Teaching Geriatric Social Work Competencies to Prepare for Effective Practice with Older Adults

Denise Gammonley, Ph.D., L.C.S.W.
School of Social Work
College of Health & Public Affairs
University of Central Florida
Plan for the morning

• The Gero-Ed Center Model---Infusion, Specialization, Resources, Faculty Development
• Your reflections on infusion vs. specialization of geriatric content within the social work curriculum.
• Sharing knowledge tools and products available from the Gero-Ed Center and Katherine Kendall Institute of CSWE.
• An example of curriculum infusion: Global Aging in the HBSE Curriculum.
• Your ideas for integrating content on aging in your courses.
• Strategies to support faculty working toward enhancing student competence in geriatric social work.
What are Social Workers Doing to Assist Older Adults in Your Community?
### Newly Revised (July, 2015)  
**9 Interrelated Competencies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• An array of tools and resources for educators.
• Web-based knowledge tools and products for educators.

• Mentoring and guidance including accessible eLearning curriculum.
• Student recruitment and career guidance products.
• Policy recommendations to promote the elder care workforce in social work.
Enhancing Competency-based Education in Geriatric SW through Curriculum Change

- Specialization
  - “tracks” or concentrations
  - Electives—often only at the advanced level
- Integration
  - Content (readings, guest lectures, etc.) included in some courses—often generalist.
  - Added on to courses
  - Not any coordinated focus in the curriculum.
- Infusion
  - Woven throughout the program and course objectives.
  - Requires linking issues of aging and older adults with other substantive areas, fields of practice, and populations served.
- Transformation
  - Concepts of aging, life course, and cross-generational interdependence become organizing themes across the curriculum
  - Mission and goals
  - Curricular Aims
How are your programs thinking about the place of geriatric social work in your curriculum?

• Curriculum Infusion
• Reflection Exercise
Geriatric Social Work Competency Scale II
http://www.cswe.org/File.aspx?id=25445

4 Domains: Values, Assessment, Intervention, Services
10 items per domain
Student Self- Rated (BSW or MSW)
Field Instructor Rated version
Skill Level Rated on 4-points:
0=Not skilled at all
1=Beginning skill
2=Moderate skill
3=Advanced skill
4=Expert skill

1. VALUES, ETHICS, AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES (Knowledge and value base, which is applied through skills/competencies.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Level (0-4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please use the scale below to thoughtfully rate your current skill:
0 = Not skilled at all (I have no experience with this skill).
1 = Beginning skill (I have to consciously work at this skill).
2 = Moderate skill (This skill is becoming more integrated in my practice)
3 = Advanced skill (This skill is done with confidence and is an integral part of my practice)
4 = Expert skill (I complete this skill with sufficient mastery to teach others).

Please give us any comments and/or suggestions regarding the skills in each section.

1. Assess and address values and biases regarding aging.
2. Respect and promote older adult clients’ right to dignity and self-determination.
3. Apply ethical principles to decisions on behalf of all older clients with special attention to those who have limited decisional capacity.
4. Respect diversity among older adult clients, families, and professionals (e.g., class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation).
5. Address the cultural, spiritual, and ethnic values and beliefs of older adults and families.
6. Relate concepts and theories of aging to social work practice (e.g., cohorts, normal aging, and life course perspective).
7. Relate social work perspectives and related theories to practice with older adults (e.g., aging and environment, social justice).
8. Identify issues related to losses, changes, and transitions over their life cycle in designing interventions.
9. Support persons and families dealing with end-of-life issues related to dying, death, and bereavement.
10. Understand the perspective and values of social work in relation to working effectively with other disciplines in geriatric interdisciplinary practice.
Global Aging in the HBSE Curriculum
How do you engage and support your faculty colleagues to become interested in geriatric social work?

- I Will Listen
- I Will Try Something New
- This Seems Worth Doing
- I Will Help You Make it Happen

University of Central Florida
Supporting Clinical/Practice Faculty/Instructors

- Working toward *Curriculum Transformation*—
  - Generating interest, making content and teaching resources available.
- Achieving longer term *organizational* change
  - SW Program mission statement and goals
  - Curriculum decision-making units
  - Print, library and AV holdings
  - Community partnerships
  - Events, student groups
• They are listening
  ▪ Resources accepted with a smile.
  ▪ Share their elder care story.
  ▪ EPAS Competencies as a hook.
• They are trying something new
  ▪ Implementing a course module/activity.
  ▪ Attending a special activity or seminar.
  ▪ Sending colleagues or providers to see you.
  ▪ Requesting more resources or information.
• They value the effort
  ▪ Sharing experiences without prompting.
  ▪ Concrete changes to syllabi.
  ▪ Sending students to you.
  ▪ Bragging to colleagues or administrators.
• They are helping me to make it happen
  ▪ Advocating for organizational or curriculum changes.
  ▪ Developing their own curriculum materials, projects.
  ▪ Identifying new field sites for aging placements.

How do I know if it is working?
Resources and References


