This handbook provides essential information for graduate students pursuing the PhD in Gerontology as well as faculty serving in an advisory role to students. The Director of Graduate Studies should be contacted with any questions or comments.

Further information may be obtained from the Graduate Center for Gerontology Web Page (http://www.mc.uky.edu/gerontology) or by contacting:

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Lexington, KY 40536-0200
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(8/12 Update)
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CURRICULUM

A. Overview

Gerontology is a diverse field that embraces scholarship along a spectrum ranging from laboratory-based biological/biomedical sciences through physiological systems, psychology and behavior, social dynamics and societal forces. All elements along this spectrum operate within an intricate time-space canvas. Gerontology is rooted in theory and the basic research necessary to establish understanding as a foundation for application in the form of clinical and community practice and interventions. Largely as a consequence of this diversity, gerontology is naturally complex, especially when we consider the ongoing web of interactions at work between the many layers of human existence.

Becoming a gerontology scholar does NOT require becoming an expert in all facets of growing and being old. Rather, it involves development of focused expertise and, most important, the development of skills at situating one’s own work within the holistic context of aging. Indeed, the ability to think critically, holistically, and in an integrative way are hallmarks of gerontology at the University of Kentucky. And using this ability to generate innovative research, practices, programs, or interventions is a hallmark of earning a doctorate in gerontology.

The PhD program in gerontology employs a curriculum designed to establish the knowledge base and thinking/methodological skills necessary to successfully contribute to gerontology scholarship. The curriculum consists of 46 hours of course work plus directed studies and research within a program of study that involves six interlocking elements:

- a required core in gerontology;
- specialized coursework in a substantive thematic research domain;
- training in appropriate and supportive research methods;
- grounding in public health concepts;
- a qualifying examination, and
- a dissertation.

B. Gerontology Core

Particular emphasis in the gerontology core is placed on developing an understanding of the complex interrelations among the aging body, health and well-being, and social structure. In addition, core seminars explore the myriad ways that scholars in different disciplines theorize and do what they do in the field of aging. In sum, the core seminars seek to develop in students an advanced way of thinking that is at once critical, holistic, integrative, and imaginative.
The gerontology core is comprised of 5 specially designed seminars that account for 16 credit hours:

- GRN 600 A Study of the Older Person (3 hrs)
- GRN 612 Biology of Aging (3 hrs)
- GRN 620 Human Aging and Adjustment (3 hrs)
- GRN 650 Research Design in Gerontology (4 hrs)
- GRN 785 Integrative Research Seminar (3 hrs)

C. **Area of Specialization**

Students begin to develop in-depth knowledge and understanding of their particular topical area of interest through specially selected coursework. A student focusing in the social sciences, for example, might develop a program of study drawing largely from sociology, but incorporating course work in psychology, anthropology or other disciplines. In a similar manner, a student focusing in the biomedical sciences might draw their coursework from physiology, incorporating studies in anatomy, biochemistry, pharmacology and other related disciplines. Each student’s area of specialization will be developed in collaboration with his or her advisor and Advisory Committee working as needed in conjunction with the appropriate department(s).

A minimum of 15 credit hours will be completed in the area of specialization over the first two to three years of the Program.

D. **Research Methods**

Students are required to complete Research Design in Gerontology (GRN 650) as part of their core. This 4 credit hour course provides a critical overview of methodological content specific to research with older people, but *it is not intended to develop competence in any specific methods*. Students are thus required to complete, or demonstrate course equivalency to, basic statistical analysis (STA 570 or STA 580). Students must also take a minimum a 6 additional hours of methods-based coursework. Such courses may include specific quantitative/statistical methods, qualitative/ethnographic methods, laboratory or instrumentation techniques, and experimental or survey design. Students should work closely with their advisor or Advisory Committee in identifying suitable additional methods training.

Appropriate courses may be found within a wide array of departments. Listed below are some examples of possible courses that would fulfill the basic methods requirement.

- STA 671 – Regression and Correlation (2 hrs)
- STA 672 – Design and Analysis of Experiments (2 hrs)
- STA 673 – Distribution-Free Statistical Inference and Analysis of Categorical Data (2 hrs)
- STA 675 – Survey Sampling (2 hrs)
- STA 677 – Applied Multivariate Methods (3 hrs)
E.  **Public Health Concepts**

By virtue of Gerontology’s position within the College of Public Health, and in accordance with accrediting policy, all students are required to complete the following public health coursework:

- CPH 778 – Survey of Public Health (3 hrs)
- Epidemiology (3 hrs)

Students entering with a public health degree from an accredited institution make petition the Director of Graduate Studies to have these requirements waived.

F.  **Transferring Credits/Non-Program Coursework**

The Graduate Student allows up to 9 credit hours to be transferred under certain guidelines (see [http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/CurrentStudents/bulletin.html](http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/CurrentStudents/bulletin.html)). It is, however, not necessary to officially transfer credits to the University; any graduate courses taken at other universities may be used toward the degree if they exhibit relevance to the student’s study plan. Such courses must be approved by the student’s advisory committee and the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS).

