

ADVANCING AGE INCLUSIVITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

A NEWSLETTER OF THE GERONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Spring 2023

The Advancing Age Inclusivity in Higher Education Newsletter is a place 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. This issue brings together perspectives for engaging emeriti/ae and other retired campus members to foster a more age-inclusive learning and work environment.

Comments and suggestions about Newsletter content and special areas of focus are very much welcomed from our readers. Please send correspondence to ageinclusive@geron.org.

Feature Article

Engaging With the University's Own Retired Community: A Journey in Cocreating Age-Inclusiveness at UMass Lowell

Ramraj Gautam, PhD, and Karen Devereaux Melillo, PhD, FGSA



The University of Massachusetts (UMass) Lowell's journey to becoming an Age-Friendly University (AFU) included a Campus Climate Survey in 2020, in partnership with UMass Boston colleagues. The results identified the importance of engaging retired and emeriti/ae (RE) faculty in creating an age-inclusive university environment (AFU principle 9).

Supported by a seed grant from The Gerontological Society of America funded by AARP, our initial work with RE faculty aimed to understand their perceptions of enhancing AFU principles and demonstrated the value of creating intergenerational programs that include RE faculty. In a 2021 survey conducted with 315 UMass Lowell RE professors, approximately 60% reported interest in guest lecturing about once a semester or once a year, and 48% expressed interest in sharing retirement and other experiences or serving as a panelist/discussant in courses. Professors showed further interest in being involved in some type of intergenerational activities with the students. For example, one emphasized that “emeriti faculty could be invited to...continue involvement, and that could be one way to stay in touch with some of the younger folks and younger faculty.”

In Spring 2022, students enrolled in Introduction to Gerontology were asked to list their top five interview questions for a notable retired professor. One of the themes was related to students' interest in career inquiries. Thus, guided by AFU principle 9 and principle 4 (to promote intergenerational learning) and the PEACE model ([Levy, 2018](#)), we received internal UMass Lowell Donna Manning Pilot Research and Scholarship Grant Program funding to design a novel Emeriti Professors Intergenerational Connection (EPIC) activity in the gerontology course. Teams of four to five students were paired with an RE professor to conduct two 1-hour Zoom meetings with the purpose of exchanging experiences related to life and academic career trajectories. In keeping with the intergenerational focus, two PhD in Nursing students, Natthapan Phianthanyakam and Patcharee Wangwum, provided support in the recruitment and data and content analysis for this project. The EPIC activity has been recently spotlighted in the [UMass Lowell news feature on AFU](#).

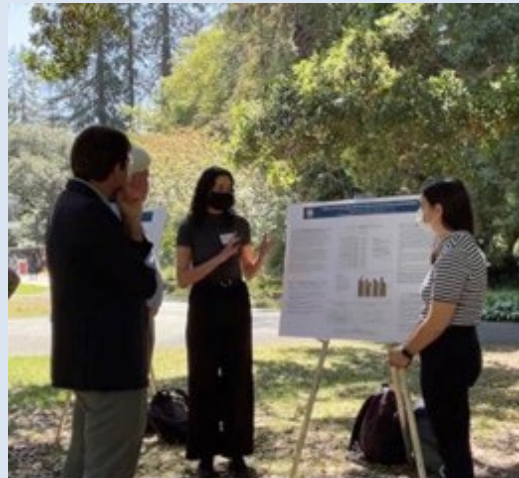
Our AFU journey has allowed us to make significant strides toward creating more inclusive and age-friendly environments for all members of the university community. With [support from the UMass Lowell Provost's Office](#), the [Age-Friendly University Collaborative](#) was established. The steering committee has been expanded to represent members from several units of the university, including the Learning in Retirement Association, Human Resources, Office of the Alumni and Donor Relations, Service Employees International Union, emeriti/ae professors, Graduate Student Association, and Student Government Association. The first meeting was held in February 2023 with a focus on engaging RE faculty, identifying key priorities, and defining actionable steps. We are planning to organize a Fall 2023 workshop related to pre- or near-retirement opportunities and challenges. UMass Lowell's journey to integrate the untapped RE faculty into the university community for the benefit of the students and faculty—and the institution—is an important step toward creating an age-inclusive university.

Campus Spotlight

Engaging Emeriti More Fully and Strategically at the University of California, Berkeley

Cary Sweeney, MS, Director, University of California, Berkeley Retirement Center

Retired faculty present an extraordinary resource and opportunity for universities to engage more fully and strategically. An inventory of emeriti activity at the University of California's (UC) ten campuses (2018–2021) reveals that UC emeriti contribute to such a large degree in teaching, research, and service that they could be counted as an eleventh campus, and as such, it would be one of the largest universities in the nation. In its creation, the UC Berkeley Emeriti Academy imagined what more emeriti might contribute to service of campus initiatives with a modest level of support and coordination.



