally highly motivated students who are eager to enhance their undergraduate experience by adding the Undergraduate Gerontology Certificate to their major. The institutional grade point averages for students who entered the program in fall of 2013 ranged from 4.30 – 2.18. Moreover, students are required to maintain a “C” or better in all gerontology courses in order to enroll in the internship class, which is required to complete the certificate. Although the Gerontology Institute Undergraduate Certificate students were not tracked at the college or university levels until fall 2012, it is important to note that the majority of the students matriculating through the program meet the aforementioned academic standards and successfully graduate from the program.

Scholarship Support for Undergraduates
The Gerontology Institute does not have its own undergraduate majors; yet we believe it is important to support, reward, and encourage undergraduates who enroll in our programs. The Institute has various forms of scholarship support and recognition mechanisms for undergraduate students. Two endowed scholarship funds are available for gerontology undergraduate student applicants: (a) Gerontology Alumni Endowed Scholarship; and (b) The Carole Rowe Jones and Waymon Jones Endowed Scholarship. The Alumni scholarship is given to high-achieving students. Meanwhile, the Jones Scholarship is given to an outstanding Gerontology Student with preference to applicants who are under-represented in the University System of Georgia. In the past three years (2 Alumni and 1 Jones), three undergraduate students received support from these funds. Each received $400.00 for a total of $1,200 in support. Undergraduate students also have the opportunity to apply for the Fulton County Gerontology Award. This scholarship provides financial support for students admitted or enrolled in one of the academic programs of the Gerontology Institute, who have an outstanding academic record and exemplify potential for leadership in the field of gerontology. Additionally, at our annual student recognition and awards luncheon we present the Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award, which is presented to an undergraduate gerontology student who distinguishes themselves thorough outstanding scholarship and significant community or university service and demonstrates potential for leadership in the field of aging. The aforementioned opportunities help to meet the strategic goal of the university by increasing the level of scholarship support for not only undergraduate students in general, but students who excel academically but face financial barriers. In addition, the Institute is in the progress of starting a new scholarship that will create an additional opportunity to provide support above and beyond the number of students currently receiving financial support.

Notably, in the past three years, we successfully graduated two “Rice Scholars,” who earned BAs in Sociology and Journalism with undergraduate certificates in Gerontology. One
undergraduate student—a Hospitality major—is currently supported by this scholarship and is earning an undergraduate certificate. The Rice Scholarship fund was established to encourage students in Early County, Georgia, to pursue a degree at Georgia State University and obtain a certificate in Gerontology so that they can return to Early County to assist the elderly population. The competitive scholarship offers a $10,000 annual stipend renewable for up to four years, an expense-paid study abroad experience, membership in a professional society, and a laptop and printer. This scholarship fund is no longer available, but we are actively working with the college development officers to develop additional undergraduate scholarship opportunities.

Gerontology Institute faculty and staff also promote other avenues of scholarship support for our undergraduate students, including for instance, encouraging our undergraduate students to apply for Georgia Gerontology Society (GGS) scholarships as well as other local, regional, and national funding sources. Two of the last three recipients of GGS’ Robert P. Wray Undergraduate Scholarship Award ($2,000 each, plus a one-year GGS membership) were enrolled in our undergraduate certificate program.

**Student Success and Satisfaction**

To date, no university level data has been collected in the traditional manner on success and satisfaction of the Gerontology Undergraduate Certificate student. Because we do not currently have an undergraduate degree program and only a few undergraduate students took advantage of our certificate program, we did not systematically assess learning outcomes for our students. In spring 2014, we will be designing and implementing a new procedure for assessing undergraduate learning outcomes. In May 2014, this procedure will be in place to evaluate any graduating undergraduate certificate students. Over the past three years the number of undergraduate students in our program has increased exponentially. We believe this growth is a result of adding an Undergraduate Director position at the Gerontology Institute in 2009. The role of the Undergraduate Director is to serve as a direct tie between the department, undergraduate students, and College of Arts and Sciences. Additionally, the Undergraduate Director is responsible for spearheading recruitment, admitting and enrolling quality students to the program, and meeting and advising students to foster retention. Moreover, the Undergraduate Director works closely with the Director and other Gerontology faculty to continually evaluate the program in effort to provide our students with a program of the highest quality. Due to the creation of this position and the effort put forth by the past Undergraduate Director, Dr. Candace Kemp, we have experienced improvements in recruitment, retention, and student success.

In the past three years, the Gerontology Institute has awarded 19 undergraduate certificates. One student earned a minor in Gerontology. Of these students, four are currently enrolled in graduate degree programs and another three students are investigating graduate school and have plans to apply. Within the last three years, 33% of our undergraduate certificate graduates are employed in non-profit or community organizations and 89% report being satisfied with their Undergraduate Certificate. Furthermore, we can provide anecdotal evidence of students’ success. In one case, James Moorhead, a recent undergraduate certificate student, completed an internship at Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE) Atlanta. SAGE Atlanta is a program of The Health Initiative and one of the 27 nationwide affiliates of SAGENet. As part of his internship, he coordinated services and programming for LGBT older adults with the focus of increasing levels of both socialization and physical activity. His internship developed into paid employment.
as a Program Assistant with the organization. James’ experience is but one example of many, demonstrating that our undergraduate students have the opportunity to become leaders and have successful career trajectories.

**Undergraduate Advisement.**

Gerontology Undergraduate Students receive advisement in a variety of ways at Georgia State University. Students receive advisement from the University Advisement Center (UAC) which consists of over 60 academic advisors who represent at least one of each undergraduate major. In addition, there are advisors who specifically focus on helping students transition from one major to the next when desired and/or necessary. The UAC serves freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. Seniors for all majors are served both in the Gerontology Institute and the Office of Academic Assistance in the College of their major. There is a designated advisor for Gerontology within the Office of Academic Assistance who is aware of our academic programs and requirements.

Until October 2012, the Gerontology Institute employed a full-time staff person to act as our Student Affairs Coordinator. An important component of this position was advising students and helping them plan their program, monitoring their progress, and performing administrative tasks to support student progress and graduation. With the elimination of position, the responsibility for advising students and performing related administrative duties has fallen to Gerontology faculty members, most specifically, the current and past Directors of Undergraduate Studies, Drs. Chivon Mingo and Kemp, respectively. Once students have shown interest or are enrolled in the program, the students report being satisfied with the ability to speak with the Undergraduate Director on a regular basis as they map out their courses for the Undergraduate Certificate Program.

**Ethnic and Gender Diversity.**

No undergraduate enrollment data are collected by GSU concerning the ethnic and gender diversity of our undergraduate students. However, we believe the undergraduate population represents the ethnic diversity of the university at large. Gerontology traditionally attracts more students who are female and older than traditional students. It is imperative that we continue recruitment efforts that will allow for sustained student diversity. Therefore, we plan to continue fostering the growth of racial and ethnic diversity in our student body. Moreover, we also would like to increase the number of male students in the Undergraduate Gerontology Certificate Program. Focusing efforts on recruiting, male, minority, and international students will ultimately enhance the experience of our program.

**Student Surveys.**

Based on the findings from the Undergraduate Alumni Survey, students are very satisfied with the Undergraduate Certificate. Students found that every class offered something unique and valuable. Moreover students attributed their success and satisfaction to the influence of and interaction with the faculty (e.g., one-on-one mentoring). The classes helped students to clearly define their educational and career goals. Over half of the students reported that the program contributed to quality of life, provided skills needed to resolve issues faced professionally, and helped meet educational goals (i.e., 56%, 67%, 67%; respectively). Findings also indicate that the skills obtained in the Certificate program are useful for the job market. All of the respondents reported that the certain skills (i.e., critical thinking, ability to analyze problems from a variety of
perspectives, ability to work with diverse populations, communication skills) learned in the Certificate Program have been useful on their current job. Importantly, greater than 50% of the students reported not only using the aforementioned skills on their resume, but also listing the skills on their resume and discussing them in the job interview. Such findings indicate that the skills obtained while matriculating through the undergraduate certificate program help students prepare for and secure a job in the field of aging. Approximately 67% of students report being able to 1) direct education or practice with older adults, 2) conduct aging-related research or evaluation, 3) implement or manage aging-related programs and services, and 4) offer education on aging-related topics in their current job directly as a result of the gerontological knowledge and skills learned through the Undergraduate Certificate Program. Our students see the Gerontology Institute as a valuable resource even post-graduation. Three-fourths of the students report staying connected via the email listserv, faculty, other students, and making visits to campus. It is our goal to continue to provide this type of environment as our students graduate and take on local, regional, and national level positions in the area of aging.

**Curriculum Quality, Courses, and Requirements.**

See Appendix A Table 1 for a full list of course offerings by fiscal year and course level. See Table 2 for a detailed account of our undergraduate classes. In the Appendix G you will find one syllabus from each of our courses. The certificate program was revised in 2012 in order to allow for more flexibility in curriculum. The original and revised curriculum can be found in Appendix E.

**Contributions to the Core Curriculum/General Education Outcomes.**

At present the Gerontology Institute does not offer a Bachelor’s degree and does not have courses within the core curriculum. In light of the demographic shift to an aging society, however, we believe it is important to provide gerontological education to all GSU students. As a result, we created “Introduction to Gerontology” (Gerontology 2000) and began offering this new course in the fall of 2012. We are actively seeking to connect this course to GSU’s and University System of Georgia’s learning goals.