Additionally, the policy of the Gerontology Ph.D. Program regarding the use of non-Program or non-UK coursework is as follows:

1) Courses that comprise the gerontology core (GRN 600, GRN 612, 620, 650, and GRN 656) are unique and no other coursework may be used to waive these requirements.
2) Methods courses at the graduate level taken at other institutions, or at UK prior to entry to the Gerontology Ph.D. Program, may serve as a basis for requesting a waiver to the supplemental methods requirement.
3) Graduate coursework from UK completed prior to admission to Gerontology may selectively be used toward the Ph.D. A student and her/his advisor must petition the DGS to have such courses accepted toward the degree.
4) Students may take graduate classes at other institutions while pursuing the Ph.D. at UK. Such classes must be approved by the student’s advisor.
G. **Teacher Training Component**

Emphasis in our doctoral program is placed on tailoring each student’s curriculum and experiences to meet the specific circumstances of the individual’s background and career goals. One possible—and potentially quite common—career pathway of gerontology students will be to gain faculty positions within the nation’s college and university system. The Teacher Training Component provides a formal arena for acquiring valuable teaching experience. It is based on the premise that practice is a necessary component of ability, yet it recognizes that careful and informed guidance is a staple in building true proficiency. Furthermore, this component helps to ensure a solid foundation in general gerontology, which is an invaluable part of preparing for qualifying exams.

Fall Semester: The Teacher Training Component involves a year of supervised work. During the fall semester (commonly the third semester of residence) students may enroll in GRN 616 – Teaching Seminar in Gerontology (2 hrs). This seminar is designed to provide a survey of the elements of teaching, from content selection and syllabus preparation to lecture and interactive techniques, student and self-evaluation, advising issues, and ethics in the classroom. The seminar also provides a supervised venue for the development of an undergraduate course in gerontology. Team teaching is strongly encouraged. Students will decide on the specific course to be taught, a course syllabus will be composed and finalized, and content research and organization will be conducted. Students will, as appropriate, be charged with advertising the course to promote adequate undergraduate enrollments. During this fall semester, students may also enroll in GRN/PGY 615 -- Seminar in Teaching Medical Science (2 hrs). This course introduces broad pedagogic elements, and also covers such topics as laboratory organization and technology in instruction.

Spring Semester: Students who have completed GRN 616 – Teaching Seminar in Gerontology have the option of assuming full responsibility for teaching an undergraduate course in gerontology during the spring semester. The students will concurrently enroll in GRN 617– Teaching Practicum in Gerontology (3 hours). This course will be coordinated by a member of the Gerontology faculty who will meet with students to discuss progress and experiences in the undergraduate class as well as practical and theoretical issues related to undergraduate education in gerontology. Students may elect to postpone their in-class teaching experience until later in their program, and students with prior experience may qualify to serve as sole instructor when they teach.

Students may also elect to participate in the University's Preparing Future Faculty opportunities. For more information about this program, including requirements for the Certificate in College Teaching and Learning, visit: [http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/StudentDevelopment/CTLCertificate.html](http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/StudentDevelopment/CTLCertificate.html)
H. Qualifying Examination

1. Eligibility and Scheduling

A student must take a qualifying examination in order to advance to Ph.D. degree candidacy. This examination will include both a written and an oral component.

A student generally becomes eligible to sit for the qualifying examination after successfully completing all Program requirements for core and elective course work, and after clearing any and all incomplete coursework on record. A student on academic probation may not take the qualifying examination. A student should have made demonstrable progress in developing a dissertation proposal before sitting for the qualifying examination.

The oral component of the qualifying examination must be formally scheduled by completing the “Recommendation for Qualifying Examination” form. This form, requiring DGS approval, must be submitted no later than two weeks before the scheduled examination and preferably before the writing component begins.

2. Content

A student must select, with the assistance and approval of the student’s Advisory Committee, three distinct thematic focus areas that serve as the context for examination items. These areas should correspond to the student's current and anticipated research interests, and will most likely be closely tied to the student's dissertation work. Students should expect to respond to questions regarding concepts, theories, and methods relating to each focus area, and should also be able to situate each focus area within the broader field of gerontology.

3. Preparing for the Examination

Students are encouraged to retain all notes and readings from all courses taken to fulfill requirements of the Program. Students should also meet with each committee member to discuss dissertation research ideas and qualifying exam focus areas, and should compose an appropriate list of readings corresponding to the chosen focus areas. At least one full committee meeting should be scheduled before the qualifying examination to allow effective guidance in both finalizing the dissertation proposal and identifying—and preparing for—the three focus areas.

4. Format

Examination items for the written component are composed by all members of the student's Advisory Committee. The student's committee chairperson, or advisor as designee, is responsible for soliciting and collecting possible examination items for each of the three focus areas, and for the final selection of examination items. The chairperson
is also responsible for distributing copies of the dissertation proposal, as appropriate and
determined by the Advisory Committee, to all committee members prior to
commencement of the written component of the examination.

Students will have 72 hours to respond in writing to items pertaining to each of the three
focus areas (an examination "section"), and all three sections must be completed within a
14-day period. It is the responsibility of the student and chairperson to determine the
exact scheduling of the sections within this 2-week period. It is also up to the student and
chairperson to determine when, during the day, the exam sections will be conveyed to the
student.