Through the support of a grant in Spring 2021—from The Gerontological Society of America funded by AARP—to benefit new age-friendly campus efforts, the Academy established an interdisciplinary, intergenerational poster session to showcase the collaboration between emeriti mentors and undergraduate student mentees. The pilot was conducted virtually and is now being replicated in person with a live poster session and reception. Following the inaugural event, the Academy was immediately contacted to collaborate on two additional campus initiatives with undergraduates.

Academy members are also helping undergraduate students to overcome their fear of attending office hours with professors through a new series of seminars titled “Demystifying Office Hours.” Nearly 200 students have participated in eight seminars where emeriti share their experience and provide guidance on approaching office hours, followed by small group conversations and optional one-to-one coaching sessions. One student shared, “Because of the conversation with the emerita coach, I went to office hours three times this semester, and I ended up getting a letter of recommendation!” This academic year, we have added an additional offering aimed at

“demystifying research.”

To reach the broader campus, state, and national community, a team of Academy members identify current topics relevant to the community and host panels of experts for public discussions. These events have focused on topics such as the ongoing debates about California health care policies, navigating the challenges of aging, and strategies for staying healthy during the pandemic. Experts included the mayor of Sacramento, California, and interdisciplinary health experts in geriatrics, public health, pharmacy, physical therapy, mental health, health policy, and social work.

Additionally, Academy members have been called on to serve as substitute lecturers for faculty coping with dependent care obligations during the pandemic and have created a library of video shorts in which faculty tell their personal story of how they chose their undergraduate major.

The Academy of 125 interdisciplinary members aims to facilitate emeriti engagement and provide infrastructure support to work collaboratively on interdisciplinary projects for the university and the region. While a number of Berkeley emeriti continue strong connections in research and teaching with their department or school, others are looking for new ways to contribute as they transition from active service to their “next career phase.” The UC Berkeley Emeriti Academy serves as a strong example of how a modest age-friendly investment can result in a meaningful return.

Campus Voices

10 Reasons for Engaging With Your Institution’s Own Retired Community



Campus Voices editor, Caroline Cicero, asked ten retired college/university faculty and staff to comment on the importance of their ongoing participation with their institutions. The interviewees were chosen from the Los Angeles area because the region’s scale can inhibit age-friendliness for its long-time residents and its sprawling milieu presents many challenges to the idealized image of a center of academic learning. They commented on the opportunities their campus connections provide to them as retired faculty and staff in their massive “non–college town” where the university is not the central feature.

By providing meaningful connections, mentoring, continued intergenerational relationships, volunteerism and civic engagement, collegiality in maintaining old and making new friendships, occasional speaking and teaching opportunities, intellectual stimulation in campus events, lifelong learning, and access to the libraries, campuses can continue to play an integral role in the lives of faculty and staff after they retire.

As a retired staff or faculty member, what does your emeriti/ae or retired connection to your campus mean to you?



Karen Koblitz, MFA

Associate Professor Emerita of the Practice of Fine Arts, Head of Ceramics Area—Roski School of Art and Design, University of Southern California (USC)

Since retirement in Spring 2017, I have become well acquainted with the wonderful work of the Emeriti Center (EC). As an active member of the USC Retired Faculty Association (RFA) Board, the EC provides support for archived programs such as Intellectual Journeys and the Living History Project, featuring interviews with retired faculty. The EC also supports intergenerational programs on technology, health, and wellness such as Trojan Table and Trojan Connections. As Chair of the RFA's Russell L. Caldwell Scholarship, support from the EC has been invaluable to the programming for our impressive first-generation scholars who come from neighborhood schools. As a retiree, the EC provides many social and educational opportunities and a continued connection to USC.



Brenda Johnson Benson, MA

Retired, Senior Administrative Dean, Counseling, Retention, and Student Wellness—Santa Monica College

Having worked at Santa Monica College for over 35 years as a Counselor, Transfer Center Director, and Student Services Senior Dean, my Emeriti connection with the college means absolutely everything to me. I am able to share my accumulated knowledge, institutional history, and perspective when issues arise as well as mentor younger professionals now walking down a familiar path. I continue to be inspired by faculty, staff, managers, and students while volunteering at activities and events that serve students with basic needs. In essence, it means this rewarding career doesn't have to be over. It lives on but in a refreshing new way.



Michael Heafey

Retired, Executive Director of Building Services—Anderson School of Management, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)

As a Bruin alumnus and retired staff worker, I wanted to keep close to UCLA even after retirement. It provides me with a new circle of friends and colleagues around campus. I met and worked with many staffers while

employed, and I cherish those relationships. I have been able to volunteer and participate in lots of activities that support and enrich campus and those who attend and work at UCLA. Proud to continue in this role.