**Signature Experiences.**

In keeping with Goal 1, Initiative 3 of the University Strategic Plan, the Gerontology Institute has a number of opportunities for students to apply and extend their knowledge beyond what is typically offered by conventional curriculums. Below you will find examples of ways the Institute has consistently made efforts to provide signature experiences for matriculating students.

**Internships.**

Internships are an integral part of Gerontology undergraduate certificate students’ educational experiences and are required for the program. During the review period, 22 undergraduate students enrolled in and successfully completed the internship course. Enrollments increased across the review period as shown in Table 3. Our internship, in many ways, mimics the University’s research fellows and professional fellows program outlined in the strategic plan. The internship allows undergraduates the opportunity to observe and interact with professionals engaged in day-to-day activities and gain a level of experience within the aging field that ordinarily would not be available to them. In recent years, our undergraduate students have
interned with: the Alzheimer’s Association, the Emma I. Darnell Geriatric Center (Grady Memorial Hospital); SAGE Atlanta (Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders); the Division of Aging Services, as well as various hospice agencies and long-term care settings, including nursing homes, personal care homes, and continuing care retirement communities.

Many internship opportunities have turned into paid employment. As a result our alumni become engaged in the field of aging on various levels (e.g., academic, service, policy). This engagement further allows for growth in our internship sites. Many alumni are now serving as internship site directors and providing a variety of rewarding opportunities for students matriculating through the program.

Study abroad.
The university’s International Fellows Program for Studying Abroad offers students an opportunity to learn and engage from a global perspective. Dr. Heying Jenny Zhan, an affiliate faculty member and former Graduate Director, created a study abroad to introduce population aging in global perspectives, focusing on China and the United States. Dr. Zhan integrated information on aging and social policies in these two countries; students attended a week of class on the traditional GSU campus and then spent two weeks in China, specifically, Beijing, Shanghai, and Changsha. Students earned six semester hours of course credit.

Urban service learning programs.
Our students are actively engaged in urban service learning programs through our internship opportunities. Being in a large metro area, our students put their gerontological expertise to use by working in areas such as public policy, non-profit fundraising, and caregiving services.

Programs within the GSU Context
The Interdisciplinary minor in Gerontology is comprised of 15 credit hours of Gerontology courses taught by our core and affiliate faculty. The minor is administered through the College of Arts and Sciences’ Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies Program. Also, with the exception of “Introduction to Gerontology” (GERO 2000), “Special Topics in Gerontology” (GERO 4700), “Directed Readings in Gerontology” (GERO 4800), and “Gerontology Internship” (GERO 4910), all gerontology undergraduate courses are cross-listed with other departments, including Communication, Psychology, School of Nursing and Health Professions, African American Studies, Social Work, and Sociology (See Table 2).

GRADUATE PROGRAMS
The Gerontology Institute offers a Graduate Certificate and a Master of Arts. These programs support the second goal of GSU’s Strategic Plan: “Significantly strengthen and grow the base of distinctive graduate and professional programs that assure development of the next generation of researchers and societal leaders.” Both programs are interdisciplinary and provide in-depth exploration of the issues, knowledge, and research about aging processes, older people, and the needs of our rapidly aging population. In order to better serve our students and strengthen and grow both programs, we made important curriculum and leadership changes during the review period that went into effect August 2013. These changes ensure students are well-prepared to
achieve their professional and scholarly goals, have access to faculty mentorship, and have the ability to complete their program in a timely manner.

Our 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 a 21 semester-hour curriculum and may be earned concurrently with a graduate degree or independently by those who hold a bachelor's or advanced degree. The new curriculum continues to offer interdisciplinary gerontological education, but offers students more flexibility in the completion of their core and elective courses.

The Master's (M.A.) 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 former prepares students to work in aging services and administration with a focus on program design and management. The latter prepares students for a doctoral program in gerontology or related disciplines and to conduct research on aging-related topics. Prior to fall 2013, all MA students were required to write a thesis. The latest curriculum change involves a course-work intensive program for administration student that culminates in a Capstone Seminar. Both concentrations continue to receive key gerontological knowledge tailored to their professional goals. (See Appendix E for initial and revised curriculum).

Quality of Graduate Students Attracted to the Unit’s Programs
The Gerontology Institute welcomes applications from professionals working in the field of gerontology, college seniors and recent graduates, mature or returning students, individuals making career changes, retirees, and international students. Consequently, our students come from a variety backgrounds and educational experiences and this diversity enriches student and faculty learning experiences inside and outside the classroom. When surveyed about what contributes overall satisfaction with the program, one student noted that having an, “intergenerational presence and diversity adds multiple perspectives to classroom discussions.” Table 4 shows our average GRE scores ranged from 400 to 620 with a three-year average of 513. Quantitative Scores range from 310 to 735 with a three-year average of 569.

Total numbers of graduate students by year, degree program, and concentration.
Table 5 shows our total numbers of graduate students. We admit students for both the fall and spring terms. Consequently, enrollment tends to be somewhat higher in the spring with the addition of newly admitted students, especially the MA program. As shown, our enrollment numbers range between 12 and 21 for our Graduate Certificate program and 12 and 22 for our MA program, with three-year averages of 17 students for both programs. During the self-study period, 38% of our MA students are enrolled in the research concentration.

Expanding Support for Graduate Programs
The Gerontology Institute has a number of scholarships, including endowed scholarships that recognize and support our graduate Certificate and MA students. In the past three years, we have
awarded 36 different scholarships to graduate students in both programs with one-time payments ranging in value from $500 to $3,000 and totaling $33,550 during the review period.

**Ratio of graduate students to faculty.** As show in Table 6, during the period of review our ratio of graduate students to faculty ranged from a low of 3.0 in fall 2012 to a high of 7.3 in spring 2011, a fluctuation that reflects the addition of one tenure-track faculty position raising the number from three in 2010 and 2011 to four in 2012.

**Student Success and Satisfaction**

**Learning outcomes.**
Learning outcomes for the MA program differ by the track in which students enroll. For those in the Research track, the competencies are: 1) Be able to design and implement a research study investigating a specific question in gerontology or be able to design and implement an evaluation of a program serving older people; 2) Be able to critically evaluate published research in gerontology; 3) Identify appropriate research methods, study design, and statistical analyses in gerontological research; 4) Be able to disseminate research findings in oral and written form to professional and lay audience; 5) Be able to design research in light of the dynamic nature of aging that reflect the diversity, ethnicity, and heterogeneity of aging population. For those in the Administrative track, the competencies are: 1) Understand issues in aging administration and be able to organize, staff, and administer a program to serve older people; 2) Be able to write a proposal for establishing and funding a new aging program; 3) Understand how to use technology to support programs in aging; 4) Know about empirically validated interventions for older people and know how to use quantitative and qualitative data to plan and evaluate services for older people; 5) Recognize the impact of public economic policies and programs on the lives of older people.

**Admission requirements and procedures, advisement, and recruitment rates.**
Admission to both Graduate Certificate and MA program requires the successful completion of bachelor’s level degree. All graduate-level applicants must submit transcripts of their college-level work, a statement of education and career goals, and a current resume. MA applicants must submit GRE scores and three reference letters; certificate program applicants must submit two reference letters but no GRE scores. Students are admitted for fall and spring semesters. Applicants are reviewed by the Admissions Committee, which consists of the core faculty. Admission decisions for Certificate applicants are made by the Institute Director and Graduate Director.

Prior to the elimination of the position last fall, graduate students were advised by the Institute’s Student Affairs Coordinator, as well as the Director of Graduate Studies and the Institute Director, who subsequently shared the responsibility. Historically, including the review period, the Director of Graduate Studies was an affiliate faculty member. As of August, 2013 the position was assumed by Dr. Kemp, one of our tenured core-faculty members. This change should provide students with greater access to in-house advising and consistency.

As shown in Table 7, during the review period, 46 individuals applied to the Certificate program and 37 were admitted for an average acceptance rate of 80%. There were 42 applicants to our
MA program, including 35 who were accepted (rate of 83%). Respectively, 68% and 66% of those admitted to our Certificate and MA programs enrolled.

Retention rates, graduation rates, and graduate degrees conferred.
As shown in Table 8, during the review period, we conferred a total of 10 Graduate Certificates. We also conferred 14 MA degrees. Typically, since the fall of 2008, students graduate within 3 years. Our best retention rate, 100%, was achieved with the cohorts of fall 2010 and fall 2012, though the cohort of fall 2011 (N=2 students) dropped to 50%.

Ethnic and gender diversity.
Women comprise the majority of our graduate students. On average 80% of our graduate students are women and 20% are men. This ratio is considerably higher than the university-wide rate where women comprise approximately 60% of graduate enrolment. In terms of ethnic diversity, approximately 46% of students self-reported as Black, 34% as White, 16% as Asian, 2% as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and 1% as 2 or more races.