Students are expected to follow all standards of academic and professional conduct while
completing the qualifying examination. Students are further expected to follow the format
specifications for referencing defined by the student’s advisory committee or by the
American Psychological Association (APA).

If the schedule format presents unusual hardship for a student, then the student and
advisor may petition for an alternative schedule. In no case shall the alternative schedule
extend any individual section period beyond 72 hours; spacing between sections,
however, may be changed to extend the overall writing component beyond two weeks.
The petition for alternative scheduling may be submitted in writing to the Director of
Graduate Studies at any time before completion of the writing component of the
examination.

Approximately two weeks after completion of the written examination, students will sit
for the oral component of the examination. Students may expect to respond to questions
concerning their written examination, completed graduate coursework, and, as
appropriate, to questions associated with the dissertation proposal. The oral examination
counts as a formal committee meeting for Graduate School purposes; it should be
scheduled at a time when classes are normally in session, and must have all advisory
committee members in attendance. Students must be enrolled for credit hours (coursework
or GRN 767) during the term (fall, spring, or summer) in which the oral examination is
scheduled.

4. Examination Outcomes

The student’s Committee Chairperson and DGS will receive from the Graduate School
the “qualifying examination signature card” prior to the scheduled oral examination date.
This card is required for reporting the outcome of the qualifying examination. This card,
with all committee member signatures and recorded examination outcome, must be
returned immediately to the DGS for final approval and signature, and for submission to
the Graduate School.

There are two possible outcomes of the examination: Pass or Fail. A passing evaluation
allows the student to proceed to degree candidacy without stipulation, although in some
cases the student’s committee may require additional coursework to be taken as part of
the post-qualifying residency requirement. If the result is failure, the advisory committee
determines the conditions to be met before another examination. These conditions may
include additional coursework, and/or both written and oral components. The minimum
time between examinations is four months. A second examination must be taken within
one year after taking the first examination. A third examination is not permitted. Failure
to submit any portion of the written qualifying exam within the allocated time will
constitute failure in the qualifying examination.

Passing the qualifying examination advances a student to the status of “Doctoral
Candidate.” The student will be so notified in writing by the Program DGS and the Dean
of the Graduate School.

I. **Residency Requirement**

See the admissions year’s edition of the Graduate School Bulletin for both pre-and post-
qualifying residency requirements.

J. **The Dissertation**

The culmination of all Program requirements is completion of an approved dissertation,
which is the result of original research that adds to or significantly and innovatively
modifies what was previously known on the subject. The Chairperson or Advisor, whose
research specialization reflects the candidate’s dissertation interests, serves as the
Dissertation Director. Procedures for undertaking and writing the dissertation are
outlined in the Graduate School’s *Manual for Theses and Dissertations*, which is
available in printed form or from the Graduate School’s web site.

1. **Proposal**

A student must submit a Dissertation Proposal for approval to the student’s advisory
committee. The format of the proposal and timing of approval is specific to each student
and associated advisory committee. Regardless of format or timing of submission, a copy
of the proposal approved by the advisory committee must be filed with the Director of
Graduate Studies.

The dissertation proposal should, at a minimum, follow basic content and length
specifications for a grant proposal submitted to the National Institutes of Health.

2. **Administrative Preparation for the Defense and Graduation**

Students are expected to know and understand the administrative procedures and required
forms associated with all elements of dissertation completion, degree application, final
defense, and graduation as specified by the Graduate School in the *Graduate School
Bulletin*. 
3. **Dissertation Format**

The content and general organization of the dissertation is left to the discretion of each student, with the approval of the student’s advisor and/or advisory committee.

The format of the dissertation should follow guidelines established by the Graduate School and described in the web document governing theses and dissertations (http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/CurrentStudents/theses_prep.html). Referencing format should follow American Psychological Association (APA) standards unless otherwise approved by the student’s advisory committee.

4. **Final Examination/Dissertation Defense**

Doctoral dissertation defenses shall be conducted in full accordance with Graduate School Guidelines. Procedure for the doctoral defense shall include the following three elements:

a. Candidates will present a public seminar on their dissertation work.

b. Following this presentation, the candidate and his or her advisory committee shall meet for the purpose of examination of the content and contribution of the dissertation document. At the beginning of this segment of the examination, the candidate and any guests may be asked to briefly step out of the room so that the committee may discuss any concerns with regard to the dissertation and deliberate on appropriate questions to ask the candidate.

c. At the conclusion of questioning and discussion of the dissertation, the candidate and any guests will be asked to leave the room, and the dissertation committee, together with the external examiner, will deliberate with respect to the success of the defense and the nature of needed changes, if any, in the final document. At the conclusion of these deliberations the candidate will be invited to return and will be informed of the outcome of the examination.
K. **Summary**

