

# AGING STUDIES AT MTSU

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## *Greetings from Aging Studies!*

This newsletter represents our initial attempt to provide the university and broader community with information about the Aging Studies Program at MTSU. Included is information about our two academic programs, the undergraduate minor in Gerontology and the graduate Certificate in Gerontology, as well as a summary of recent faculty activity. Future editions will focus on other programs and services offered by Aging Studies along with updates on faculty teaching, research and service. We hope you find the newsletter useful and welcome your comments and suggestions. For more information about the Aging Studies program, visit our web site at [www.mtsu.edu/~aging](http://www.mtsu.edu/~aging) or contact Brandon Wallace, Director of the Aging Studies Program, at (615) 898-5976 or [aging@mtsu.edu](mailto:aging@mtsu.edu).

## The Aging Studies Program at MTSU

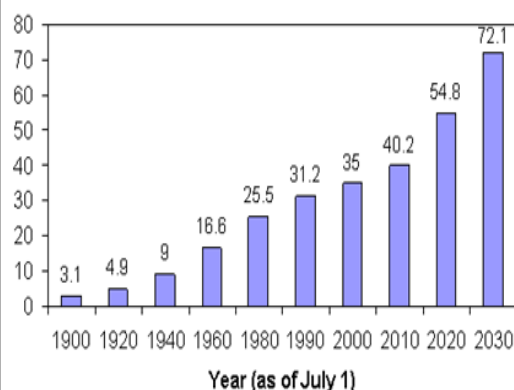
The Aging Studies Program at Middle Tennessee State University is an interdisciplinary program of research and education focusing on aging and the elderly. Faculty from nursing, nutrition, speech, recreation, social work, psychology, and sociology conduct research and teach courses that provide students and aging professionals with the knowledge and expertise necessary to address the challenges posed by an aging population. The Aging Studies Program serves the university and community through both educational and service programs, often combining the two through service-learning and practicum opportunities made possible by extensive collaborations and partnerships with community agencies and organizations. The program seeks

to assist Aging Studies faculty achieve excellence in teaching, research, and scholarly activities by supporting research, faculty development, and encouraging participation in professional conferences. The program achieves its educational goals by offering an undergraduate Minor in Gerontology and a Graduate Certificate in Gerontology and advocating the integration of aging issues across the curriculum.



### Did you Know ...

**Figure 1: Number of Persons 65+,  
1900 - 2030 (numbers in millions)**



The older population will grow significantly in the future (see Figure 1). This growth slowed somewhat during the 1990's because of the relatively small number of babies born during the Great Depression of the 1930's. But the older population will burgeon between the years 2010 and 2030 when the "baby boom" generation reaches age 65. The population 65 and over will increase from 35 million in 2000 to 40 million in 2010 (a 15%

increase) and then to 55 million in 2020 (a 36% increase for that decade). By 2030, there will be about 72.1 million older persons, almost twice their number in 2007. People 65+ represented 12.6% of the population in the year 2007 but are expected to grow to be 19.3% of the population by 2030 (*A Profile of Older Americans: 2008*, Administration on Aging).

## FACULTY NEWS

### Janet Belsky

Dr. Belsky, Psychology, is currently Vice-President of the Board of Directors' for Elder's First, a new adult day care in Murfreesboro. She is also completing the second Edition of *Experiencing the Lifespan* (Worth, 2009), an undergraduate text in lifespan development being used at over 200 colleges and universities. The book won a textbook excellence award in 2008 for Best New Textbook in the Humanities and Social Sciences from the Textbook Authors Association.

### Margaret Fontanessi-Seime

Dr. Seime, Social Work, attended the 35th Annual Association for Gerontology in Higher Education Meeting in San Antonio,

Texas. According to Dr. Seime, there were so many interesting and informative workshops that it was hard to choose which to attend. She also met some wonderful and interesting people. For example, Kareen King, who has taken words from various Alzheimer's patients and turned their words into songs. King has a CD out and does concerts in addition. AGHE will include an international component next year and Dr. Seime is planning to attend and present at the conference.

### Brian Hinote

Dr. Hinote, Sociology, is working with National Health Care Corporation in their new Clinical Residency in Physical Therapy program, conducting training seminars on

the sociology and demography of aging. He is planning additional sessions on health research and indicates there may be opportunities for other faculty to become involved at a later date.

### Brandon Wallace

Dr. Wallace, Sociology, presented a paper titled "Age, Sex, and Race Differences in End-of-Life Care in Nursing Homes" at the Southern Sociological Society Meetings. The paper represents a continuation of Dr. Wallace's recent work on the quality of end-of-life care in nursing homes.

### **Information and Referral**

Got a question about aging and the elderly? Need information on services and programs for the aged and their families? Give us a call at (615) 898-5976. We will do our best to provide you with the information you need.

