

# GERONTOLOGICAL STUDIES, BA

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**More Information:** <https://sociology.case.edu/undergraduate/gerontological-studies/>

**Degree:** Bachelor of Arts (BA)  
**Major:** Gerontological Studies

## Program Overview

The Gerontological Studies Program is a multidisciplinary program designed to integrate research and theory about age, aging, and human development over the life course.

Rapidly occurring social change is compelling social scientists, policymakers, human service professionals, and others to focus on aging as both an individual and global force. With rapid population aging globally, the world faces frontiers of change include knowledge developments in the biosocial domain (epigenetic and other types of gene-environment interaction), growing awareness of economic inequality and powerful trends in the political and economic spheres (e.g., cumulative dis/advantage, pension policy, generational equity), and cultural changes (e.g., caregiving arrangements and the growth of the anti-aging industry).

Courses are drawn from the Departments of Anthropology, Psychological Sciences, and Sociology in the College of Arts and Sciences; the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing; and the Social Work Program at the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences. Students may choose from a variety of courses according to their own interests. Some approved elective courses are not specifically gerontology courses but cover topics that contribute to the understanding of aging and the life course. The perspectives gained in the core courses will provide the student with the background needed to relate the material in the more general courses to gerontological issues. The program is firmly grounded in the liberal arts and thus provides the student with the challenge to think and communicate effectively and to integrate diverse information, theories, and practice.

Gerontological Studies is an appropriate second major or minor for students with a wide variety of career goals. Persons with baccalaureate degrees in this field are eligible for entry-level positions in organizations that provide health and social services to older people and that formulate policy related to aging and older adults. For those whose careers will require professional or graduate training, this program can be valuable preparation. This includes pre-health students, especially those with an interest in geriatrics or family practice. It is also excellent preparation for those who are working toward careers in social work, family law, and financial planning. Students planning to pursue these professional degrees will find that an increasing number of their clients or patients will be older adults needing assistance with problems related to aging.

Gerontological Studies faculty members are engaged in a variety of funded research projects. These include studies of health disparities and cumulative dis/advantage over the life course; patterns of care for older adults; visual perception changes that accompany aging; the impact of high levels of physical activity on the biological aging process; grandparent-grandchild relationships; and stress, coping, and adaptation among older adults in a wide range of settings.

## Undergraduate Policies

For undergraduate policies and procedures, please review the Undergraduate Academics section of the General Bulletin.

## Program Faculty

Dale Dannefer, PhD  
(Rutgers University)  
*Selah Chamberlain Professor of Sociology, Department of Sociology; Director, Gerontological Studies Program*  
<http://sociology.case.edu/faculty/dale-dannefer/>  
Aging and the life course; theory; work and family; research methods

Brian Gran, PhD (Northwestern University), JD (Indiana University-Bloomington)  
*Professor, Department of Sociology*  
<http://sociology.case.edu/faculty/brian-gran/>  
Sociology of law; comparative sociology; health care policy; human rights

Eva Kahana, PhD  
(University of Chicago)  
*Distinguished University Professor and Pierce T. and Elizabeth D. Robson Professor of the Humanities, Department of Sociology*  
<http://sociology.case.edu/faculty/eva-kahana/>  
Sociology of aging; medical sociology; social factors in stress and coping

Jessica Kelley, PhD  
(Purdue University)  
*Professor and Chair, Department of Sociology*  
<http://sociology.case.edu/faculty/jessica-kelley-moore/>  
Health disparities; sociology of disability; sociology of the life course; race/ethnicity

Lihong Shi, PhD  
(Tulane University)  
*Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology*  
<https://anthropology.case.edu/faculty/lihong-shi/>  
Sociocultural anthropology; reproduction; gender and family relations; grief and healing; population aging and sex-ratio imbalance; China, East Asia

## Program Requirements

This program is available only as a second major for a BA degree; as a secondary major for a student completing a BS degree; or as the sole major for a BA degree if a student is also completing a BS degree. All students must meet the general requirements for bachelor's degrees and the Unified General Education Requirements.

The interdisciplinary program in Gerontological Studies offers a major as part of the Bachelor of Arts degree. Gerontological Studies may be selected only as a second major, since the primary major must be based in a traditional academic department. The major consists of a minimum

of 30 credit hours; 9 of which are required courses and 21 are approved elective courses.

<b>Code</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Credit Hours</b>
<b>Required Courses:</b>		<b>9</b>
COSI 345	Communication and Aging	
PSCL 369	Adult Development and Aging	
SOCI 361	The Life Course	
or SOCI 369/469	Age, Society, and Inequality	
<b>Electives:</b>		
ANTH 215	Health, Culture, and Disease: An Introduction to Medical Anthropology	3
SOCI 311	Health, Illness, and Social Behavior	3
SOCI 313	Sociology of Stress and Coping	3
SOCI 365	Health Care Delivery	3
Additional Electives <sup>a</sup>		9
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>		<b>30</b>

a Additional electives that are approved by one of the co-directors of Gerontological Studies.