Student surveys (see Appendix B).
Overall, the graduate students surveyed, feel positively about their experiences in the program. One graduate student commented, for instance, “My overall satisfaction with the program of study is the environment of acceptance and inclusiveness of students, staff, and faculty. The Institute has created a very unique environment where the emphasis is on academics and scholarship.” The overwhelming majority feel their program is helping them: write clearly and effectively, conduct research, be aware of historical contexts; demonstrate gerontological competence, and understand practices in the field. The majority of students also believe that their program is challenging and believe that faculty members expect high quality work. They feel requirements are clear and that sufficient research opportunities exist within the Institute. The majority also rate the overall quality of the program as very high or excellent. Students are very positive about their interactions with faculty. The overwhelming majority indicated that faculty members are prepared, up-to-date, accessible, motivating, and fair. They also feel administrative staff members are helpful, that the Institute promotes an environment of inclusiveness and respect, and would recommend the Institute to other students.

When asked what contributes to overall satisfaction with their program, graduate students commented, “faculty support and dedication”, “feeling of community”, “extremely student focused”, “the family environment”, and “connection to faculty, connection to fellow students, and practical applicability to real work in the field.” Another commented, “The quality of instructors is outstanding and their connections with the working community in gerontology is very important.” Yet another student noted that the faculty, “create an environment that encourages students to get involved both in and out of the classroom. The environment is one in which students can feel they are genuinely cared about.” Another student stated, “I recognize a desire of both professors and students to work together to improve the outcome of the older adult population. My observation is [that] it is more of a partnership/team effort than a professor/student relationship. It is a privilege to be part of this group.”

Students expressed concern about the limited selection of course offerings and the limited range of times slots course are offered. With a limited number of core faculty, especially those with
research-funded course buy-outs and administrative course releases, it is a challenge to offer a wide range of courses and time-slots. In the past, we have used part-time instructors to staff some of our courses and also rely on affiliate faculty. In FY 14, we were able to consolidate resources from the College of Arts and Sciences with course-buy-outs from sponsored research in order to hire a full-time visiting lecturer, Dr. Reyes-Ortiz. Although this is a temporary position, having a full time instructor allowed us to offer more classes and provide additional consistency in classroom instruction. Dr. Reyes-Ortiz will be moving on to a permanent position at University of Texas Medical Campus next year, but he has been a valuable member of our team over FY14. We hope to be able to continue to attract strong lecturers in the future. These challenges regarding course offerings are likely to persist going forward and will require innovative solutions.

Student publications and presentations.
Gerontology faculty members encourage students to publish and present their work. During the study period, three MA students published articles with faculty co-authors in peer-reviewed publications, including two in the Journal of Aging Studies and one in the Journal of Applied Gerontology. One student also co-authored a book chapter. Another student served as the editor for the monograph based on the 23rd Annual Southeastern Student Mentoring Conference in Gerontology and Geriatrics. Our students regularly attend local, regional, and national professional meetings including, the Georgia Gerontological Society (GGS), the Southeastern Student Mentoring Conference in Gerontology and Geriatrics (SSMC), the Southern Gerontological Society (SGS), and the Gerontological Society of America (GSA). Whenever our budget allows, we offer limited travel allowances for students to attend professional conferences. During the review period, four graduate students presented at GGS, 21 at SSMC, four at SGS, and nine at GSA, including six who presented multiple times.

Student accomplishments: Exams, theses, projects, grants, prizes, and awards.
Prior to the fall of 2013, all MA students were required to write a thesis. Thus during this time 14 students successfully completed their theses, including some that form the basis for peer-reviewed publications, and still more that informed service delivery. Please see the Appendix D for a list of theses authors and titles.

Each year, GGS awards the Virginia M. Smyth Graduate Scholarship to one outstanding student within the state. We are very proud that in the past three years, two of our students, Erin Fisher and Megan Moulding, who also received the Southeastern Association for Area Agencies on Aging Scholarship, were honored with this competitive award.

Student outcomes after graduation: Admission into further graduate education, employment.
Our students are highly successful after graduation. Of the 14 MA students who graduated during the review period, 6 students went on to further their graduate work, most in Ph.D. programs including those at Duke University, Georgia State University, University of Georgia, University of Florida, and the University of South Florida. Most of the remaining MA alumni and the 10 students who completed their Graduate Certificate are employed and hold positions in areas related to health, older adults, and aging policy and services. One MA graduate is employed as a program specialist for an Area Agency on Aging, and another student is employed as a gerontological researcher the School of Nursing at the University of Alberta.
Meanwhile, because our Graduate Certificate program provides a unique opportunity for professionals to re-tool their training, several certificate alumni have gone on to develop or bolster their existing expertise in gerontology. For example, in fall 2010 Helen Larsen enrolled in our program. With an MSW, Helen had considerable experience working with a variety of populations including people with AIDS and children, but had no training or experience working with older adults. She sought a Graduate Certificate in Gerontology to prepare herself to work with this growing population. In spring 2011 she did an internship at Wesley Woods Hospital in the Long-term Acute Care (LTAC) unit. Upon completing her Certificate in May 2011, she accepted a full time position as geriatric social worker with the LTAC at Wesley Woods. During the review period, 34 graduate students enrolled in and successfully completed the internship program with many making valuable connections in the field of aging, including those, like Helen, that led to a job offer.

**Programs Undertaken Jointly with Other GSU Units**

We have not offered any graduate programs jointly with other GSU units. A new proposal with the Department of Sociology, however, is currently under review and has successfully been approved by the College of Arts and Sciences’ Graduate and Undergraduate Councils. In an effort to recruit strong undergraduates into our MA program, we are proposing a joint B.A. in Sociology and M.A. in Gerontology program. The program is designed to enable students to receive a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and then a Master of Arts in Gerontology in as short a period as five years. The aim of the program is to prepare students to enter the workforce in an aging-related occupation or to continue their graduate training in a Ph.D. program. We expect this dual degree program will be available to incoming undergraduate students in fall 2015.

We also collaborate regularly with other GSU units across campus as many of our courses are cross-listed with other disciplines and are taught by affiliate faculty members. As shown in Table 2, during the review period, Gerontology offered courses cross-listed with sociology, social work, psychology, communication, African American studies, and nursing.

**THE GERONTOLOGY INSTITUTE’S RESEARCH CULTURE**

Despite its relatively small size, GSU’s Gerontology Institute has a strong research culture and a lengthy history of research success, including an impressive record of externally funded research and of peer-reviewed publications. Going forward, we intend to build on our past and current successes in order to further grow our program of research, research support, and research impact. We also are interested in fostering and coordinating interdisciplinary research on aging and older adults across the college, university, and beyond.

**Levels of External and Internal Funding**

The Gerontology Institute has a successful record of applying for and receiving external funding. All core faculty members are currently engaged in externally-funded research projects. GSU’s Office of Institutional Effectiveness reported our highest year of direct cost funding during the review period as $292,856.
During the review period, the Institute was home two studies funded by the National Institute on Aging, “Negotiating Social Relationships in Assisted Living: The Experiences of Residents” (PI, Mary M. Ball, R01 AG030486-01A1, $900,000) and “Negotiating Sex and Intimacy in Assisted Living” (PI, Elisabeth O. Burgess, R21 AG030171-01; $225,500). Dr. Candace Kemp, co-investigator for both projects, also was co-investigator on two studies funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (total value: $75,649) focused on understanding the social and economic dimensions of aging and another examining inheritance in intergenerational families. Dr. Jennifer Craft Morgan, during the review period, was the recipient of funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration (value: $392,210) and The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (value: $299,847).

Within the three year review period, Drs. Ball and Perkins (former research associate) were co-principal investigators on a project funded by the Georgia Division of Aging Services through a State of Georgia Department of Human Services Contract. The aim of this project was to collect information to inform development of the Georgia State Plan on Aging FY 2012-2015 and the Georgia Medicaid’s CCSP waiver renewal.

Research Productivity that Furthers the Strategic Goals of the University

Our research goals resonate with GSU’s strategic plan, particularly Goal 3 to, “Become a leading public research university address the most challenging issues of the 21st Century.” As the population of the U.S., and across the globe, ages and becomes more diverse, the Gerontology Institute is “Leading the Way in an Aging Society.” Gerontology Institute faculty members are engaged in groundbreaking research designed to address the challenges of our aging society. Their research has and will continue to translate into solutions to the challenges of an aging society by emphasizing three distinct, yet inter-related research areas: (1) housing and formal long-term care; (2) social relationships, families, and caregiving; and (3) health and aging. Woven throughout these three areas of inquiry is an emphasis on understanding diversity and diverse experiences of aging. Research by our faculty members addresses issues of structural inequality and differential experiences of aging by race, ethnicity, social class, gender, and sexual identity. In addition to exploring diversity in aging populations of the U.S., our faculty members also research issues of aging from a global perspective, which contributes to GSU’s strategic goal 5, to “Achieve distinction in globalizing the University.”

1. Housing and Formal Long-term Care. Older adults today have a wide variety of housing options from aging-in-place to retirement communities to assisted living and skilled nursing facilities. Research by our core and affiliate faculty members addresses the quality of life for older adults in a variety of housing options. This work examines where older adults live, what their experiences are in these settings, including how much control they have over their living environments, and identifies the factors that facilitate their ability to age-in-place. Additionally, our faculty members explore issues related to frontline workers in formal long-term care settings, including satisfaction, retention and training among this essential workforce.