A new course has been developed by Dr. Margaret A. Seime in the Department of Social Work entitled, "Aging: Multigenerational Practice in Social Work." This course focuses on working effectively with older adults within multigenerational relationships. It recognizes the reciprocity that occurs across the generations, including not only family members, but also

friends, neighbors, and community. Using Social Work knowledge, skills, and values it focuses on assessment and interventions within a multigenerational framework. The class addresses aging, care giving for older adults, raising grandchildren, coping with loss, dementia, and late life changes. The issues of diversity, resiliency, empowerment, social justice, and social change among the

elderly are also discussed. This course will be offered every Spring and is cross listed with Sociology, Social Work, and the Gerontology minor.



## NEW SOCIAL WORK CLASS IN AGING

## **DYNAMICS OF ELDERLY CAREGIVING CONFERENCE**

From all accounts, this year's **DYNAMICS OF ELDERLY CAREGIVING CONFERENCE**, which occurred on April 24 at the St. Clair Street Senior Center, was a huge success. With strong attendance and exceptional content, the conference again lived up to its reputation as an important event for local pro-

fessionals and lay persons seeking information about caring for the elderly. Aging Studies is proud to partner with the School of Nursing, the senior center, and other local organizations in sponsoring this event. Thanks to Dr. Judy Campbell, Nursing, and the rest of the planning committee for a job well done.

## Hands-On Learning: Adult Health and Development

The Adult Health and Development course (AHeAD) is an experiential learning course taught by the Department of Human Sciences. Students establish personal relationships with senior adult "mentors" while learning about aging and the elderly. The course is both educational and fun as the students and elders learn from each other. This past semester, students worked with nursing home residents at Community Care of Rutherford County. In previous semesters, they have been involved with participants at the St. Clair Street Senior Center. AHeAD is a great way to make the study of aging more personally meaningful to students.

## Undergraduate Minor in Gerontology

The interdisciplinary Minor in Gerontology is designed to meet the needs of students interested in pursuing a career working with or for the older adult population. The minor provides students the opportunity to examine the biological, psychological, sociological, and cultural perspectives which influence the status of the aging individual in society and is designed to compliment a variety of majors. Students who complete the Aging Studies minor will be exposed to the basic social policies and personal skills required for working effectively with older persons.

### Program Requirements

The minor requires the successful completion of 15 semester hours. All students are required to take GERO 2600. The remaining 12 hours may be selected from approved departmental courses. Students may not take more than six hours from a single department. To strengthen research or applied skills, students are encouraged to complete either GERO 4800 or GERO 4900.

### Interdisciplinary Courses

GERO 2600 Introduction to Gerontology  
 GERO 4030 Topics in Gerontology  
 GERO 4800 Special Projects  
 GERO 4900 Practicum

### Departmental Courses

CDFS 3300 Caring Across Generations  
 CDFS 4390 Families in Later Life  
 CDFS 4391 Aging Health and Development  
 CDIS 4800 Speech and Language Disorders in the Adult Population  
 N FS 4210 Nutrition in Aging  
 NURS 3370 Health and Gerontology  
 PSY 4610 Adult Psychology and Aging  
 PSY 4630 Death and Dying  
 REC 3380 Recreation for Persons with a Disability  
 REC 4470 Leisure and Aging  
 SOC 4020 Sociology of Aging  
 SOC 4040 Health Care Delivery Issues  
 S W 3170 Family Caregiving Across the Life Span  
 S W 4430 Social Work with the Terminally Ill

## Graduate Certification in Gerontology

The Graduate Certificate in Gerontology provides advanced study in gerontology for students preparing for careers in a broad range of positions. It also offers those working in the aging field an opportunity to enrich existing knowledge and skills while furthering opportunities for career advancement.

Certification requires the completion of a minimum of 18 hours of graduate courses including SOC 6550 Seminar on Aging and SOC 6900 Practicum: Applied Analysis. SOC 6900 may be waived for those with appreciable work experience in agencies and organizations serving the elderly. The remaining hours are to be selected from the following courses.

CDFS 5390 Families in Later Life  
 CDFS 5391 Aging, Health and Development

CDIS 5800 Speech, Language, and Auditory Problems of the Aged  
 REC 5380 Recreation for Persons with Disability  
 REC 5470 Leisure and Aging  
 N FS 5210 Nutrition in Aging  
 PSY 5610 Adult Psychology and Aging  
 PSY 5630 Death and Dying  
 SOC 5020 Sociology of Aging  
 SOC 5030 Topics in Gerontology  
 SOC 5040 Health Care Delivery Issues  
 SOC 5800 Special Projects  
 SOC 6510 Independent Study  
 SOC 6660 Program Management and Evaluation  
 SOC 6670 Mental Health and Aging  
 SOC 6680 Counseling Elders

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