

The UNCG Gerontology Program



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Prospective Students

How do gerontology, aging and geriatrics relate to each other? In broad terms, gerontology is the study of the aging process, and geriatrics is the healthcare specialty related to the diseases and conditions associated with the aging process. In practice, the two disciplines overlap and increasing emphasis is being placed by both on how to encourage people to age successfully and stay as healthy as possible over the life course.

Are there jobs available in the gerontology field? Yes. In general, increases in both the number of older adults and their longevity assure an expanding job market for graduates with training in gerontology. Specifically, graduates in gerontology are moving into positions with titles such as corporate gerontologist, aging planner, geriatric care manager, memory unit director, family caregiver specialist, in-home care supervisor, policy analyst, retirement property manager and marketing/development director.

What kind of material is covered in this graduate program? The UNCG Gerontology Program curriculum focuses on gaining professional competencies in key areas through increased knowledge and skills. Coursework addresses ethical, policy, biomedical, psychosocial, demographic and business dimensions of aging as well as research methods and statistics. Key topical areas include finance, housing, insurance, health and wellness, silver industries, boomers, long term care, community responses, caregivers, planning and evaluation and innovations. Students will accumulate a portfolio of work which will illustrate their skills to perform demographic and market analyses; plan and evaluate products, programs and services; review best practices and evidence-based literature; and synthesize policy information in brief format.

Is there an internship component? Students in both the Certificate Program and the various MS tracks are required to complete internships or research experiences. Such experiences are developed individually among the student, site and a faculty coordinator to meet the educational needs of the students and to provide service to the site. Options can be tailored to meet the schedule demands of students who are employed.

Do I have to take the GRE? In order to be accepted into any of the Master of Science program tracks, students must follow the admissions process for the UNCG Graduate School which requires submission of official test scores from either the GRE or MAT. For the dual MS/MBA Program, official scores from either the GRE or GMAT must be submitted. No test scores are required for the Certificate Program.

Are there minimum scores required on these tests for admission into the MS or MS/MBA programs? Admission decisions are based on a review of the overall application which includes transcripts, recommendations and a personal statement as well as the official test scores.

I received my bachelor's degree several years ago. Taking the GRE and going through the admissions process for the MS Program is daunting to me. Is there a way I can "test drive" graduate coursework? Yes, if you have a bachelor's degree, you may enroll through the UNCG

Visions Program. <http://www.uncg.edu/grs/visions/> The UNCG Gerontology Program allows GRO coursework taken via the Visions Program to count toward a Certificate or MS if you subsequently seek and receive admission to a formal program. It is not unusual for students in your circumstances to begin as Visions students and then progress (via the application process) to the Certificate Program. After further study and preparation for the GRE or MAT, some students go on to admission into the MS Program. The UNCG Gerontology Program may accept up to 3 credit hours taken as a Visions' student for the Certificate Program and up to 9 credit hours taken as a Visions' student for the MS Program.

I see that a personal statement is required with my admission package. What type of information should I include in my personal statement? You may find some helpful hints on writing your personal statement at <http://csc.dept.uncg.edu/students/gradschool/#applicationessays> The personal statement is our opportunity learn something about the applicant and to access an applicant's writing abilities. And it is your opportunity to tell The UNCG Gerontology admission committee about your prior academic and professional career paths, your goals, and why you feel the program will help you meet your goals. The personal statement should be no more than 2 or 3 pages.

I need to work while pursuing a graduate degree. Is the Gerontology Program accommodating to working students? Yes, many UNCG Gerontology Program alumni have worked full-time or close to full-time while pursuing their degrees. GRO courses are frequently taught in the late afternoon or early evening, and faculty members appreciate the life experience that working students bring to the classroom. That said, it is wise to seek encouragement from your employer and to understand personally the demands that will be made on your time by coursework. Keep in mind that there are maximum lengths of time for completion of a degree depending on the program to which you are admitted.

What is the deadline for application for each semester to the Gerontology Program? Are those deadlines the same as for the Graduate School? The general deadlines for application are summarized at <http://www.uncg.edu/grs/programs/programs.php?prog=gro> Note that there are different deadlines for international students. Further, applicants who wish to be considered for the MS in gerontology assistantship must submit their application by March 15.

How long does it take to receive an admission decision? Once an application is complete, it is reviewed in a timely fashion. You will be able to check the status of your application online via <http://www.uncg.edu/grs/prospective/appstat.html>.

How many credit hours are required for the Certificate in Gerontology Program? Beginning with the Fall Semester 2008, students must complete 16 hours to earn a Certificate in Gerontology including 10 hours of required coursework and 6 hours of electives.

May I start the Program in the summer? Theoretically yes, but GRO course offerings in the summer typically are internships or research experiences which have prerequisites and are not available to entering students.

I want to pursue a Certificate in Gerontology while currently enrolled in a different UNCG graduate program. What steps do I need to complete? Complete the application for the Certificate Program which includes submission of a personal statement and payment of a \$55 application fee. Use the application form at <http://www.uncg.edu/grs/prospective/forms.html>. Note that the Gerontology Program can use common parts of your original application to the Graduate School, such as your references, in this review process. Coursework you have already completed, or coursework in your other program, may count toward your certificate. Your Gerontology advisor will review that potential with you when you develop a plan of study.

From reviewing materials on the web via the Gerontology Program and the Graduate School, I see different numbers of credit hours required for the same programs, why is that the case? In early 2008, the Gerontology Program made several curriculum changes to enhance the overall program and expand course and concentration offerings. Credit hour requirements were increased slightly for the MS tracks and the Certificate Program, and an Aging and Business concentration option was added. Students admitted for the fall of 2008 must meet the new requirements; hence, information and materials related to both the existing and newly created requirements may be found on the web during this transition year.

Important note: *These questions are posed and answered from the perspective of a general applicant. If you have specific questions you are encouraged to direct those to The UNCG Gerontology Program at 336-256-1020.*