2. Social Relationships, Families, and Caregiving. Increasing longevity means that social relationships, including those with family and friends, are lasting longer than ever before. At the same time, longer lives alongside changing gender expectations and patterns of marriage
and divorce, also may require individuals to forge new relationships across the life course and into late in life. Research by our core and affiliate faculty members explores social relationships and family life, broadly defined, and examines sex, intimacy and older couples, peer relationships, informal caregiving for older adults, and intergenerational ties, including grandparents raising grandchildren.

3. Health and Aging. Understanding and explaining the physical and mental health care needs of older adults and health care policy are core issues in the field of gerontology. Our faculty members are engaged in a wide variety of research on health disparities, health care workforce, elder abuse and public health.

At present, we have made great strides toward maintaining and growing these three inter-related externally funded research programs while addressing persistent problems in today’s aging and increasingly diverse society. While each of the core faculty have a robust research program, we provide four examples of how our externally funded grant activity both maintains and strengthens our program of research and addresses key problems in today’s aging and diversifying society.

First, one of our core faculty, Candace Kemp, PhD (PI), began a new five-year study (1R01AG044368-01A1; $1, 938,313), “Convoys of Care: Developing Collaborative Care Partnerships in Assisted Living” on August 1, 2013 funded by National Institute on Aging at the National Institutes of Health. Collaborators include: Jennifer Craft Morgan, PhD and Elisabeth Burgess, PhD from the Gerontology Institute; Mary Ball, PhD and Molly Perkins, PhD from Emory University; and Patrick Doyle, PhD from Bowling Green State University and the University of Maryland Baltimore County. This interdisciplinary team is addressing a pervasive challenge for older adults: How to age in place when factors such as health declines, dwindling financial resources, and loss of caregiver support impact older adults’ ability to remain in home and community-based care arrangements.

Second, another of our core faculty and the Director of the Gerontology Institute, Dr. Elisabeth Burgess, is finalizing manuscripts from her recent NIA-funded R21, “Negotiating Sex and Intimacy in Assisted Living.” The purpose of this two-year qualitative study was to examine how sexuality and intimacy are negotiated in assisted living facilities (ALFs). This ground-breaking study addresses a persistent challenge for older adults residing in facility-based care: How do older adults experience sexuality and intimacy in semi-private settings where ageism, stereotypes and workplace policies constrain their freedoms? As the population ages and remains healthy longer, policies and care practices must be developed in order to maximize quality of life of older adults.

Third, one of our newest core faculty members, Dr. Chivon Mingo (PI), recently began a new pilot study supported by a grant from the National Institutes of Health (5P30 AG015281; $29,600) and the Michigan Center for Urban African American Aging Research. “The Chronic Disease Self-Management Program: Utilization among older Community-Dwelling African Americans in the Atlanta Region” extends her dissertation/post-doctoral research on improving evidence-based health promotion interventions in ways that better support diverse communities of older adults in terms of both outcomes and outreach and enrollment. This cutting-edge
research is addressing a pervasive challenge for today’s aging and diversifying society: Given the aging of the population, how do we improve the health and quality of older adults in ways that prevent or postpone functional decline and mortality? Further, how do we do this in such a way that even vulnerable groups reap the benefits of our evidence-based health promotion programs?

Finally, another of our newest core faculty members, Dr. Jennifer Craft Morgan is continuing her work as Lead Evaluator with the Personal Home Care State Training Grants program supported by a grant from the Health Resources Services Administration, T82HP20321. This program was funded under the Affordable Care Act in an effort to help states develop education and training models for direct care workers in home and community-based settings. Dr. Morgan and her University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill colleagues have been evaluating the North Carolina education and training model. This applied evaluation research is addressing a pervasive challenge for today’s aging and diversifying society: Given the increased need for health care workers, particularly in home and community-based settings, how do states build education and training models that meet the need of workers for quality jobs, meet the demand for increased health care services from employers and maximize quality of life for a diverse group of older adults?

Quantity and Quality of Disseminated Research
Gerontology Institute faculty members are productive scholars and leaders in the field. According to the GSU’s institutionally-maintained Thompson-Reuters InCites database, core and affiliate faculty members combined (a total of 33 faculty members were included) published 68 peer-reviewed articles during the review period. Faculty publications appeared in numerous gerontology journals and in peer-reviewed journals in other relevant disciplines, including top-tier journals such as The Gerontologist; The Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences; The Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences; Journal of Applied Gerontology; Generations; Journal of Aging Studies; Research on Aging; and Journal of Aging and Health. In addition to peer-reviewed publications, Institute faculty also edited, wrote, and contributed to nine books that make major contributions to scholarly discourse in Gerontology.

Success in Recruitment and Retention of the Top Faculty in the Field
At the beginning of the study period, the Gerontology Institute had four core faculty members, including two assistant professors, one associate professor, and one associate professor of research. In 2012, clinical psychologist, Dr. Ann Pearman left academia to open a private practice. Dr. Pearman was hired in 2006 and was the first tenure-track core faculty member hired by the Institute. Also in 2012, the Institute’s director of research, research associate professor, Dr. Mary Ball, retired from Georgia State University. Dr. Ball had worked in the Institute since 1996. At the close of the study period, with additional hiring and a promotion, core Institute faculty members included two assistant professors and two associate professors.

Impact of Research on Relevant Disciplines.
Because the current core faculty are our building blocks for the future and are significantly different than those counted within the study period, we undertook a self-citation study of our four core faculty over their careers. For comparison purposes, we ran the database for three social science oriented past-presidents of our national association – The Gerontological Society
of America. Their h-indexes ranged from 10-23. As you can see in Table 9 our core research and teaching faculty are highly productive.

**Faculty Development**

In 2012, the Gerontology Institute ran two highly successful recruitment campaigns seeking to hire two assistant professors of Gerontology, one with a background in gerontology, psychology or a related discipline and the other with a background gerontology, sociology or a related field and an emphasis one of more of the following areas: long-term care, social policy, or inequality. The first position was intended to replace the vacancy left by Dr. Pearman’s departure. The second, although filling the void left by Dr. Ball’s retirement, represented a growth position for the Institute by being a tenure-track appointment.

Our recruitment efforts yielded highly qualified candidates and we successfully recruited our top candidates, Dr. Chivon Mingo and Dr. Jennifer Craft Morgan. Drs. Mingo and Morgan both relocated to GSU from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Dr. Mingo held a prestigious Postdoctoral Research Fellow position in the Institute on Aging and Thurston Arthritis Research Center. Dr. Morgan, who earned her Ph.D. in 2005, was the Program Lead for Research in Workforce Aging and a Research Professor in the Department of Allied Health Science. Prior to this position, she was the Associate Director of Research for UNC’s Institute on Aging. Dr. Mingo and Morgan will go up for their pre-tenure reviews in the coming year.

Hired as a tenure-track assistant professor in 2007, Dr. Candace Kemp prepared her tenure dossier in 2012. She was successfully promoted and tenured in 2013. She is the first core faculty member to be tenured and promoted within the Gerontology Institute.

**Faculty Partnerships and Professional Service**

Faculty participation in research centers and clusters at GSU.

Dr. Mingo is an affiliate of the Partnership for Urban Health Research (PUHR) and is a member of their Steering Committee. PUHR seeks to understand how the urban environment affects the health and well-being of people who reside and work in the metropolitan Atlanta area. They focus their efforts on populations that bear a disproportionate burden of illness and disease using an interdisciplinary approach to research. In partnership with surrounding communities, they endeavor to create and disseminate knowledge that is both meaningful and beneficial to the communities that participate in the process. Goals include: 1) becoming nationally recognized as a center of excellence in urban health research; 2) developing innovative research methods and refine and advance their application; 3) establishing interdisciplinary teams, composed of academic and community partners; 4) creating a scholarly urban health partnership with the Atlanta community and beyond; and 5) advancing knowledge in the four priority health research areas, including Dr. Mingo’s area of emphasis, chronic disease and aging. Last year, PUHR, with the assistance of Drs. Mingo and Burgess, submitted an internal grant proposal that was well-received, but not funded in the initial round. The collaboration included Public Health, Geosciences, and Gerontology (3 out of the 4 collaborators are/were members of PUHR).

Dr. Burgess is joint appointed in Sociology and maintains a leadership presence in that Department, including serving on P&T committees, mentoring junior colleagues and supervising masters and doctoral students. She is a member of the Health & Life Course and Sexuality &
Gender Concentrations in sociology. Dr. Burgess continues to collaborate with sociology faculty on research and instructional projects including serving as co-editor for *Sex Matters: The Sexuality and Society Reader* (now out in its fourth edition with WW Norton) and collaborating with Dawn Baunach on several published manuscripts. Over the study period Dr. Burgess supervised two completed doctoral students in Sociology, one of whom also earned a graduate Certificate in Gerontology, and served on five sociology dissertation committees and one MA sociology thesis committee.

National and international research collaborations/partnerships.
Dr. Mingo is highly involved with national collaborations exploring issues of health disparities among older African Americans. She is currently working with the Michigan Center on Urban African American Aging Research (MCUAAAR) where she is being mentored by scholars as part of the Research Center of Minority Aging Research (RCMAR). In addition, Dr. Mingo is a member of the Healthy Aging Network (HAN) through the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

Evidence of interdisciplinary research.
As Gerontologists much, if not all, of our faculty’s work is interdisciplinary and involves collaborations with scholars from a range of disciplines. This is evidenced by the fact that our core and affiliate faculty members are drawn from 17 different disciplines across campus. Moreover, as a collective, faculty’s research and published work has included team members from or draws on disciplines including, but not limited to: psychology (behavioral, cognitive, clinical, and developmental), sociology, communication, social epidemiology, family studies, nursing and health professions, social work, criminal justice, real estate, health services research, and public health.