This summary listing indicates all requirements for the Ph.D. in gerontology. Students are encouraged to use this summary worksheet (available on the gerontology website) to track progress through their program of study, checking off requirements as they are completed, listing all courses used to fulfill requirements, and recording dates of key program milestones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Requirements (16 hrs)</th>
<th>Check Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GRN 600 A Study of the Older Person (3 hrs)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>GRN 612 Biology of Aging (3 hrs)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>GRN 620 Human Aging and Adjustment (3 hrs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRN 650 Research Design in Gerontology (4 hrs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRN 656 Integrative Research Seminar (3 hrs)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Methods (minimum 9 hrs)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STA 570 Basic Statistical Analysis (4 hrs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or STA 580 Biostatistics (3 hrs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective Methods (6 hrs minimum)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Specialization (minimum 15 hrs)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPH 778 Survey of Public Health</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epidemiology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Health Concepts (6 hrs)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualifying Examination (Date Passed: ____________)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation Proposal (Date Approved: ____________)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation Defense (Date Passed: ____________)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PROcedures AND EXPECTATIONS

A. Student Advising

Upon admission to the Ph.D. Program in Gerontology, each student will be assigned a preliminary “Faculty Mentor” who will serve as a provisional advisor (the Director of Graduate Studies will serve as the student’s official advisor until a permanent advisor has been identified and formalized with the graduate school). This Mentor, working in collaboration with relevant departments and the student, will develop an individually tailored program of study and research within the framework of the required curriculum. By the end of the first year, each student should have selected a permanent advisor. This advisor, if serving as the sole advisor, must hold a faculty rank of Associate Professor or above. An Assistant Professor may serve as co-chair of the advisory committee if accompanied by a senior faculty member.

It is anticipated that by the end of the Fall semester of his or her second year of study, each student will have formed a four member (minimum) Advisory Committee that must include at least three Gerontology Faculty, one of whom will serve as chair. One committee member must have an appointment outside of gerontology (affiliate faculty can serve in either capacity). Finally, at least three committee members must hold the status of “Full” graduate faculty (i.e., they are tenured and have the rank of Associate Professor or higher).

Each student is required to meet at least once per year with his or her advisory committee. The student is required to write a summary report on this meeting that should then be signed by his or her advisor and placed in the student’s file.

Students are expected to meet with their advisor on a regular basis. The advisor’s role is to assist the graduate student with any problems that may arise in their program of study and research, to monitor the student’s progress, and to serve as an intellectual and professional mentor during the student’s tenure in the Program.

Graduate students are not obligated to remain with or to retain their initial mentor and/or advisor. With the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, any student may change advisor at any time during his or her tenure in the program. It is understood that changes will occur as students define or re-define their area of interest or otherwise change focus and direction in their work.

B. Notification of Professional Activities

Students are required to keep a running log of all professional activities engaged in while affiliated with the gerontology program. This record is similar to the curriculum vitae and should include, but is not limited to: presentations at professional meetings, seminars presented, papers published, and visits to other universities. Students should notify the DGS of all professional activities when they occur and are required to notify the DGS of all progress indicators at the close of each spring semester.
C. **Expectations for Faculty Supervised Research**

Because the Doctoral Program in Gerontology is research focused, students are expected to participate in research from entry to the program and progressively increase their research commitment and rigor as they advance. Until a student has selected a permanent advisor to direct her/his dissertation work, the Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the student, will assign the student to a Faculty Mentor with whom she/he will work on research activities related to the student’s interest in gerontology. In this context, care will be taken to match a given student with faculty doing research along the lines of the student’s interest.

A student, working with her/his assigned faculty research mentor, is strongly recommended to complete a **Research Mentoring Agreement** containing:

1. Type of research activity (e.g., funded or non-funded);
2. A description of the project or topic;
3. The roles and responsibilities of the student and the faculty advisor; and
4. Expected time commitments (e.g., hours per week the student is expected to commit to the research, and scheduled meeting times between student and advisor. As a general rule, full time students are expected to commit 20 hours per week on research activities, and part time students approximately 5 to 7 hours per week.)

A copy of the **Mentoring Agreement**, signed by both the student and the faculty advisor, should be submitted prior to the mentoring arrangement (strongly recommended for completion before the semester it begins) for approval to the Director of Graduate Studies of the Program. The role of the DGS is primarily to maintain records of student research interests and/or progress and to assure fairness among individual student agreements.

D. **Professional Organizations**

Students are encouraged to join and to participate in professional organizations. The following is a sampling of organizations central to Gerontology and Public Health:

- *The Gerontological Society of America*
- *Association for Gerontology in Higher Education*
- *Southern Gerontological Society*
- *Kentucky Association for Gerontology*
- *American Public Health Association*
- *Kentucky Geriatrics Society*
- *Kentucky Public Health Association*

Students may also wish to build and/or maintain activity within discipline-specific organizations at regional or national levels.
ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Our Program is based on the philosophy that faculty instruction, mentorship, and advising, along with financial support (through at least fellowships or assistantships, tuition coverage, travel allowances, dedicated office space, and ongoing technology assistance) is solely intended to promote the intellectual and professional development of students to a level deserving of a Ph.D. in Gerontology. But the true value of a doctoral education emerges, first and foremost, from each student’s personal investment in intellectual and professional development. Our concept of “Academic Progress” is, therefore, based on whether a student’s personal investment meets or exceeds the Program’s investment, and whether students are moving expeditiously towards completion of coursework, qualifying examination, and dissertation.

