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IN HIGHER EDUCATION.

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Welcome from the AGHE Section Chair



Dear Colleagues:

The time has sprung forward (for most of us) and spring is officially here. It's hard to believe that a year ago, Zoom was a novelty and educators around the world were "pivoting" quickly, moving from in-person classes to online versions. I'm proud of our AGHE community and how we adapted to this "new normal." With another spring upon us, I feel more hopeful this year and am looking forward to what's to come.

One of my favorite highlights of spring is celebrating the aging field with Careers in Aging Week. During the week of April 18-24, let others know about your chosen career and spread the word to your students. Speaking of your students, check out the story about the Ageism First Aid course which was a project initiated by AGHE's Academic Program Development Committee. This excellent resource can be incorporated into your courses. Looking for ideas for your virtual classroom? This month's newsletter features the first of a two-part series about virtual classroom engagement techniques that have been successfully utilized in two gerontology education settings.

Welcome to spring and to our latest edition of the *AGHExchange*. Read on.

Cheers,

Judy

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Call for Editor-in-Chief Nominations and Applications *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*

The Gerontological Society of America (GSA) Program, Publications, and Products Committee is announcing a search for the position of Editor-in-Chief of *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, the official journal of the Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE).

Gerontology & Geriatrics Education is a peer-reviewed journal that focuses on the exchange of information related to research, curriculum development, program evaluation, classroom and practice innovation, and other topics with educational implications for gerontology and geriatrics. It is designed to appeal to a broad range of readers, including faculty, students, practitioners, administrators, and policy makers and is dedicated to disseminating cutting-edge and evidence-based knowledge in the field of gerontology and geriatrics education. This 4-year contract term will become effective January 1, 2022. Transitions will begin as early as October 2021.

The Editor-in-Chief works closely with publishing staff, Associate Editors, and at times directly with authors, reviewers, and readers for the benefit of the journal and the Society. The Editor-in-Chief proposes the editorial plan and exercises editorial independence in selection of content with advice and guidance provided by the Editorial Board, Taylor & Francis, and GSA.

The editorship is a voluntary position with an institutional editorial office stipend. Candidates must be dedicated to developing a premier scientific journal.

Nominations and applications may be made by the candidate or others, and must include all of the following components:

- Letter of intent (500-word maximum) with reason for interest in the position, relevant experience, and vision statement for the journal in 5 years.
- Candidate's curriculum vitae.
- Conflict of interest statement.

Information about the role and application procedure can be found at [Call for Editor-in-Chief](#). The deadline for applying is April 30, 2021.

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Coming Soon! New Issue of the GSA Newsletter *Advancing Age Inclusivity in Higher Education*

Be on the lookout for the March/April Issue of the GSA Newsletter, *Advancing Age Inclusivity in Higher Education*. This issue will focus on the important topic of teaching-, learning-, living- and service-related intergenerational connections. This bi-monthly newsletter is intended to serve as a space where educators, administrators, scholars, and community members can share news about how colleges and universities are responding to aging populations and the rise of more age-diverse campuses. So, be sure to check out the new issue! In the meantime, previous issues can be found [under “Newsletter” on the Age-Friendly Universities page](#) on the GSA website.

Gear Up for Careers in Aging Week!



Mark your calendars -- this year's Careers in Aging Week is scheduled for **April 18 - 24**. GSA hosts this event every year to raise awareness about the diverse careers available in the field of aging.

As we all know, the demand for professionals with expertise in aging is growing rapidly due to the growth of the aging population. With this in mind, Careers in Aging Week is observed every year by businesses, clinics, coalitions, organizations, universities, colleges, and other organizations across the world. The goal is to bring greater awareness and visibility to the wide-ranging career opportunities in the field of aging.

If you have already begun planning or have some ideas you're considering, please share them in GSA Connect AGHE Community by [replying to this post](#). For additional information and resources for this year's Careers in Aging Week, [click here](#).

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Looking for a New Approach to Examining Ageism in your Gerontology Course?
Try *Ageism First-Aid!*

A|F|A | AGEISM
FIRST AID

Among the terrific educational resources you will find as you peruse the [Education Center](#) on the GSA website, you will find *Ageism First Aid*, a project initially funded by a grant from the Retirement Research Foundation, sponsored by the AGHE Academic Program Development Committee, and developed through a collaboration of several AGHE member faculty.