Significant professional service.
Gerontology faculty members are highly engaged in professional service in regional and national organizations. For instance, all core faculty members belong to the Gerontology Society of America (GSA), including Dr. Mingo who is the recent past chair of the Emerging Scholars and Professional Organization (ESPO). Dr. Mingo also currently serves on the Bylaws working group committee. In the past, she was a paper award committee member for the Behavior and Social Science section, the ESPO Paper and Poster award Chair, and the Task Force on Minority Issues in Gerontology ESPO Representative. Dr. Nancy Kropf, one of our affiliate faculty members served as GSA’s Treasurer in 2012 and is a Fellow in the Social Research, Practice and Policy section. Dr. Burgess serves as Institutional Representative for the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) and on the executive board of the Southeastern Student Mentoring Conference (SSMC).

Drs. Morgan and Kemp are highly involved in the Southern Gerontology Society (SGS). Dr. Morgan served as past program committee chair, oversees the awards committee, and is a member of the board. Dr. Kemp has served on SGS’s executive board as Secretary since 2010. She joined the society’s publications committee in 2009 and most recently helped to redesign its web presence as a member of the ad hoc, website committee in 2013. Dr. Atkinson, an affiliate, is currently serving as membership chair for SGS.
Our faculty members regularly review for a variety of high impact journals in Gerontology and other disciplines including, for example, *The Gerontologist*, *The Journals of Gerontology: Aging & Society*, *Social Forces*, and *Journal of Marriage and Family*. Core faculty members, Drs. Morgan and Kemp, serve as editorial board members for the *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, SGS’s official journal. Dr. Kemp also recently joined the editorial board of the *Journals of Gerontology: Social Sciences*.

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO CITIES**

By 2030, over one million older adults will be living in the Atlanta Region. As a result, cities, such as Atlanta, are currently faced with a myriad of challenges as it relates to meeting the needs of this rapidly aging population. It is impossible to discuss the complex challenges that many cities face without considering how the aging population influences such challenges. Therefore, in line with the University’s strategic plan the Gerontology Institute Faculty has been engaged in developing interdisciplinary projects that will target many of the complexities associated with the growth of an aging population in an urban environment. For example, Dr. Mingo collaborated with Dr. Tim Hawthorne from Geosciences on a CITIES grant proposal entitled “Aging in Place in Urban Atlanta: An Interdisciplinary Examination of Objective and Perceived Neighborhood Quality and Health with Older Adults around Atlanta Beltline Communities.”

The faculty and students work closely with the Division of Aging Services and the Atlanta Region Area Agency on Aging to address the needs of the Atlanta Region’s older adults. Our core courses are structured in a manner in which challenges of an aging population are addressed including those that are unique to urban areas. In addition, our internship provides the opportunity for students to become actively engaged and serves as a pipeline for students to continue to work in urban areas on aging related issues. For example, many of our student interns have been placed at the Grady Hospital Senior Services, a hospital in downtown Atlanta that maintains a strong commitment to the health and health care needs of residents in the Fulton and DeKalb County area. Through the internship, students engage in ways that create value to our urban internship site as budding gerontologists. They apply their gerontological skills and knowledge to address aging-related challenges that are often exacerbated by the urban context (e.g. transportation for older adults who can no longer drive, promoting physical activity in the context of neighborhood safety).

Since its inception, the Gerontology Institute has brought to campus a significant number of distinguished speakers who have engaged with the student body as well as the community at large. To date we have two very important lectureship series that are invaluable to our student body, GSU, and the greater Atlanta community. First, we have our annual Payne Lecture Series established in honor of Dr. Barbara Payne-Stancil founder and director emerita of the Gerontology Institute at Georgia State University. Most recently our speakers included Dr. Ira Rosofsky, who spoke on the experience of long-term care, and Congressman John Lewis, who spoke on issues of policy and aging. Second, we have our Brown Bag Lecture Series where speakers are invited twice per semester to present on the most recent topics in aging. In the past, we have had Dr. Lynda Anderson, Director of the CDC’s Healthy Aging Network; Dr. Chris Kelly, Associate Professor in the Department of Gerontology at the University of Nebraska at Omaha; Dr. Sybil Ingram, the Samurai Caregiver; Dr. Toni Miles, Director, Institute on Aging at University of Georgia, and others. Past speakers for both the Payne Lectureship Series and the
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Brown Bag Lectureship Series have focused on long-term care, policy, health and health care, caregiving, and other key topics as it relates to aging in cities. We continue to bring in speakers as we know this is a valuable resource for our larger community who are faced with a variety of issues, concerns, and questions about our rapidly aging population.

GLOBALIZING THE UNIVERSITY  
As a small unit, the Institute’s contribution to the goal of “Globalizing the University” has primarily been through partnerships with other departments. The Institute as partnered with Sociology for a Study Abroad class in China offered by affiliate faculty member, Dr. Zhan. We have co-hosted several visiting scholars from China and are currently hosting a visiting scholar from Taiwan. Over the study period, we have consistently attracted students from abroad, in particular from China and India. The Institute plans to continue to collaborate with affiliate faculty on global initiatives and actively engage international students in the field of aging. We believe that strategically engaging issues of global aging will be central to the 21st century and, as the Institute grows, we hope to develop long range global initiatives.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT  
In this section we will assess the Institute as a whole. The undergraduate program is small, but has demonstrated a potential for growth. We have increased the number of students enrolled in gerontology classes and in the Undergraduate Certificate program. Undergraduates also receive many opportunities to engage in out of classroom signature experiences, particularly through the internship program. Based on the findings from the Undergraduate Alumni Survey, students are very satisfied with the Undergraduate Certificate and students attributed their success and satisfaction to the influence of and interaction with the faculty (e.g., one-on-one mentoring). Findings also indicate that the skills obtained in the Certificate program are useful for the job market. In the future we must strive for new opportunities to engage students in research. Through mentored experiences with gerontology faculty, undergraduates should have the experience to attend and present at conferences such as GSU Undergraduate Research Conference, Southeastern Student Mentoring Conference in Gerontology and Geriatrics, or the Southern Gerontology Society.

The Gerontology Institute has the only MA program in Gerontology in the University System of Georgia and a well-respected graduate certificate program. Over the study period we have increased both the size and the quality of our entering students. We have adjusted our program requirements to reflect disciplinary norms and better prepare students for careers in aging. Our graduate certificate program continues to attract strong interest from professionals and students in other programs interested in adding training in aging to their current degrees. We offer a high-quality education to our students, which is evidenced by the student surveys and by the success our students have achieved in post-graduation placements. These measures of success suggest that the program is of high quality and should be sustained. There are two improvements that should be made: (1) Evaluate the efficacy of revised curriculum for the Administration Concentration of the MA program and (2) graduate students would like more opportunities for research experience and applied career development, whether financial, managerial, or clinical.
The Gerontology Institute is highly productive in terms of the quantity and quality of publications and garnering external funding. This success is particularly exciting given that the core faculty of the Institute is relatively junior in terms of faculty tenure. Half of the faculty members are new assistant professors and there are currently no full professors. Although the affiliate faculty boast more senior faculty, they are often engaged in leadership within their departments (e.g. Donald Reitzes, chair of Sociology Department) or colleges (e.g. Nancy Kropf, Associate Dean for Research and Strategic Planning, Andrew Young School of Policy Studies and Yong Tai Wang, Assistant Dean for Health Professions, Byrdine F. Lewis School of Nursing and Health Professions). While their leadership across the university helps to promote aging research and scholarship across the university, these affiliates have little time available to mentor junior faculty in Gerontology, supervise gerontology students, or engage in collaborative research. The Gerontology Institute at GSU is unique. Over the past five years, particularly now that the majority of core faculty members are tenured or tenure track, we function very much like a small department with the College of Arts and Sciences. This stability has allowed us to grow our programs and attract new students to gerontology. As a research institute without a doctoral program, we have deliberately built on partnerships with other programs at GSU and externally in order to build research agendas that address the challenges of aging in our society. Over the next five years, the Institute will continue to strengthen its undergraduate and graduate programs by attracting even more students and preparing them for careers in aging or doctoral research in gerontology or related fields. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the field of gerontology and the interests and skill sets of our faculty, we believed that the Gerontology Institute is well positioned for growth over the next decade. Each one of our core faculty members has experience with external funding and we expect to see the experience parlayed into multiple sponsored projects. Given the opportunity to grow and mature, the Gerontology Institute will be a key player in assisting the University in meeting the goals of its current strategic plan.

SECTION 2: HOW ADEQUATE ARE THE INSTITUTE’S RESOURCES

FACULTY RESOURCES
Since the last self-study in 2004, the Gerontology Institute has experienced tremendous change including 100% turnover in personnel. In 2004, the Institute included a four full-time faculty and three staff members - director whose appointment was .5EFT, three NTT research faculty members, and 2.0 EFT in staff support (one full-time academic professional, .5 EFT administrative coordinator, .5 EFT research coordinator). Currently the Gerontology Institute includes 4 full-time TT faculty members, a visiting lecturer, and one full-time staff member (a business manager). In addition the Institute has always relied on the support of affiliate faculty from across campus. In 2004, the Institute has 19 faculty members from 12 departments across the University. Currently, the Gerontology Institute includes 27 affiliate faculty members 17 different departments.

