SPECIAL REPORT

OF THE

GRADUATE COUNCIL

concerning

CREATION OF A CERTIFICATE IN
AGING, PUBLIC HEALTH AND POLICY
(#4236)

Presented at the
774th Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate
January 25, 2018

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

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Briefly describe the certificate.

The UMass Amherst School of Public Health and Health Sciences is offering a Graduate Certificate in Aging, Public Health, and Policy. The certificate is 15 credits. The Certificate is open to all graduate students currently admitted to the MPH/PHD Public Health Programs in the School, including on-line and in-person students. The program is also open to non-matriculated working professionals in the fields of Public Health, Health Care, Allied Health Sciences, Gerontology, and Education. As well as, researchers and policy makers in aging, who have an interest in improving skills in the field of aging and in potentially pursuing a future Master in Public Health degree.

Provide a brief overview of the process for developing this certificate.

The certificate was first proposed in the summer of 2016. Market research was identified through the UMass Continuing and Professional Education’s partnership with EAB. A 2014 report entitled “Market Demand for Aging Studies and Gerontology Graduate Programs” was pulled from a database. Briefly, the report found that as the “Baby Boomers” age there is an ever increasing demand for aging services and knowledgeable professionals working in the field of Gerontology. Overall, demand grew 23.7 percent nationally in the time period 2010-
2013. Given the age of the report, a second evaluation of market demand was requested in May 2017. Additional market research was conducted during the fall 2016. 10 fully online and 1 face-to-face Graduate level certificates in Gerontology were identified around the US, with only one in the New England regional area. The sole program in New England did not focus in the field of public health. Given the results of the market research, it was decided to pursue this certificate. Planning began with identifying current faculty and courses already offered in the Health Promotion and Policy department and the creation of a planning committee. The planning committee met once per month and developed the course outline, credits, and logistical details. In fall 2016, the committee identified the need for at least 3 new faculty. By May 2017, 3 new faculty had been hired. New course development began in May 2017 and was completed on July 17th, 2017. The 2014 EAB report and Market research are attached to this submission.

**Purpose and Goals**

Describe the certificate's purpose and the particular knowledge and skills that will be acquired by participating students.

The purpose of the certificate is to provide working professionals and MPH students with the knowledge and skills to become leaders in the fields of Aging, Policy, and Public Health

Successful candidates in the certificate will gain the following skills:

- Analyze existing aging-related health care policy to determine efficiency & usefulness.
- Articulate historical and potential future financial impacts of aging policy choices.
- Create a new health long-term care policy.
- Compare the aging-related policy differences among states based on variations in state characteristics, such as demographics, urban-vs-rural settings, political leanings, or geographic regions.
- Examine the history and development of aging health care law and policy including policy participants, investors, and stakeholders.
- Examine how aging policy affects patients and communities in terms of cost and access to care.
- Synthesize the various components of long-term health policies.
- Demonstrate knowledge of fundamental concepts in the field of aging and the life course.
- Describe pertinent social and environmental issues and special health issues that affect older adults.
- Explain public health, the aging network, and health care services for older adults and to describe available resources for older adults.
- Understand how social structure and sociohistorical perspectives shape the life course in various ways. Identify key components of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory as they apply to population aging.
- Identify sources of health-related data in order to describe the distribution of disease in populations. Generate hypothesis from descriptive data on disease frequency in relation to person, place and time. Interpret health status indices based on these data, such as mortality and morbidity rates.
- Identify, analyze and interpret risk factors influencing individual and community health status through a strong foundation in epidemiology, social, and behavioral theory.
• Apply ecological theory, or “systems thinking”, for discussing and resolving prevalent chronic disease issues and planning and implementing health promotion interventions.
• Apply evidence-based approaches in the development and evaluation of social and behavioral chronic disease and health promotion interventions.
• Research and propose an innovative new approach to health promotion/chronic disease management.
• Understand federal, state, and local government structures and processes as they relate to aging policy.
• Understand the intersection of federal and state legal actions and the health and wellbeing of older people.
• Review and describe the different functions of end-of-life decision-making tools and processes and understand the legal implications for each tool.

Resources

If this proposal requires no additional resources, say so and briefly explain why. If this proposal requires additional resources, explain how they will be paid for. For proposals involving instruction, indicate how many new enrollments are expected and whether the courses have room to accommodate them.

• This certificate does not require additional resources in terms of new faculty or new courses.
• We anticipate approximately 10-20 students in each course and because each course is offered online, we do not anticipate any issues with accommodating student enrollments.
• Marketing for the certificate will be required. Funding for marketing efforts will be paid from UMass CPE funds and SPHHS CPE funds. We anticipate spending $25,000.00 per year in marketing.
• The new certificate will be administered by the Academic Director of Continuing Education Programs at the SPHHS as part of the positions current responsibilities.

Curriculum

Please describe the curriculum for this certificate, listing all required courses and possible electives, any prerequisites or GPA requirements, the recommended order or coursework and any other pertinent information. You may attach additional materials related to the curriculum at the end of this section.

Prerequisites:

• Bachelor’s degree
• 2.8 GPA
• Currently working in Public Health, Health Care, Health Education, Allied Health Sciences, Research, Gerontology, or Health Policy/Law.