A. Failure to Make Adequate Progress

Students in the Program are expected to maintain consistent progress in their course work and independent research activities. Any student who accumulates more than six hours of incomplete (I) grades during any regular semester, or who has less than a 3.0 cumulative grade point average, will be placed on Program Probation. In such cases the student may become ineligible for further assistantships or fellowships.

If deficiencies are found, the student will be so advised in writing along with means for remedying deficiencies. If the deficiencies are not removed in a specified period of time, or if the student’s performance reveals a persistent pattern of less-than-satisfactory performance, the Administrative Council, with the concurrence of the student’s advisor, may recommend termination from the Program.

Should the student wish to appeal the termination, the following procedure is to be followed:

(1) An ad hoc Committee appointed by the Director of Graduate Studies will meet to discuss the situation and vote on the issue of the student’s continuation. All existing information on the case will be made available to the faculty. Recommendations will then be made to the entire Graduate Faculty in Gerontology.

(2) If the Graduate Faculty recommends to the Dean of the Graduate School that a student be terminated, the student will receive written notice of the decision that will clearly state the reasons for the termination and provide the student with an opportunity to meet with the Graduate Faculty of the Program. At this time, a second vote will be taken and a final recommendation will be made to the Dean of the Graduate School.
B. Completion of Degree

Qualifying examinations and defenses must take place during the academic year or while classes are in session. Although the defense of the dissertation (also called the “final examination”) is the apex of doctoral studies, the degree is not complete until all revisions to the dissertation have been made and approved, and the required signed copies of the dissertation are submitted to the Graduate School.

C. Procedure for Redress of Grievances

Individual students having a grievance about any aspect of the Program should first take her/his grievance to the Director of Graduate Studies of the Program. If the DGS cannot resolve the issue, the grievance should then be taken to the Director of the Program. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be obtained at this juncture, the grievance should then be taken to the Dean of the Graduate School. If resolution is not obtained at this level, the student may then forward the grievance to the Academic Ombud. If the Ombud cannot resolve the issue, then the student may take the issue to the University Appeals Board. (See Section 6.5 of the Student Rights and Responsibilities handbook for a description of the Appeals Board.) **The student also has the right to go directly to the Academic Ombudsperson at any stage of this process.**

D. Vacation and Leave Policy

Because graduate students do not accrue vacation days, the Doctoral Program has adopted a set of rules and guidelines. For each funded student, two weeks are allowed for vacation in addition to official University Holidays. Academic breaks are not vacation days (i.e., Fall Break, Spring Break).

Graduate courses do not necessarily follow undergraduate semester rules and regulations (e.g., no —Dead Week— exists for graduate level courses). Maternity and Paternity leave is one month with an optional two weeks (this time to be negotiated with the Faculty Mentor). For the optional two weeks, work/training may be completed in advance of requested leave or completed during a specified time frame immediately afterward. Any student, with the consent of their Faculty Mentor, may petition the DGS for time off or deviations from these rules and guidelines. Approval of such petitions must be obtained from the DGS in writing.

GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Admission Criteria

All candidates must meet general admission requirements as stipulated by the Graduate School. Successful applicants will have a grade point average of at least 3.0 in their major field and will have a strong background in a field relevant to health and aging. Because of its multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary focus, it is anticipated that students
enrolling in the Program will include individuals with a background in medicine and the biomedical services, the social and behavioral sciences, the humanities and applied disciplines such as social work or public administration.

Candidates will be evaluated according to the following admission criteria:

1. Minimum GPA of 3.0 for BA/BS degree from an accredited college or university, or Minimum GPA of 3.2 for an MA/MS degree.

2. GRE scores (Scores of 1200 or higher on the Verbal + Quantitative components of the GRE and 5.5 on the Analytical are desirable).

3. Official academic transcripts from all colleges attended.

4. Three letters of recommendation from individuals with knowledge of the applicant’s research and/or work.

5. Personal statement containing a description of applicant’s background and goals.

6. Applicants are encouraged to submit samples of their writing.

No single criterion is dominant but the combination must demonstrate the applicant’s potential for success in advanced graduate study.

B. Application to the Program

Before applying to the Graduate Center for Gerontology, applicants should complete and submit a formal application to the University of Kentucky’s Graduate School. Application forms may be obtained from the Graduate School and should be returned to the University of Kentucky, Graduate School, 101 Gillis Building, Lexington, Kentucky, 40506. Two official transcripts and GRE scores should be forwarded directly to the Graduate School from all previously attended institutions. (NOTE: Beginning in Fall of 2012, application to the Ph.D. Program must be made through the SOPHAS system. The Graduate School Application fee will be waived for applications received through this system.)

International students should also submit TOEFL scores to the Graduate School unless they are applying to the University of Kentucky with an MA, MS or MPH degree from a U.S. institution. Incoming students are expected to have excellent command of written and spoken English. Without the ability to speak and write clear English of professional quality, graduate students will be at a disadvantage in the Program and may not be allowed to proceed with graduate work.

Letters of recommendation, a statement of personal goals, and other application materials should be sent directly to the Director of Graduate Studies, Graduate Center for
Admission to the Graduate School entitles students to enroll in graduate courses provided they have the appropriate prerequisites. The University provides provisional admission for students who have not completed all formal requirements for admission. Consult the University’s Graduate School Bulletin for criteria regarding provisional admission. Students seeking a Ph.D. in Gerontology must be admitted to full graduate standing. Maintenance of full graduate standing requires a B average or higher on all graduate work completed at the University.