Faculty Surveys
Faculty members generally are very satisfied with the Gerontology Institute. The core faculty members are very satisfied with their engagement in the Institute and believe in the quality of the academic programs in Gerontology. There are more mixed opinions regarding research support. In the open-ended responses, several faculty members elaborated that the Gerontology Institute
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“is doing all it can,” but they felt that significant effort is needed “to bring our research infrastructure to the level it is at other high-level research Institutes.” Even affiliate faculty members mentioned providing “technical support for collaborative grant writing” as an effective way to promote interdisciplinary collaboration. Most affiliate faculty acknowledged that time and lack of their home department’s recognition of their service to the institute negatively impacted their ability to participate more. Comments included, “I look forward to being more active in the future,” “my current workload in my primary dept. leaves little time to participate,” and “I am eager to collaborate on research with colleagues in Gerontology…Time is the only obstacle.” (See Appendix B)

ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES
The day-to-day functioning of the Institute depends on the efforts of one Business Manager. This position was reclassified in 2013 from a Business Affairs Coordinate to Business Manager, reflecting the work and responsibilities of this position. This represents a cut of one staff member from the last self-study. Student assistants and graduate assistants assist in administrative functions as funds allow.

TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES
Currently, most faculty members have up-to-date office computers. Our faculty equipment is on par with that of other departments in the social sciences. The Institute has sufficient funds to purchase/provide copies and licenses of software to each individual faculty member as needed.

In the past several years the department has maintained a website that serves as an important portal of information about the department for parties outside the university, including potential majors and graduate program applicants. The department, nonetheless, lacks the resources to consistently maintain and update this website. We no longer have a staff member to serve as webmaster and we have had to use our own resources to hire a GLA to upgrade the website. We maintain a strong social media presence, including 382 “likes” on our Facebook page. Social media is managed by the Institute Director and a Graduate Assistant.

SPACE RESOURCES
The Gerontology Institute is housed on the 6th floor of One Park Place. The Institute has a welcoming reception area with a desk and computer for student assistants, three cubicles with computers and printers, available for student use, a student lounge with an additional computers and printers for student use, a copy room with a copier/printer and a fax machine, two storage closets, nine locked offices, and one seminar room that can hold 20 people. This seminar room is used regularly for research team meetings, gerontology graduate seminars, brownbag presentation, committee meetings, and thesis defenses. The conference room is equipped with an LCD projector, screen, telephone, and internet.

All four core faculty members, the visiting lecturer and the business manager each have an office, phone, a personal computer, laptop, printer, and access to a copier, fax machine and office supplies. Computers available are complete with word processing and data software for data storage and analysis (e.g., Microsoft Office, Adobe, and SPSS) and are regularly upgraded. Faculty offices include locked file cabinets to ensure the integrity of their research data and student records. Furthermore, there is a network drive (I drive) that can be used to store
important institute documents and is easily accessed by faculty and staff as well as select students who have been granted access.

All funded graduate research assistants have access to a research space with a personal computer in 2 separate locked offices within the Institute or within the suite beside the Gerontology Institute and 2 locked offices within the Institute suite. All research assistants have access to a copier/printer, fax machine, and office supplies. Computers available are complete with word processing and data software for data storage and analysis (e.g., Microsoft Office, Adobe, and SPSS) and are regularly upgraded.

Overall the furniture is in adequate condition but the carpet and drapes, particularly in the conference room are worn and stained. Our current location in One Park Place is physically separate from most College of Arts and Sciences departments. The Gerontology Institute is slated to move to Langdale Hall in approximately two years. While we look forward to the opportunity to share a building with several other social science departments, we are concerned about losing access to conference and GRA space that has been particularly essential to team building for externally funded research and with affiliate faculty.

GSU FOUNDATION RESOURCES AND OTHER GIFTS
Through the GSU Foundation, the department maintains the Barbara Payne Lectureship, all of the scholarships, and the general foundation fund. The Institute anticipates a new endowed scholarship honoring a former staff member, Mary MacKinnon. In the past year, the Institute has also received a bequest for a scholarship from Ms. Jeanette Cummings, a gerontology alumna.

GSU Foundation Gerontology funds are used to support a number of different activities in the department. They include: Faculty workshops, outside speakers, graduate and undergraduate awards, department retreats and special occasion events, recruitment of new faculty, graduate orientation events, retirement events, promotion events, and graduate student travel. These funds are an important source of departmental funds; without them these activities would be significantly curtailed.

LIBRARY RESOURCES
Based on data provided by our departmental liaison librarian, the University Library’s Gerontology holdings adequately support the research areas of our faculty and students (see Appendix F). The library’s analysis of the books they receive through their automated acquisition system indicated that they receive 33% of the available print books and 13% of the available e-books in the relevant call number ranges for gerontology. Our liaison librarian is available to consult with our students and gives presentations on the GSU library to both graduate and undergraduate classes. Comparison data provided by our liaison librarian indicate that our library acquisitions for Gerontology are greater than that of any of our peers.

SECTION 3: WHERE DOES THE INSTITUTE WANT TO GO?

GOAL 1: STRENGTHEN OUR RESEARCH BASE
In order to contribute to the university’s goal of becoming a leading public research university, we intend to build on our success in external funding for faculty research, by diversifying our efforts through (1) engaging in partnerships to increase aging scholarship across campus and (2) expanding the size of the faculty to build leadership within the unit.

GOAL 2: ENHANCE THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF OUR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Although the Institute has offered an undergraduate certificate since 1980 and an interdisciplinary minor since 1997, undergraduate education in gerontology has not been a priority. During the study period, the Institute began to increase attention to undergraduate education by developing new classes and increasing credit hour production, revising the undergraduate curriculum, appointing an Undergraduate Director to advise and monitor undergraduate programming, and conducting additional outreach to the undergraduate population. Our undergraduate students and alumni report high levels of satisfaction with our department. In line with goal one of the university strategic plan, we believe that the time is right to invest energy into undergraduate education in gerontology. We intend to do this by (1) developing a BIS degree in Aging and Health in collaboration with the School of Nursing and Health Professions; (2) increasing the profile of gerontology classes across the university; (3) developing Honors classes; (4) developing new scholarships targeting undergraduates; (5) engaging undergraduates in research; and (5) creating pathways to graduate school through our dual degree program with Sociology.

GOAL 3: BUILD OUR GRADUATE PROGRAM

In its brief ten year history, our program has grown in prominence and relevance. Over the past two years we have met or exceeded our recruiting goals for number of graduate applications and yield of enrolled students. Over the next five years, we anticipate strategic growth in our graduate programs by both increasing the number and quality of our students. We believe that we are in the position to contribute to the university’s goal of strengthening its base of distinctive graduate programs by (1) recruiting and retaining successful MA students; (2) offering valuable specialization to doctoral students in other departments through the Graduate Certificate Program; (3) mentoring students’ career success inside and outside of academia; and (4) strengthening graduate student opportunities as GRAs on externally funded research projects and through internships and service learning in the community.

GOAL 4: BECOME MORE ENGAGED WITH THE UNIVERSITY’S CITIES INITIATIVE

The Gerontology Institute is well-positioned to contribute to the university’s strategic plan through the goals focused on understanding the complex challenges of cities. Our faculty, students and alumni are engaged in research and service project throughout Atlanta. In 2013, Dr. Mingo in partnership with Dr. Burgess and researchers from Geosciences and Public Health submitted a proposal for an internal CITIES grant. Although not funded, the synergy created from this proposal will result in increased engagement with the Cities Initiative. Our goal is to engage core and affiliate faculty members in the problems of cities. We intend to accomplish this goal through (1) by promoting collaborative interdisciplinary scholarship that addresses the challenges of aging populations in cities (2) engage with new and emerging initiatives related to
cities, and (3) continuing to engage students in the urban laboratory of Atlanta through internships, service learning, and research projects.

SECTION 4: WHAT DOES THE INSTITUTE NEED TO REACH ITS GOALS?

GOAL 1: STRENGTHEN OUR RESEARCH BASE

Since our last self-study in 2004, our Institute has seen considerable turn-over. We have transitioned from a unit that relied on non-tenure track (NTT) research faculty to one with tenure-track (TT) faculty. This transition has solidified our research base and our status within the college, the university, and the discipline. In 2004, the Institute included three full time faculty members and a director whose appointment was .5EFT. Three of these faculty members were NTT research faculty members. Although the number of core faculty members remained constant, the composition of the faculty shifted such that the majority of faculty members are now TT instead of NTT research faculty. Specifically, today the Institute is comprised of 4 full-time faculty members (four TT faculty members, including the director). Additionally, the Institute relies on the support of part-time instructors (PTIs), one Visiting Lecturer (FY2014), and affiliate faculty from across campus. In 2004, the Institute had 19 faculty members from 12 departments across the University. Currently, the Gerontology Institute includes 27 affiliate faculty members in 17 different departments. We propose strategic growth in faculty over the next five years through additional affiliate faculty, joint-appointed faculty, and a new Institute Director.

