Dear Colleagues:

We are pleased to share some exciting developments at the Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) that will dramatically enhance our ability to showcase AGHE’s activities to the broad community of scholars involved in gerontology nationally and internationally.

Background

Over the past two years AGHE has been evaluating the best mechanisms for advancing its mission and strengthening its programs. In 2016, a joint AGHE-GSA Committee explored the Association’s overall organizational health and sustainability, including its operating deficits. In 2017, AGHE President Nina M. Silverstein appointed AGHE President-elect Judy L. Howe to chair a Strategic Planning Task Force to develop the next strategic steps the Association should take to ensure its long-term success.

Approval for Transformation to AGHE 2.0

We are pleased to announce that the AGHE Executive Committee has endorsed the Task Force recommendations and that the GSA Council has also approved the strategic approach AGHE has proposed. The AGHE bylaws have been revised and approved by the AGHE Executive Committee and the GSA Executive Committee. The updated bylaws were approved by AGHE’s membership during the AGHE Business Meeting at the 2018 AGHE Annual Meeting and Educational Leadership Conference on March 2, 2018, in Atlanta, Georgia. A press release announcing the approval for the transformation was issued on March 14.

AGHE 2.0 Key Elements

The Strategic Planning Task Force has recommended AGHE take the following strategic steps to strengthen the Association and ensure its long-term viability.

1. Re-position the organization as the Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education and more fully integrate it into The Gerontological Society of America (GSA) where it will serve as the Society's education organization.

2. Maintain the Institutional Membership option in the newly formed Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education.

3. Enable all GSA members to elect affiliation with AGHE during the normal membership enrollment process.
4. Align essential AGHE operations (Fellowship, Awards, Committees, Program of Merit) with established GSA processes, timetables and financial management.

5. Recalibrate and streamline the number of AGHE Committees and focus on high-priority activities.

6. Adjust AGHE Executive Committee structure to be consistent with other membership groups in the Society.

7. Integrate the AGHE Annual Meeting & Educational Leadership Conference with the GSA Annual Scientific Meeting.

8. Maintain AGHE designation of Gerontology & Geriatrics Education (G&GE) as its official journal.

9. Maintain AGHE Tree of Knowledge Campaign, James McKenney Student Travel Awards, and access to interest earned on endowment funds.

10. Continue to pursue grant supported project to advance AGHE's mission.

These strategic steps will enable AGHE to pursue its mission while exposing a much larger population of academically-based scholars to the benefits of AGHE membership.

Commonly Asked Questions

While this is an exciting time for AGHE members, we also understand that individuals will have questions regarding how these changes will be implemented. Please refer to the Commonly Asked Questions About the Transformation to AGHE 2.0 below.

Next Steps

Please contact us with any questions you may have at the email addresses shown below. We look forward to working with you as AGHE takes this bold step forward.

Sincerely,

Nina M. Silverstein, PhD
AGHE President
nina.silverstein@umb.edu

Judith L. Howe, PhD
AGHE President-Elect
judy.howe@mssm.edu

p.s.: AGHE encourages its members to maintain their active engagement in the new Academy.
Commonly Asked Questions About the Transformation to AGHE 2.0

1. Will individuals still be able to join AGHE?

Yes. To participate in AGHE, individuals will join GSA as a member (the 501c3 organization that is AGHE’s home), and select “the Academy” if they would like to participate in and receive information from the Academy.

2. What if I’m retired, can I join AGHE?

Yes. To participate in AGHE, individuals join GSA (the 501c3 organization that is AGHE’s home), and choose the retired category of membership and select “the Academy” if they would like to participate in and receive information from the Academy.

3. May I be a member of a GSA Section and AGHE?

Yes. Individual members of GSA must affiliate with a member section (or At Large) and have the option to select “The Academy” as well.

4. Will the new Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education offer institutional memberships?

Yes, institutions may join the Academy. The institutional membership options will be simplified and rates will remain largely the same. Depending on the type of institutional membership selected, between two and four individuals will be eligible to enroll. Once the individual memberships have been purchased, members will be alerted to complete their GSA member profile online. Here they will have the opportunity to select “the Academy” to affiliate with.

While the bylaws are still being developed it is anticipated that there will be 3 types of institutional membership including:

(1) Educational Institution – Two-year college; Four-year college; Professional School; University.
(2) Educational Affiliate
(3) Organizational Affiliate

5. If I am designated as an AGHE member under an institutional membership, do I need to also pay GSA dues?

No. Once your institution has joined the Academy and assigned you one of its memberships, members will be alerted to complete their GSA member profile online. Here they will have the opportunity to select “the Academy” to affiliate with.