Students generally enter the Ph.D. Program in Gerontology in the Fall Semester. Graduate students in the Ph.D. Program in Gerontology are subject to the general rules and regulations of the Graduate School as stated in the latest issue of the Graduate School Bulletin. Incoming students should read the Graduate School Bulletin carefully, particularly those sections describing University requirements. It is the responsibility of the student to know and observe all regulations and procedures required by the Program of study they are pursuing.

C. Admissions Process

Applications for the Ph.D. Program in Gerontology are independently reviewed by each member of the Core Faculty. On the basis of these reviews, the Director of Graduate Studies determines a list of candidates to be submitted to the Administrative Council for consideration. Final decisions regarding admission are made by this Council.

D. Residency Requirements

See the admission year’s Graduate School Bulletin for both pre- and post-qualifying residency requirements.

E. Academic Load

The academic year, for funding purposes, consists of two semesters—fall and spring. Financial support provided by the Center does not include tuition waivers for courses taken during summer sessions. The normal full-time load of a graduate student during each Fall and Spring Semester is 9 credit hours. Students considering enrollment for more than 12 credit hours must obtain permission from their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies. Under no circumstances may students exceed 15 credit hours in one semester without the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School. The required minimum (and recommended) number of credit hours for students with university funding is 9 (usually 3 three credit courses).

The Gerontology Program routinely admits students who wish to study part-time for part or all of their degree program. Part-time students should work closely with the Director
of Graduate Studies in determining the most efficient schedule of classes to ensure timely completion of the degree.

F. Financial Aid

The Graduate Center for Gerontology provides a number of scholarships and research assistantships including the Sanders-Brown Center on Aging Foundation Fellowship, the Charlotte Schmidlapp Fellowship, the Rebecca Van Meter Fellowship, a Research Challenge Incentive Fellowship, and Graduate School Research Assistantships. Students may also apply to the Graduate School for Graduate Student Support. These funds can be requested by enrolled graduate students to assist with expenses related to their dissertation research or for travel to present research at professional conferences. Other awards include the Dissertation Enhancement Award, the Commonwealth Research Award, Multi-Year Fellowships and Presidential Fellowships, and Tuition Scholarships. These awards are more prestigious and more specific than the Graduate Student Support awards. For further information, please contact the Graduate School Fellowship Office.

Duration of Funding

The Center will make every effort to guarantee funding for the first two years of study based on satisfactory progress towards the degree. Subsequent funding is competitive based on performance; under most circumstances the Center extends funding for full-time Ph.D. students to four years. Continuation of funding beyond the 4th year of study may occur, contingent on budgetary conditions, in the following circumstances:

- Engagement in intellectual development and dissertation research focused within the laboratory sciences; or
- If the third or fourth year is devoted to independently funded non-residency fieldwork, then the Program of study and support is normally extended.

Expectation of Good Faith Effort to Secure External Support

All students are expected to prepare and submit proposals for external funding at least once in the course of their Program. This is considered by the Program to be a very important part of professional training and development. Faculty members are committed to supporting and assisting students in the development of such proposals.

G. Student Housing

Information regarding campus housing options is available through the University Housing Office, 125 Funkhouser Building, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506-0054. The telephone number is (859) 257-1866. The University of Kentucky covers many acres of land that have been divided into three major areas of campus. Men’s, women’s, and co-educational residence halls are located on all three campus areas.
H. **Library Resources**

The University of Kentucky library system consists of several decentralized libraries. The W.T. Young Library offers technologies such as E-MNet, InfoKat, Laptop Loan Program and wireless internet connectivity. Libraries most frequently used include the William T. Young Library located on the Lexington campus; the Medical Center Library (MCL), located in the Albert B. Chandler Medical Center; and the Education Library (EDL), located in Dickey Hall. The libraries conduct tours at the beginning of each semester; check with the reference department for times and dates.

I. **Institutional Review Board (IRB)**

The Office of Research Integrity (ORI) has created a homepage on the Internet containing information and forms related to research involving human subjects, care and use of animals in research, and research misconduct. Via the homepage, (http://www.research.uky.edu/ori/) you may identify contact persons, access the latest applications and forms as well as view federal and local University of Kentucky regulations. Whether engaged in animal or human research, *all researchers are required to completed mandatory computer-based education*, which must be periodically updated. Information about this education is on the ORI website.

J. **Other Resources - Research Subject Pool.**

The Sanders-Brown Center on Aging has a pool of over 4,000 community dwelling research volunteers 60 years of age and older available to participate in research studies in aging. The Graduate Center for Gerontology maintains a database of potential subjects that is accessible by students and faculty. Human subject approval is necessary from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to gain access to these research subjects.

K. **Computing Center**

The Computing Center is located in McVey Hall, at the west end of Funkhouser Drive. The Information Systems Help Desk in 107 McVey Hall distributes a wide variety of free introductory guides and computer manuals to facilitate your computer work and networking connections. The Help Desk also provides free virus detection software, communications software, and other resources for which the University has site licenses. The UK Medical Center also frequently holds training workshops for various software packages (e.g., EndNote, Excel).