Initiative 1: Engaging partnerships to increase aging scholarship across campus

The Gerontology Institute serves as a conduit for research on aging within a wide variety of disciplines. The majority of our 27 affiliate faculty members identify themselves as aging or life course scholars within their discipline including departments such as Sociology, Social Work, Nursing, Public Health, and Physical Therapy. The research portfolio of the Institute is enhanced by collaborations and connections with these scholars. Over the past five years, we have made a conscious effort to build new partnerships with departments on campus that have not traditionally been engaged in aging research.

Over the next five years, we intend to increase the size of our affiliate faculty to 35 scholars. Recruiting approximately ten new affiliates will enhance the research profile of the Institute. One way of attracting new affiliates is to engage potential faculty while they are being recruited to GSU. The Institute director and faculty are available to meet with job candidates with an interest in aging when they are on campus. For example, Drs. Burgess and Mingo recently met with two job candidates in Psychology who conduct research on aging. The Institute has partnered with other units across campus to submit a 2CI proposal for a high impact hire specializing in Demography of Aging. We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate with the Department of Sociology, the School of Public Health, and the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies on this proposal and we expect that this and related 2CI hires will yield additional affiliate faculty or potential jointly appointed faculty. Finally, we plan on continuing our outreach across campus. By increasing the profile of Gerontology on campus, we encourage existing faculty to consider the role of aging in their research agenda. In the past, we have been able to use Institute
resources, particularly from indirect cost recovery, in order to support professional development of and collaborations with Affiliate faculty. This program requires no additional resources.

The most emphatic comments on the faculty survey pertained to a wide variety of challenges with the infrastructure related to sponsored programs at Georgia State. We must improve sponsored program administration at the college and university level. The Office of Sponsored Programs recently significantly restructured its office which included hiring new personnel and creating more functional teams. Moreover, the college has been restructuring its pre- and post-award services and processing. We will work closely with the college administrative services and the university OSP to assure a more efficient and effective process is in place. This is in line with initiative 4 of Goal 3 in the University Strategic plan: “enhance supporting infrastructure for the conduct of research.”

Each of our faculty members has an impressive record of funded research given their career stage. In order to support further development, we need to increase institutional support at department, college, and university level. This is important for our assistant professors as they progress to tenure but also for our associate professors so that they can proceed quickly to full professor. With this portfolio of skills and experience, Gerontology will be better prepared to secure large external grants, such as training or center grants.

Facilitate new research collaborations in aging that have the potential to lead to external funding. In 2013, we piloted a seed grant program for core and affiliate faculty. The purpose is to support a range of activities leading to the writing and submission of at least one proposal for extramural research funding that, if received, would advance the mission of the Gerontology Institute and its core and affiliate faculty. The outcome of this project should be a grant application to an external funding agency. Priority will be given to proposals seeking federal funding from National Institutes of Health (NIH) or National Science Foundation (NSF), but projects seeking funding from private foundations such as Robert Wood Johnson Foundation or other government agencies such as CDC are also welcomed. We anticipate being able to fund one seed grant per year. This program requires no additional resources.

Initiative 2: Expanding the size of the faculty and build leadership within the unit
Over the next few years, we would like to enhance the engagement of faculty across campus in Gerontology research by establishing several joint appointments in the Institute. Historically, due to the lack of TT faculty, joint appointments between the Institute and other departments were not feasible and Institute faculty collaborated with a small group of affiliate faculty with shared research agendas. Despite the growth and diversification of our affiliate faculty over the past five years, there is little incentive for these scholars to partner on interdisciplinary scholarship. In some cases, home departments actively discourage a research agenda outside of their discipline. Over the next several years, the Institute will identify 2-3 current Georgia State faculty actively engaged in research on aging. In collaboration with their home departments and in consultation with Deans, joint appointments at appropriate rank in Gerontology will be offered. The benefit of joint appointment would be that (a) gerontology research and service would be an expected part of their workload and (b) the Gerontology Institute would provide support for their engagement in the discipline of gerontology by providing travel funds to present at gerontology conferences and summer salary support to build research agendas on aging. We
propose that the first joint appointments should be at the level of Associate Professor, with a focus on drawing from the pool of current Institute affiliate faculty. Joint appointments in Gerontology could also be a recruiting tool for partner departments hiring new faculty. We do not anticipate that this program will require additional resources.

In order to position the Institute for significant research growth, the institute should work over the near and long-term to attract a senior scholar with a funded research agenda. Such a scholar would (a) increase the national and international prominence of the department; (b) lead interdisciplinary teams of core and external faculty in securing significant external funding, such as a Center grant; and (c) mentor core and affiliate junior faculty. Although all of the core faculty members are engaged in externally funded research, the Institute presently lacks the expertise of full professors needed to solidify and strengthen our research base. The field of gerontology addresses one of the most challenging issues of the 21st Century and is thus central to Goal 3 of the university strategic plan. Because of the burgeoning population of older persons, and the need for research regarding the population’s needs and training individuals to serve these needs, the Institute is poised for significant growth. In order to accelerate the progress towards multiple significant external awards, the Institute should build leadership both internally (e.g., through the promotion of its existing faculty) and through entrepreneurial efforts to add new senior scholars with track records of sponsored research.

The gerontology programs of our peer institutions are all led by directors/chairs who are full professors. Three of the programs (Kentucky, South Florida, and Wayne State) are directed by senior scholars with decades of experience in sponsored research from NIA, NSF, private foundations and state contracts. The remaining program (Nebraska) does not have a strong profile of sponsored research and is directed by recently promoted (2012) full professor with little experience in sponsored research. We believe that a leader with a profile similar to those as Kentucky, South Florida, or Wayne State would accelerate research growth and enhance our research profile at GSU and nationally.

Although all of our core faculty members have a variety of experience with funded research and have the potential for growth in sponsored research, this faculty is comprised of relatively junior scholars. Recently tenured associate professor, Dr. Kemp, has an impeccable reputation and has just procured her first R01 from NIA and is beginning to mentor junior faculty and to engage in additional team building. In 2012, the Institute recruited two nationally recognized scholars as assistant professors (Mingo and Morgan). These junior scholars, now in their second year at GSU, would also benefit from additional senior leadership. It should be noted that the current Institute Director, an Associate Professor, has been quite effective and efficient in building the department over the past five years, in addition to furthering her own research skills and experience. She has had some experience with generating NIA funding, both as a PI and Co-I. At this stage of the Institute’s growth, however, it is recommended that a senior scholar who is more seasoned in obtaining funding would be best positioned to continue to accelerate the Institute’s current trajectory.

In order to achieve this goal, we need to consider a variety of options. The 2CIs have recently been the mechanism within the university to hire senior faculty outside GSU. Next year, new hiring initiatives may be announced, and this could be a mechanism through which the
Gerontology Institute can attract a candidate of this caliber. Several other emerging initiatives within the university may provide the means to attract a senior scholar, and these include the Global Studies Institute within the College of Arts and Sciences and the Cities initiative. Strengthening current relationships and building new ones among Gerontology Institute faculty (core and affiliates) and the faculty within these initiatives may lead to important partnerships. These partnerships may not only lead to more affiliate or joint-appointed faculty, but may identify internal candidates for the new Institute Director, as well as provide funding mechanisms for an external search. An external search for senior leadership could also be possible through a variety of mechanisms, including the Eminent Scholar program, additional philanthropy, and industry collaborations. The gerontology faculty members (core and affiliates) are well-connected nationally and internationally, and exploring these connections has already identified scholars who fit the definition of “eminent scholars.” It is incumbent upon the faculty and the current Institute Director to explore the option of attracting one of these scholars to come to campus. Essentially, we need to seek every possible, creative option to find, attract, and fund highly credentialed senior scholars.

**GOAL 2: ENHANCE THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF OUR UNDERGRADUATES IN GERONTOLOGY**

The Gerontology Institute provides a distinctive undergraduate experience for students involved in our undergraduate programs. Over the next five years, we intend to expand and enhance the opportunities for undergraduates to study gerontology at Georgia State.

**Initiative 1: Developing a BIS degree in Aging and Health.**
Currently, the Gerontology Institute is working with the School of Nursing and Health Professionals to develop a Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies in Health and Aging. We hope to offer this program to students by fall 2015. As GSU has grown their student body, there is also a growing interest in gerontology at the undergraduate level. Therefore, a program of this type (i.e., BIS in Health and Aging) will provide students with the opportunity to obtain a basic education beyond that of a certificate. The BIS will have an applied focus and prepare students to be able to significantly contribute to an applied health profession working with older adults. Upon completion of the program students will understand 1) the influence of biopsychosocial changes on the health of older adults and the aging process, 2) the influence of social determinants on health and aging, 3) how to work effectively in an applied health care setting, 4) the influence of public policy on healthcare and health outcomes, 5) understand the impact of health promotion and health prevention on health outcomes, 6) how to plan, develop, administer, and evaluate community based health programs for older adults. Overall, students will be assessed on communication skills, critical thinking skills, and analytical skills. A degree of this type is particularly important for students wanting to further their education in gerontology. Moreover, this program will be unique as no other institution in Georgia currently offers a Bachelors level degree in this growing discipline. We propose that having such a unique opportunity would lead to the growth of undergraduate students. This initiative requires no new resources.
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**Initiative 2: Increasing the profile of gerontology classes across the university**
At present the Gerontology Institute does not have courses within the University or College core curriculum. However, in light of the rapidly aging society, we believe it is important to provide gerontological education to all GSU students and that such knowledge should be included in the core curriculum. We are actively seeking to add “Introduction to Gerontology” (Gerontology 2000) to the list of core curriculum in Area F (i.e., lower division major requirements for other Area F courses and/or major course at higher levels). In addition, this course contributes to the courses aligned with the University System of Georgia’s learning goals E (i.e., students are able to effectively analyze and articulate the complexities of behavior while expressing how history, social, political, economic, factors influence behavior development) and learning goal III which is focused on developing critical thinking skills. A course of this type would be beneficial and provide a strong foundation to students of all majors. Several of our upper-division undergraduate classes are cross-listed with other departments and are popular electives in psychology and sociology. Many of our students “find” gerontology because when they took a cross-listed class that met a requirement within their major. We are currently seeking new partnerships to cross-list classes with relevant departments. For example, we are currently working with Policy Studies in the AYSPS about cross-listing Aging Policy and Services. The Institute also is working with other departments to have gerontology classes listed as approved electives for their majors. This initiative requires no new resources.