6. Will AGHE continue to award Fellowship to qualified individuals?
Yes. The Academy is expected to continue awarding Fellowship using its already established criteria. This will be separate from GSA Fellowship status.

7. Will AGHE retain the royalties it earns from any arrangement in which book authors or other products earn royalties for AGHE?

Yes, earned royalties can be used to support Academy activities.

8. Will there be an AGHE meeting in 2019?

Yes, the Academy’s programming will be held at the GSA Annual Scientific Meeting in Austin, TX, November 13-17, 2019. Academy members will submit their abstracts for peer review by March 15, 2019, with abstracts being peer-reviewed by individuals who have self-reported as having requisite expertise. Members can participate in scientific sessions, awards presentations, networking events and the large exhibit program. AGHE related sessions will be available to meeting attendees throughout the conference with major activities likely clustered over the first three days of the meeting.

9. Will there be a separate registration process for AGHE?

No, there will be one registration process for the Annual Scientific Meeting.

10. Will there be a separate exhibit program?

No, there will be one exhibit program. Exhibitors will now be able to reach an audience of more than 3,000 attendees.

11. Will AGHE continue to have Gerontology & Geriatrics Education as its official journal?

Yes. AGHE members are also eligible for reduced subscription rates on the journal which is published by Taylor & Francis. The publisher has also announced a new online benefit for AGHE members.

12. Will AGHE continue to offer awards?

Yes, AGHE will continue to offer awards, including the James McKenney Student Travel Awards.

13. When will these changes take effect?

Given the scope of the transformation to AGHE 2.0, the changes will be implemented throughout 2018. AGHE members will be updated as the implementation moves forward.

14. Will AGHE still have Committees?
Yes, AGHE will still have committees. Current Committee chairs are being asked to extend their service through November 2018 as this is a transition year in the process. This will permit time for the AGHE Executive Committee to re-constitute Committees.

15. Will students still be able to participate in the Academy?

Yes, students will be able to participate in the Academy. Appropriate steps will be taken to integrate AGHE student activities into the GSA Emerging Scholar & Professional Organization.

16. Will the Academy have a specific liaison?

Yes, a program manager will be assigned as the “go to” contact person for the Academy. Members can email the staff contact at AGHE@AGHE.org with questions.

17. AGHE has endorsed the Age Friendly University initiative. Will the new Academy continue to endorse this global program?

Yes, the Academy will continue to endorse the Age Friendly University initiative. In the future, endorsements of this nature will be subject to approval by the GSA Executive Committee.

18. Will there still be Institutional Representatives?

The role of institutional representative will be modified to be Institutional Liaison to reflect a change in responsibility for this individual. Under the new proposed bylaws, all individuals who are members of the Academy will be able to vote on Academy matters. The Institutional Liaison will remain the “go-to” contact for relevant communications.

19. Who served on the planning Task Force?

Task force members included:

- Judy Howe, Chair
- Dana Bradley
- Dave Ekerdt
- Janet Frank
- Christine Fruhauf
- Jamie Hughes
- Karen Kopera-Frye
- Suzanne Kunkel
- Barb Resnick
20. Will the Academy still raise funds through the Tree of Knowledge and endowment?

Yes, the Academy may maintain its annual fund-raising appeal through the Tree of Knowledge and will receive interest from endowment funds, with the corpus retained by GSA.

21. How does this integration impact AGHE’s financial situation?

This integration will enable AGHE to stabilize its financial position after multiple years of operating deficits. Upon successful integration, the accumulated AGHE deficit of more than $200,000 will be forgiven by GSA. The Society will need to recognize this significant loss in its financial reports.

22. Will there be any AGHE activity at the 2018 GSA Annual Scientific Meeting?

Yes, there will be an AGHE Presidential Symposium. AGHE members may also submit symposium proposals, contributed paper abstracts and poster abstracts as they have always been able to do. AGHE committees may also meet at the 2018 GSA Annual Scientific Meeting.

23. Is the AGHE Program of Merit (POM) continuing?

Yes, the AGHE Program of Merit (POM) is continuing in its current format.

24. What is the next step in the process of establishing the new Academy under the AGHE 2.0 plan?

The current AGHE membership will vote on the proposed new bylaws establishing the Academy.