L. **E-mail and Mailboxes**

E-mail is an important mode of communication between faculty and students. It is imperative that students check e-mail regularly for important announcements, scholarship notices, and special events. Indeed, the assigned university email account is considered an “official” means of communication. All students have mailboxes located in in the Program offices.
M. Parking

A large parking area is provided for students (C sticker) at Commonwealth Stadium, with regular shuttle bus service to the Medical Center and the Lexington Campus. This parking area is within walking distance of the Graduate Center. Parking permits can be obtained from the University Parking Services; call 257-5757 for additional information.

N. Final Notes

For additional information on University regulations and procedures regarding doctoral programs, consult the Graduate Bulletin of the University of Kentucky Graduate School.

University Governing Regulations prohibit all discrimination on the basis of sex, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, color, creed, religion, age or political belief. Sexual harassment is an explicit violation of Administrative Regulations and should be reported. As a condition for being a student in the Graduate Center for Gerontology, you are required to attend a Program on sexual harassment during your first semester of enrollment.

Information in this Handbook is regularly updated but in the rapidly changing environment of the contemporary university, there is sometimes a lag between the implementation of changes and their inclusion in printed and on-line material. Consequently, it would be greatly appreciated if you would communicate with the DGS if you discover any aspects of the Handbook that needs to be updated. Feedback on ways in which the Handbook can be improved is also welcome at any time.
I. FUNCTION

The mission of the Graduate Center for Gerontology is to provide advanced interdisciplinary research training in gerontology, to conduct interdisciplinary research with an emphasis on aging and health considered from a cell to society perspective, and to make service and policy contributions to improve the quality of life of elders individually and as a population within the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world.

II. FACULTY DEFINITION

University Rules and Regulations Section I and Section II

1. The faculty of the Graduate Center for Gerontology/Department of Gerontology* is composed of:

   a. Core faculty, i.e., those faculty members who hold regular title, special title, clinical title, or research title series in the Graduate Center:

   b. Affiliate faculty, whose primary appointment is in another university department;

   c. Affiliate faculty, whose appointment is in another institution or in the community

   d. Adjunct faculty;

   e. Part-time faculty;

   f. Voluntary faculty, and

   g. Emeritus faculty.

2. The structure of the Graduate Center is such that the administrative leadership is vested in the Director, and at the Director’s discretion a Deputy Director can be appointed.

3. Up to three affiliate faculty members nominated by the Director and approved by the Administrative Council and all faculty falling into category 1a, have full voting privileges within the Graduate Center. All other faculty are welcome to participate in faculty matters, but do not have a vote. There are no ex-officio members of the faculty.
4. All faculty of the Graduate Center for Gerontology may serve as a full or associate member of the faculty of the University of Kentucky Graduate School, following the rules of appointment to that body.

*Referred to henceforth as the Graduate Center

III. FACULTY MEETINGS

University Rules and Regulations II - Section I

The Graduate Center is administered by an Administrative Council comprising of the core faculty, three appointed members of the affiliate faculty, the Administrative Coordinator of the Graduate Center, and two students in good standing. Administrative Council meetings are convened on a regular basis. In addition, special meetings may be convened. The Director, or his/her designee, generally the Director of Graduate Studies, will preside over all Administrative Council meetings. All meetings will follow the established University policy on open meetings.

Special meetings may be called by the Director as needed. An agenda is made available at the time of the meeting. Items may be modified by faculty in attendance. Voting members are as noted above in II.3. A quorum shall be one-half of voting Administrative Council members. Parliamentary procedure shall be in accordance with generally accepted procedures, relying upon Robert's Rules of Order, should there be differences as to procedure.

Routine issues introduced and discussed at any meeting may be voted upon at that meeting. A vote taken to approve a major new policy and/or policy change shall occur only at the next upcoming faculty meeting subsequent to its initial introduction.

On routine issues, an absolute majority vote of the voting members present is decisive. Issues involving fundamental changes in educational or other Graduate Center policies can be decided by a two-thirds majority vote.

Any voting member may request the Director to call a special meeting by submitting the request in writing briefly describing the issue(s) that the member wishes to be placed on the agenda. The Director shall call the meeting ten working days.

The discussions at the Administrative Council meeting should be free and uninhibited, with ample opportunity provided to express individual views.

Minutes will be taken and transcribed in the form of a statement that summarizes the discussion prompted by each agenda item. Minutes will be circulated to all members of the Administrative Council prior to the following regularly scheduled meeting. The minutes should be approved at the next regularly scheduled meeting. Minutes will be kept on file in the Director's administrative office.

IV. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

In addition to the Administrative Council, the Graduate Center for Gerontology is administered by standing committees and ad hoc committees appointed by the Director and approved by the Administrative Council

Section 1: Curriculum Committee
The mission of the Curriculum Committee is to ensure that the curricula of all academic Programs in the Graduate Center for Gerontology are up-to-date, reflect the interdisciplinary emphasis of the Graduate Center and are of the highest possible quality. (See Graduate Center Handbook).