Victor Marshand Webb

Retired, Producer and Stage Manager/Associate Director/Director—KCBS 2 and KCAL 9 News; Retired, Adjunct Professor—Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California (USC)

As adjunct faculty for more than two decades, it's pretty safe to say that faculty/staff spend most of their working years siloed in their home departments or schools.

Connecting to the USC Emeriti Center (EC) at retirement changed all that for me. It opened access to more diverse university experiences than I knew existed at USC. EC represents a broad sweep of the institution's academic and social landscape mostly unknown to not-yet-retired employees. The EC provides invitations and opportunities for retiree community service, outreach to students in need, neighborhood student scholarships, pre-/post-retirement health care and financial counseling, new technology webinars, access to administrators, extended on-/off-campus learning activities, free parking, and awards/celebrates retirees' service contributions to the university. Kudos!

The EC environment creates multidisciplinary faculty and staff friendships unavailable in pre-retirement. The EC is an information source encompassing the whole of the university that enhances on-/off-campus participation and camaraderie (it seems) more than any singular department or school. To USC's advantage, the whole of the university also benefits enormously from the EC's presence and engagements.

Every soul is welcomed at the EC, even those sans degrees or upscale titles—an equalizing karma abounds. I highly value my USC Emeriti Center association!



John A. Kirchner, PhD
*Emeriti Professor of Geography and
Transportation—California State University,
Los Angeles*

Since attaining emeriti status, I have kept a close relationship with the campus, teaching an occasional regular course, being active in the Emeriti Association itself (as an officer and photographer), and being a regular participant in the Emeriti Association's Lifelong Learning Program aimed at the senior community. I have given many public lectures through this program on a variety of topics, including national parks in the U.S. and elsewhere, wildlife and travel photography, rail travel around the world, and tropical agriculture, which was one of my research interests during my academic career. I have also been lucky enough to lecture internationally, in Mexico, and especially in China, including visiting professorships. I also do occasional outside consulting, and use what little free time I have writing articles and books. I still maintain an office on campus.



Barbara White, DrPH, RN
*Faculty Emerita, Nursing—California State
University, Long Beach*

Emeriti status is an honor and recognition of my life's work and includes several campus "perks." As a newly retired faculty, however, I have found as yet little University outreach for continued involvement in campus life—other than for my potential to provide continuing monetary support to the University and opportunities to volunteer with our Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. New retirees must redefine themselves for the "third half of life." At our Age-Friendly University, we are often an untapped resource. I would welcome a return to campus in volunteer roles such as advisory board membership, thesis/project/dissertation committee member, community membership on an accreditation or evaluation team, guest lecturer, resource for community outreach, or as a mentor. In this post-pandemic era, this will take a reinvigorated, welcoming, well-respected, and engaged Retired/Emeriti Faculty/Staff Association that offers continuing opportunities for involvement beyond periodic and prosaic updates on college/university activities.



Richard MacKenzie, MDCM

Retired, Professor of Pediatrics—Keck School of Medicine, University of Southern California; Director Emeritus, Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine—Children’s Hospital Los Angeles

I really believe that youth is not a time of life, but a frame of mind. We grow old by deserting our ideals! By continuing my incidental contact with students reminds me of my ideals that I had as a student and to grow young. As an emeritus faculty member from the medical school, it also allows me to have renewed and new contact with my faculty colleagues, both emeritus and active, from other than the Health Sciences. This has enriched my life and opened doors to unanticipated, enlightening conversations and experiences.



Beatrice Yorker, JD, RN, MS

Professor Emerita of Nursing, Criminal Justice, and Criminalistics—California State University, Los Angeles

I am so grateful to have emeriti status as a retired Dean. Although we are not a “college town,” my scholarship and practice has mostly focused on urban issues. I came to Los Angeles because it is the largest learning laboratory I could imagine for students in our College of Health and Human Services. Since retiring, I am busier than ever publishing my research in forensic science, crime in health care, and child abuse. Having the support of, and access to, our wonderful librarians is so essential at this stage of my career. For example, I am appointed as an expert to evaluate Munchausen syndrome by proxy by the Edelman Children’s Court [in Los Angeles] and testify in complex cases. This is a continuation of our campus partnership over the years. I also am grateful to our Emeriti Association for keeping us connected to the campus, even when much of it was virtual during COVID. I love being able to choose when and what I work on and enjoy staying current in my fields of interest.



Stephen Cederbaum, MD

*Chief Emeritus Pediatrics Genetics
Professor, Human Genetics, Intellectual
and Developmental Disabilities Research
Center, Semel Institute for Neuroscience
and Human Behavior—University of
California, Los Angeles (UCLA)*

Academics are scholars and the passion for scholarship transcends our place in the formal workplace environment. Said differently, when we retire our brain does not do so, at least at the same time. Having a faculty club, an emeriti association, and a place in our department is necessary for this critical engagement to continue. UCLA has provided this structure for so many of us to continue to be engaged professors, albeit without or with a thinner portfolio. For me, its absence would have been devastating.



