Enhancing Age Inclusivity on Campus

Growth of an age-diverse student population along with "aging in place" of faculty and staff require changes in higher education policies and practices. Research with academic leaders identified these transformative and actionable strategies that are consistent with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals to create age-friendly environments.



Where will your campus start?

Campus-Wide Strategies

To foster an age-inclusive campus climate, take these actions to increase campus awareness and engagement.

RAISE
Increase awareness of age diversity, friendliness, and inclusivity on campus.

INFORM
Provide information and education on age bias and working in an age-diverse environment.

ASSESS
Survey older students, faculty, and staff to identify their specific resource needs.

HIERARCHY OF STRATEGIES
Strategies are organized into 3 tiers reflecting their level of impact, priority, feasibility, and likelihood of implementation.

	Transformative		Actionable	
	High Impact	High Priority	High Feasibility	High Likelihood
★ Tier 1	✓	✓	✓	✓
★ Tier 2	✓	✓	✓ OR –	
☆ Tier 3	✓ OR –		✓	✓

UMass Boston | LASELL UNIVERSITY | GSA GERONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

SUPPORTED BY
RRF Foundation for Aging

For more information: umass.afustudy@umb.edu
Additional resources available at geron.org/AIHE

DESIGN BY OPUS | WWW.OPUSDESIGN.US

Evidence-Based Strategies

Teaching & Learning

CURRICULUM ★
Make age-related course content appealing and relevant to students.

FLEXIBILITY ★
Increase flexibility in teaching, classroom management, course policies to accommodate caregiving/work obligations.

ADVISING ★
Tailor academic advising and registration to the needs of returning and older students.

PEDAGOGY ☆
Educate faculty members on an asset-based approach (strength-driven) to teaching older students.

ACCESSIBILITY ☆
Design accessible classrooms and remote learning environments.

Personnel

BIAS TRAINING ★
Add age bias, including implicit age bias, to the diversity, equity, and inclusion training of search committees.

PROMOTIONS ★
Provide opportunities for experienced internal candidates to apply for higher-level staff positions.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ★
Offer opportunities that help staff increase their knowledge and skills over the course of their careers.

COMPENSATION ★
Compensate professional development participation.

SALARIES ★
Review salaries and promotion criteria for equity.

FAIRNESS ★
Avoid using age or proxies for age in setting screening criteria for furloughs/layoffs.

RETIREMENT ★
Establish a positive culture of late-career engagement and retirement.

RECRUITMENT ☆
Create job ads and application processes that are open and accessible to older as well as younger applicants.

MENTORSHIP ☆
Provide formal and informal opportunities for intergenerational interaction and mentorship.

RECOGNITION ☆
Publicly recognize the ongoing accomplishments of long-standing employees, especially accomplishments not traditionally celebrated.

AWARDS ☆
Offer longevity awards or incentives in recognition of years of service.

HONORS ☆
Honor retirees and recognize their contributions.

Student Affairs

SCHEDULING ★
Offer more flexible in-person and online schedules and program structures, more professional certificate options.

RECRUITMENT ★
Incorporate more age-diverse recruitment materials and strategies.

ADMISSIONS ★
Adapt applications to account for experiences of applicants not immediately out of high school.

COUNSELING ★
Provide career counselors with training in working with returning students, those seeking additional credentialing and second careers.

ORIENTATIONS ☆
Develop orientations specific to nontraditional and older students, including returning students.

CAREER ☆
Support skills that older students need to learn to succeed with LinkedIn and other online professional platforms.

Bowen, L. M., Silverstein, N. M., Montepare, J. M., Whitbourne, S. K., Lin, Y., & Xu, S. (2024). Evidence-based strategies for creating age-inclusive campuses. Journal of Diversity in Higher Education. doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000575