Credits: 15
Proposed Courses: Core/Required

1. HPP 690A - Intro to Aging and Public Health
2. HPP 627 - Long Term Care Policy and Politics
3. HPP 690B - Aging, Policy, Politics, and Law
4. HPP 690R - Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention in an Aging Population
5. HPP 690E - Public Programs

Recommended order of courses:

First semester should be HPP 690A and HPP 627. If a student wishes a third course they can choose one of the others. Should a student wish to take only one course per term the HPP 690A should be their first class and HPP 627 should be the second course.

*Explain how these courses represent a coherent course of study.*

HPP 690A, 627, and 690B provide students with the opportunity to learn the basics of aging in our society, including the current long term care systems, health care systems, aging policy and law, and how politics and societal attitudes shape the delivery of health and social services to older people and impact the wellbeing of this population. Students then move into the more nuts and bolts about the system including delving into public programs, and specific topics that affect the aging population through the completion of HPP 690R and HPP 690E.

*Describe how there is a clear educational objective that can be achieved in an efficient and well-defined manner.*

The Aging Certificate course curriculum explores the interaction of Public Health and aging in the theoretical, clinical, system, and policy domains. These four major domains are introduced from a sociohistorical perspective followed by discussions of current issues and policies that impact older adults and the stakeholders of an aging society. Course participants will gain a theoretical understanding of the continuum of care for older adults and how social determinants impact health. In addition, topics will explore how clinical professionals attempt to meet the physical and mental health needs of this population and discuss the role of long-term services and supports as well as policies that impact end-of-life care. By viewing the aging process through these four major domains, course participants will advance their knowledge base and be equipped to apply this knowledge as a clinical-provider or public health professional. Course participants should be prepared to meet their educational objectives by adapting course material and assignments to best meet their professional goals. This may include developing a course assignment further to submit for publication or developing an internal document for co-workers to better understand the aging process.

*Explain how the course sequence offers a clear objective at the appropriate educational level.*

As course participants’ progress through the Aging Certificate program, they will gain an in-depth understanding of how each of the major four domains (e.g. theoretical, clinical, systems, and policy) interacts with an aging population. A graduate-level ‘Introduction to Aging and Public Health’ course welcomes course participants to general theoretical, systems, and policy topics. Participants then engage with course topics in more detail in order to comprehend the
complex programmatic, clinical, and governmental perspectives of an aging population. The Aging Certificate program is designed to build off any existing knowledge of the health and social service delivery systems participants may have upon starting the program. The course curriculum is designed to allow participants an opportunity to further explore topics of interest within the public health and aging field. As participants move through the course sequence they will have opportunities to develop material useful in their professional endeavors.

Describe the perceived need for this certificate.

Market Research into existing Aging certificates found that there are no aging and public health programs in the New England Regional area. Additionally, the research shows demand for aging professionals increased 23% during the time period 2010-2013, with the trend projected to continue as the Baby Boomer generation continues to age.

If the courses that comprise the certificate have been or currently are being offered, describe their schedule of availability. If the certificate is comprised of new courses, describe their planned availability.

Required courses:

1. HPP 690A-Intro to Aging and Public Health (spring and fall terms)
2. HPP 627-Long Term Care Policy and Politics (spring and fall terms)
3. HPP 690B-Aging, Policy, Politics, and Law (spring or fall terms)
4. HPP 690R-Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention in an Aging Population (summer term)
5. HPP 690E-Public Programs (summer term)

If the certificate requires or includes courses from outside the sponsoring department, provide evidence of agreement(s) with the unit(s) offering those courses. You may attach any memoranda of understanding below.

N/A

If applicable, please attach any memoranda of understanding from other departments or colleges below.

No Files Uploaded at This Time

If the requirements for this certificate overlap with those of another certificate or a degree program, describe that overlap.

(Note that if a student who has completed a certificate seeks clearance for a degree program that overlaps with that certificate program, the Registrar will note on the transcript that the certificate has been superseded by the degree.)

The certificate is designed to either stand alone or to be completed in tandem with the MPH-Public Health Practice Degree.

Should a current MPH-PHP student wish to earn the certificate as part of the MPH degree, 5/5 of the required MPH electives will be the aging certificate core courses.

Should a non-degree aging certificate student wish to move on and pursue the full MPH degree
upon completion of the certificate, then all 15 courses will transfer into the MPH degree upon matriculation, provided the student has met all eligibility requirements for admissions and the Graduate School transfer credits policy.

What type of student is allowed to participate in this certificate program? (E.g., matriculated UMass students, non-matriculated CPE students, Five College students, graduate students, students in a specific degree program, etc.)

Matriculated UMass students, Non-matriculated CPE students, graduate students, UMass MPH and PHD students, UMass MBA Health Administration students.

What role will this certificate play in relation to other departments or degree programs on campus? Certificates vary widely across campus and may represent a subset of an existing degree program, a multidisciplinary program, or an entirely free-standing area of focus.

The certificate will be a subset of the existing MPH-Public Health Practice degree program and an entirely free-standing area of focus.

Is this a transitional certificate program? (Transitional certificate programs are comprised of core courses from specific degree programs and may act as stepping stones into those programs. If a student who has completed a transitional certificate matriculates to the University and completes the degree program associated with that certificate, the transcript will note that the certificate has been superseded by the degree.)

No

MOTION: That the Faculty Senate approve the Creation of a Certificate in Aging, Public Health and Policy, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 18-024.