Ageism First Aid is an online course made up of three modules designed to help change the common negative misconceptions and myths about aging by replacing them with facts that should be common knowledge. The course supports factual conversations about aging and spark widespread use of positive aging-related language among people in the health and helping professions. The course is written for a broad audience, ranging from high school students to professionals holding graduate degrees and doctorates.

For faculty using Ageism First Aid (AFA) as an instructional component in their courses or program, requiring students to complete AFA at the beginning of introductory courses will help ensure that your students are prepared for interactions with older adults that may be required through course assignments, service learning requirements, work experience, and/or research. The AFA course will help reduce ageism in early writing assignments and discussions, serve as a leveler in courses with students from a variety of disciplines, and provide scaffolding and foreshadowing throughout the course.

For more information about the focus of the three modules, course pricing, and registration for students, please visit the [Ageism First Aid: Institutions page](#) on the GSA website. For information about the benefits of enrolling in the course yourself as a GSA member, please visit the [Ageism First Aid: Individual page](#).

A Two-Part Series on Innovative Teaching Modalities: Engagement Techniques Part One

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In this article, we are sharing part one of a two-part series on virtual classroom engagement techniques that have been successfully utilized in two gerontology education settings. Both techniques address adaptability as a key skill. In the education arena, our capacity to adapt to changing conditions has certainly been tested during the last year of the coronavirus pandemic. One of the many challenges faced by educators in gerontology is pivoting campus-based learning to more technology-heavy approaches. However, a global pandemic also illuminates a silver lining of opportunities amidst the chaos, such as discovering innovative techniques that are adaptable to different teaching modalities.

Part One: Team-Based Learning & A Social Forces and Aging Course

At Miami University (OH), students in any discipline can enroll in a three-credit, upper-level sociology-gerontology cross-listed course, “Social Forces and Aging”. This course examines the social forces that shape the diverse experiences of aging for individuals and the social structures in which they live. In a shift to synchronous online learning, team-based learning (TBL) and InteDashboard, an online TBL platform, was chosen for its learner-centered approach to intentional engagement and purposeful application of course material. TBL “applications” offer students a chance to apply course content through a guided, team approach while also providing an opportunity for developing teams and helping students personally connect with course material.

In recent classes, several interrelated concepts were discussed: the life course perspective, cumulative advantage/disadvantage (CAD), and intersectionality. Following discussions of these concepts, students were asked to complete a scaffolded application over the course of three classes. First, teams were given a series of prompts to create a life course for a real or fictional character, which included key components (e.g., turning points, transitions, life events, examples of linked lives, etc.) that were then presented in class. In the second class, teams revisited their characters to apply the concept of CAD and were encouraged to critically

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examine (and report out) their character's early life circumstances (i.e., advantages and disadvantages) and the imagined impact on later life.

In the third class, after a discussion of intersectionality, we utilized an exercise from the University of Michigan Inclusive Teaching Program, the Social Identity Wheel. This exercise supports students' exploration of their own social identities and engages students to "reflect on the various ways those identities become visible or more keenly felt at different times, and how those identities impact the ways others perceive or treat them" (University of Michigan Inclusive Teaching, n.d.). Following a reminder of established ground rules around respect and creating safe spaces, teams met via Zoom breakout groups to discuss their unique elements of social location (e.g., race, religion, age, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) and review together questions such as, "What identities do you think about most/least often?" and "What identities have the strongest effect on how you perceive yourself/others perceive you?" This exercise concluded with an in-class debrief and a take-home reflection assignment linking their Social Identity Wheel experience to the three course concepts and perceptions of their later lives based on what they learned about themselves.

Adapting to New Learning Environments

This exercise led to increased identification and awareness of students' personal social location and the impacts on later life; it also lends itself to building an inclusive classroom of diverse learners. Additionally, this exercise encouraged students to apply course concepts to their personal lives, beyond the threshold of the online classroom setting, and find meaningful ways to connect with their online community. Adapting this exercise to a virtual learning environment proved to be easier and more effective than was initially anticipated. The ease of this process was supported by a willingness of both the instructors and students to engage the course material in different ways. Part one, and the forthcoming part two, are designed to provide educators with helpful engagement techniques. We welcome questions or dialogue on how we can assist you with implementing this activity.

Reference

University of Michigan Inclusive Teaching. (n.d.). *Social Identity Wheel*. University of Michigan.
<https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inclusive-teaching/social-identity-wheel/>