Calvin Lau, DDS

*Retired, Clinical Professor, Herman Ostrow
School of Dentistry; Past President, Retired
Faculty Association—University of
Southern California (USC)*

The Emeriti Center is a fantastic organization to allow retirees to continue participation with USC. We get support from contemporaries and get their expertise too, so we can continue to live meaningful lives. Don't be afraid to explore. It's so important to be able to contribute and participate in a positive way.

Age-friendly campuses offer endless potential for fulfilling AFU principle 9: “to engage actively with the university’s own retired community.” Intentional efforts in welcoming retired staff and faculty back to campus for both informal and formal activities provide benefits for campus and community. Both virtual and in-person meetings and events provide these opportunities for civic engagement, social participation, and age inclusivity. Furthermore, meaningful intergenerational connectedness benefits the students our academic institutions are created to serve.

News and Notes

- AFU partner **University of Minnesota** hosted a virtual orientation with over 400 lifelong learners! The Age-Friendly University of Minnesota Council met with older learners, retirees, and alumni in March to provide an overview of resources, programs, and opportunities to engage with campus life. Programs across campus used a speed presentation format to introduce their programs and invite attendees to be a part of campus. On June 26, 2023, the University will host its second Age-Friendly University Day, bringing older learners to

campus to engage in conversation and camaraderie. Diana Pierce, a journalist and former Minneapolis television newscaster, will provide opening remarks followed by a panel hosted by NPR correspondent Chris Farrell. The panel will feature four older adult women who have carved out impactful roles as advocates and leaders in the community. Breakout sessions on financial abuse, finding purpose in later life, and climate change and aging will be offered. For information on age-friendly efforts contact chai@umn.edu.

- Congratulations to **Clare C. Luz, PhD**, Associate Professor and Director of Research of AgeAlive at AFU partner **Michigan State University**, who was awarded the university's 2023 Distinguished Partnership Award for Community-Engaged Service. She notes that it has been wonderful to be part of the AFU initiative and have the work of AgeAlive recognized by administrators, which includes the Senior Ambassador Program, Town and Gown lecture series, and other programs such as efforts to launch a Lifelong Learning Institute and planning for the upcoming annual Research Forum, which will focus on Living a Purposeful Life With Dementia.
- Gerontology and nursing faculty at AFU partner **California State University, Long Beach**, are collaborating to investigate the use of campus Student Health Services (SHS) by nontraditional and older learners. To understand the best outreach to serve older learners, they are analyzing SHS data comparing the frequency and reasons for visits among three age groups: traditional (18–24 years), nontraditional (25–49 years), and older learners (50+ years). The next study phase will involve surveying older learners to understand their use/nonuse of SHS and their health care needs that might be addressed through SHS.
- This May, AFU partner **University of Nebraska Omaha** will host the 9th Biennial Aging With Passion and Purpose Conference that will feature the Age-Friendly Communities webinar designed for older adults and their families, friends, and care partners as well as multidisciplinary providers of care, researchers, and educators. Disrupting ageism, staying active, creating age-friendly homes and communities, and health-conscious foods with ethnic roots are a few of the thought-provoking topics to be discussed.

Resource Center

Join us for AGHE's Campus Conversation

Gerontology and Geriatrics Curricular Standards and Guidelines in Higher Education
—Advancing Your Curriculum or Program

Tuesday, May 9, 2023, 1 to 2 p.m. EST

Free for GSA Members; \$25 Registration for Non-Members

To register: <https://www.geron.org/meetings-events/webinars>

With the publication of the [7th edition of the Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education's \(AGHE\) Gerontology and Geriatrics Curricular Standards and Guidelines in Higher Education](#), opportunities for curriculum development and program enhancements abound. Although health professions programs have led the way in competency-based education, this edition supports the transition for all levels of gerontology programs to shift to a competency-based platform as well. For health professions programs, integrating gerontology and geriatrics into their existing

curriculum makes notable the program's preparation to advance their students' knowledge, skills, and attitude to work with older people. Additionally, these Standards and Guidelines are the foundation for attaining the [AGHE Program of Merit](#), a voluntary program of curricular review to recognize meritorious programs. The key to this session is the opportunity to have discussions and apply critical thinking in the advancement of gerontology and geriatrics at your institution and within your programs.

Presenters:

- **Marilyn R. Gugliucci, MA, PhD, FAGHE, FGSA, FAGS, FNAOME**, Professor and Director of Geriatrics Education and Research, University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine
- **Tamar Shovali, PhD**, Associate Professor of Human Development, Eckerd College
- **Mary Ann Erickson, PhD, FAGHE**, Associate Professor, Department of Health Sciences and Public Health, Ithaca College (Moderator)

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