**Initiative 3: Developing honors classes**
We are excited about the growth of the new Honors College at Georgia State and believe that the study of aging will be attractive to the best and brightest students on campus. Communication and Aging has already attracted enough Honors students to create an honors section for that course. Dr. Atkinson also taught a Freshman Honors Seminar in the fall of 2012 focusing on intergenerational relationships. In addition, we have recently submitted a new proposal for an honors class, “Caring in the Context of Global Aging.” Dr. Morgan is proposing this undergraduate class which draws attention to global patterns of informal and formal care. A writing-intensive experience, this class promises to engage honors students and introduce them to potential of Gerontology. This initiative requires no new resources.

**Initiative 4: Increasing support of undergraduate scholarships**
Georgia State prides itself on its success at educating a diverse population of non-traditional students including those who struggle financially. Student success models have shown that even a small financial scholarship can make the difference for our students. The Institute intends to leverage our experience with funding scholarships at the graduate level to develop new funds that can be used by undergraduates. We are pleased to announce our first new scholarship in several years, the Mary M. MacKinnon Scholarship in Gerontology, in memory of a beloved staff member who was an alumna of the Institute. Both undergraduate and graduate students will be eligible for this award. Over the next five years, we intend to work closely with college development officers to build relationships which will lead to additional scholarships.

**Initiative 5: Engaging undergraduates in research**
As the number and quality of students enrolled in our class continues to grow, we are seeking to engage them in research experiences. Students can participate in funded research through
research internships or directed projects. We continue to encourage our students to showcase their experiences by participating in the Georgia State Undergraduate Research Conference and the Southeastern Student Mentoring Conference in Gerontology and Geriatrics. Both of these conferences are aimed at students and provide students with opportunities to gain experience designing a project and presenting it to a professional audience. This initiative requires no new resources.

**Initiative 6: Building our dual degree program with Sociology**

In 2014, we have put forward a BA/MA dual degree in Sociology and Gerontology. Through this program, exceptional sociology majors with an interest in aging will have the opportunity to complete both a bachelor’s in sociology and master’s degree in gerontology as short as five years. We see this program as having two positive outcomes: (1) students who plan to go directly into the workforce will do so with the experiences of sociology and gerontology and (2) students with a research focus a strong foundation for other doctoral programs in gerontology or related fields. Sociology has been a traditional feeder program for our MA program. In the last year, three of our entering MA students had earned bachelor’s degrees in sociology from GSU. This is the ideal opportunity to channel some of our best undergraduate students into a stellar graduate program. We expect the dual degree program to be approved by the end of this year and in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs for fall 2015. We will use AY2014-15 to develop a plan for recruiting and mentoring these students at all stages of the program. This initiative will require no additional resources.

**GOAL 3: BUILD OUR GRADUATE PROGRAM**

**Initiative 1: Recruiting and retaining successful MA students**

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the initiation of the MA program in Gerontology. Over this time we have graduated 38 MA students, who have gone on to doctoral programs and careers in aging. While we have been able to meet our graduate recruitment goals for the past three years, we need to make more progress toward improving the quality of our students. Over the next few years we intend to strategically grow the MA program through recruiting, retaining, and graduating motivated scholars in gerontology. We expect to increase the number of entering students in our fall cohort by 1-2 students over the next five years. Our increased profile on campus and in the region has resulted in an increase in applicants over the past few admission cycles. Moreover, our research initiatives discussed above in goal #1 will make the Institute more attractive to students seeking a graduate education. We recently began to use a wide range of recruitment strategies (e.g. active use of Hobson’s for direct emails, purchasing ETS GRE lists, attending graduate school fairs and other events, and advertising in conference programs on national and regional gerontology conferences) which have increased our profile in feeder schools. Furthermore, our increased presence in the undergraduate arena will help us “grow our own” MA candidates who become interested in aging and stay at GSU to pursue further education. This initiative requires no new resources.

**Initiative 2: Increasing the number and quality of internal graduate certificate students**

Increases in grant funding beget opportunities to more fully integrate doctoral level students into the Gerontology Institute. We have been successful in attracting a few doctoral students from other departments in the College to work on funded research. We hope to increase the
participation of doctoral students from other departments into our certificate program. This would help us identify talented doctoral students who can benefit from and support our funded research program. We will seek ways to make the graduate certificate appealing to doctoral students by offering internship opportunities within funded research programs to allow students to develop key research skills in areas such as data collection (e.g., semi-structured interviewing, web-based data collection tools, survey design) and data analysis programs (e.g., SPSS, NVivo). We will also increase our efforts in marketing our certificate to doctoral students in departments where aging-related skills and knowledge may increase the value of their GSU education (e.g. policy studies, sociology, psychology, education, nursing and allied health). This initiative requires no new resources.

**Initiative 3: Mentoring students’ career success inside and outside of academia**

With the addition of the Capstone Seminar, the Gerontology Institute has incorporated skills and competencies in the administration track to include developing and maintaining a web presence for the purpose of career development (e.g., LinkedIn), using social media and other sites for job leads, articulating value related to gerontological education and work experience and social networking in service of career development. We will continue to enhance these aspects of the program in ways that reach across our alumni networks and internship placement networks to formalize relationships to facilitate transition from education to paid employment. In addition to posting jobs, we will look for ways (e.g. panel presentations, networking opportunities, formal mentor mechanisms) to build relationships with the many alumni who can serve as mentors for current students. This initiative requires no new resources.

**Initiative 4: Strengthening opportunities for graduate students outside the classroom**

The Gerontology Institute provides a rich set of opportunities for its graduate students. As we continue to enhance our base of sponsored projects (as discussed in goal one above), the institute will strengthen graduate student opportunities to work on externally funded research projects. This will better prepare our students to succeed in doctoral programs or for research jobs. Also, the Institute has done a great deal of work to develop a contact database of multiple internship opportunities and related personal contacts. We will use this effort to open up additional options for graduate students to experience the issues of aging in real-world practical applications. These resources will prepare our more applied students for careers in aging. This initiative requires no new resources.

**GOAL 4: BECOME MORE ENGAGED WITH THE UNIVERSITY’S CITIES INITIATIVES**

**Initiative 1. Promoting collaborative interdisciplinary scholarship that addresses the challenges of aging populations in cities**

The research interests of our core and affiliate faculty include issues pertaining to the challenges of aging populations living in cities. In particular, our faculty members are collaborating in research teams that link community experts, state policymakers, and GSU colleagues researching cities. Historically these teams have not always brought the issues of aging populations to the forefront of research on the challenges of cities. Not only do we bring aging research expertise to the table but are also able to engage community partners from aging services such as Atlanta
Regional Commission/ Area Agency on Aging and the state Division of Aging Services. We will continue to pursue research interests and opportunities with partners such as those in public health, sociology, and geosciences, in order to address the unique challenges of older adults living in urban environments. This initiative requires no new resources.

**Initiative 2: Engaging new and emerging initiatives related to cities**

As the college and university defines and refines the Cities initiatives related to goal 4 of the GSU strategic plan, the Gerontology Institute plans to nurture existing partnerships and build new ones related to addressing the “complex challenges faced by cities and their regions today as they transition to the megacities of the future.” For example, we are very excited about an initiative emerging from the Sociology department (as part of their self-study process) for a Social Science Research Center. This interdisciplinary center will be designed to engage social science research to address the challenges of cities. Building on existing ties with sociology, we plan on establishing collaborative efforts as this center develops. In particular, Dr. Morgan has begun conversations with Dr. Wright (recent 2CI hire in Sociology) about potential alliances. The research center would be a long-range project funded through multiple sources such as large grants and community partnerships. As an external partner, we do not anticipate additional resources would be needed to facilitate our participation.

**Initiative 3: Engaging students in the urban laboratory of Atlanta**

Since its inception, the Institute has engaged students in signature experiences in metropolitan Atlanta through internships and student learning. The opportunities are structured to introduce students to the challenges spurred by the gerontological explosion in urban areas. Furthermore, they serve as a pipeline for students to continue to work in a capacity within which they are addressing aging in cities. This initiative requires no new resources.