Section 2: Recruitment Committee

The mission of the Recruitment Committee is to ensure that the Graduate Center recruits students of the highest caliber and that outreach and public information materials from the Graduate Center are of the highest possible quality. (See Graduate Center Handbook).

Section 3: Development Committee

The mission of the Development Committee is to ensure the fiscal stability and growth of the Graduate Center. (See Graduate Center Handbook).

Section 4: Mentorship Committee

The mission of the Mentorship Committee is to ensure that the highest level of intellectual, practical and social support possible is provided to all persons involved in or associated with the Graduate Center for Gerontology. (See Graduate Center Handbook).

Section 5: Ad Hoc Committees shall include committees appointed to conduct searches to fill vacant faculty positions and specially appointed committees to conduct non-regular activities including progress review, reappointments, promotion, and tenure.

V. FACULTY PROCEDURES

The Graduate Center for Gerontology conducts business in accordance with all University of Kentucky Rules and Regulations.

1. Promotion and Tenure

Promotion and tenure of a faculty member will follow the University Rules and Regulations regarding review at levels above that of the Graduate Center. All matters of faculty selection, progress review, reappointments, promotion, and tenure shall be handled by review of the candidate’s dossier by each faculty member. All faculty will have an opportunity to participate in the review process and to render judgments in these matters. Each faculty member will be allowed to use his or her own judgment regarding the total dossier of an individual and put a relative value on such issues as peer reviewed and non-peer reviewed publications, teaching portfolio, record of service, perceived academic status, funding levels, quantity and quality of activities, involvement with students, service on external bodies (such as review teams and editorships), quality and quantity of teaching activities, and other issues relevant to appointment, promotion and tenure. At a minimum, each file will contain an updated curriculum vitae and, as necessary depending upon the action being taken, a suitable number of outside letters as well as internal recommendations. Letters may be sought by the Director and/or the faculty member. Each faculty member will have access to materials in his or her own file under the Open Records Act.
The College of Public Health requires an annual faculty performance review and an updated curriculum vitae for all tenured and non-tenured faculty. The annual evaluations will be produced as required by the University's Governing Regulations. The Director of the Graduate Center can require additional evaluation and reviews on a faculty member as deemed necessary. Faculty members' evaluations are submitted by the Director to the Dean of the College of Public Health for review and approval. Evaluations are maintained in faculty members' personnel files located in the business office.

The Director will discuss junior faculty performance with senior faculty for two and four year evaluation reviews. All specific input from senior faculty will remain confidential. The junior faculty will be invited to present his or her input before the senior faculty. All members of the senior faculty will perform the review and sign the evaluation document. In addition, the faculty member will be invited to sign the review.

Evaluation and peer review are factors in determining whether to reappoint faculty members to the Graduate Center for Gerontology. Such reappointments are based on the University's Governing Regulations.

The Director of the Graduate Center is responsible for recommendations to the Dean on terminating faculty. Procedures and criteria used in preparing recommendations shall include consultations with all tenured members of the Graduate Center and with all full-time, non-tenured members of the Graduate Center (except those appointed in the research title or visiting series) with the actual or equivalent rank of assistant professor or higher who have been members of the Graduate Center for at least one year.

Faculty members shall be required to develop and complete a Distribution of Effort form on a yearly basis. The DOE form shall reflect each faculty member's activities in research, instructional, clinical, administrative, professional development and non-sponsored activities and relate to their assigned appointment in the Graduate Center for Gerontology. The DOE will be used in determining salary adjustments.

2. Budget

The Director of the Graduate Center working, with the Administrative Coordinator and in consultation with the Assistant Dean for Fiscal Affairs is responsible for budget preparation in accordance with procedures adopted by the College and the University.

3. Policy and Rule Changes

All changes in policies and rules are written and submitted to the Administrative Council for review and approval at regular Administrative Council meetings. After approval, the rules and policies are entered into the Graduate Center Handbook.

All policies and rules of procedure for the Graduate Center for Gerontology are superseded by governing and administrative regulations of the institution.

VI. LOCATION OF APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS
The following documents are located in the business office and/or Director's administrative office of the Graduate Center for Gerontology.

A. Governing and Administrative Regulations  
B. University Senate Rules  
C. Graduate School Bulletin  
D. Graduate Center for Gerontology Handbook  
E. Graduate Center Rules of Procedure  
G. University of Kentucky Business Procedure Manual

VII. ACADEMIC MATTERS

All academic matters are conducted in accordance with the University of Kentucky Administrative Rules and Regulations. Faculty are involved in academic matters on a regular basis, including, but not limited to, advising Ph.D. and Graduate Certificate students; revising and updating the curricula of the Graduate Center; establishing class schedules, and overseeing appropriate evaluation of the courses they teach. These matters are introduced, discussed, and finalized as part of the regularly scheduled meetings of the Administrative Council.

VIII. STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Consistent with the philosophy of the Graduate Center of Gerontology students serve as full voting members of all Graduate Center committees with the exception of situations where a direct conflict of interest exists as determined by the Administrative Council.

Approved:

______________________________    ____________________  
Director                                      Date  
Graduate Center for Gerontology

______________________________    ____________________  
Dean, College of Public Health              Date  

______________________________    ____________________  
Provost/Interim Provost                  Date  
University of Kentucky