This has been a busy and exciting year for MSU’s Gerontology Program, with more than a dozen active Gerontology Master’s students and more than two dozen Gerontology minors. Both graduate and undergraduate students have taken leadership roles in convening the MSU Gerontology Club and in re-establishing Sigma Phi Omega, the gerontology honor society, on campus. Their group efforts resulted in the design and screening of new Gerontology Club SPO t-shirts, which have been very popular among gerontology students. For additional information about Gerontology Club and Sigma Phi Omega activities, see page 2.

For the very first time this spring, a Gerontology course, Public Policy and Aging, was offered online, with a mix of both graduate and undergraduate students participating. The instructor, Renee Fredericksen of the Minnesota Department of Health, taught this very successful online course. In the fall of 2008, the Gerontology Program will be offering its first off-campus course, Women and Aging, in the Twin Cities. The instructor will be Pat Camillo, MSU Nursing faculty member, whose clinical and research interests focus on older women. For a complete listing of fall Gerontology Program courses, see page 4.

MSU’s Center on Aging will be sponsoring the Third Annual Chesley Lecture on Aging on April 7th at the Country Inn and Suites. Thanks to the efforts of Center on Aging Committee members, additional sponsors this year include MAGEC South, the Minnesota Board on Aging, Immanuel St. Joseph Foundation Legacy Society, TCF Bank, Pathstone Living Communities and Eldercare, Inc. Around the theme of “Living Well in the Midst of Change and Loss”, keynote speakers this year will be Tom Gillaspy, Minnesota’s State Demographer and Pauline Boss, Professor Emeritus in Family Social Sciences at the University of Minnesota. For additional details and registration information, see page 5.

Plans are underway to begin offering Center on Aging sponsored “Gerontology Research Updates” beginning in the fall. They will involve presentations by Gerontology faculty and other MSU faculty interested in and involved in research on aging.
Sigma Phi Omega is the National Honor and Professional Society in Gerontology. It was formed in 1980 to recognize the excellence of those who study aging. Sigma Phi Omega seeks to promote scholarship, professionalism, friendship, and services to older persons, and to recognize exemplary attainment in aging studies and related fields.

The Minnesota State University Beta Mu chapter recently inducted eight new members; Sanjay Sarkar, Paulina Camacho, April Kinner, Katie Griep, M. Johanne Bradley, Ashley Evans, Jim Tift, and Megan Dahle. We are always welcoming new members. If you are interested in joining Sigma Phi Omega or want to be informed about our upcoming events, contact Katie Griep at katherine.griep@mnsu.edu or Jim Tift at james.tift@mnsu.edu.

The Gerontology Club has been extremely active this year. Some of the activities that club members have been involved in include volunteering at Laurel’s Edge with activities, having information booths and bake sales in the CSU, and designing new t-shirts for the club and Sigma Phi Omega. If you are interested in a t-shirt, please contact Katie Griep at katherine.griep@mnsu.edu or Jim Tift at james.tift@mnsu.edu.

As the semester progresses, the Gerontology Club will be attending conferences and will be sponsoring a Careers in Aging Week. Upcoming conferences consist of the Chesley Lecture on Monday April 7, 2008 at the Country Inn and Suites in Mankato, and the Minnesota Gerontological Society Conference in Brooklyn Center, MN on Friday April 25, 2008.

April 17th the Gerontology Club will be having a booth in the CSU from 11 am - 1 pm where materials on careers in the field of aging will be presented. The purpose of Careers in Aging Week is to introduce to a broad audience the wide-ranging career opportunities that exist in aging and to promote GSA and AGHE as the premier organizations for supporting career development in the field of gerontology.

The Gerontology Club is open to all MSU students who may have an interest in learning about the study of aging. Meetings are held on the first Tuesday and third Thursday of every month unless otherwise specified in the Centennial Student Union. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, April 1st at 2pm in CSU 256. It is never to late to join, so anyone interested is welcome to attend! If you need more information, contact Katie Griep at katherine.griep@mnsu.edu. Or check out our bulletin board located in Armstrong Hall by the Sociology Department for upcoming meeting dates!
Gerontology is a multidisciplinary field of study that draws upon perspectives of many diverse academic fields. For this reason, students choose a minor in Gerontology for different purposes. We decided to ask the MSU gerontology students to find out why they chose the gerontology minor, and how they plan to integrate it with their major and future career plans. Below are some of the many ways that a Gerontology minor can be incorporated with different academic majors.

**Spotlight on Gerontology Minors**

**Ashley Evans** is a Junior in the Nursing program with a minor in Gerontology because she has worked in nursing homes and assisted living facilities for the past three years and has really enjoyed working with the elderly. Ashley’s future plans are to integrate her Gerontology minor with her future plans of working as a Geriatric Nurse Practitioner.

**Sophomore Lisa Knott** is a Social Work major who chose a Gerontology minor due to personal and professional reasons. Professionally, she states that because of the baby boomer generation, there will be an increase in career opportunities. Lisa enjoys talking and interacting with the elderly and plans her future career as a social worker in a hospital or clinical setting.

**Deanna Schwehr** is a Senior Sociology major who chose a Gerontology minor after taking Gerontology courses. Deanna says she became more aware of the increase opportunity in jobs associated with gerontology due to the baby boomers growing older. After Deanna graduates, she hopes to organize a program for urban elders to continue living in their homes as they

Congratulations to Ashley Evans and BreAnna Kruger on being the Rose M. Hull Gerontology scholarship winners. Ashley and BreAnna will each be receiving $750!
Fall 2008 Course Schedule

**Gerontology Courses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gero 499/677</td>
<td>Individual Study in Gero</td>
<td>ARR</td>
<td>ARR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gero 200</td>
<td>Aging: Interdisciplinary Perspectives</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>5:00 - 7:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gero 4/697</td>
<td>Internship</td>
<td>ARR</td>
<td>ARR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soc 4/504</td>
<td>Sociology of Aging</td>
<td>T H</td>
<td>3:30 - 4:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psyc 4/566</td>
<td>Psychology of Aging</td>
<td>T H</td>
<td>3:00 - 4:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hlth 4/555</td>
<td>Health and Aging</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>6:00 - 8:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biol 4/517</td>
<td>Biology of Aging &amp; Chronic Diseases</td>
<td>M W</td>
<td>4:00 - 5:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gero 4/585</td>
<td>Women and Aging</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>6:00 - 9:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hlth 4/541</td>
<td>Death Education</td>
<td>M W F</td>
<td>11:00 - 11:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soc 4/505</td>
<td>Sociology of Death</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>6:00 - 8:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurs 341</td>
<td>Gerontological Clinical</td>
<td>M T or T W</td>
<td>6:30 - 2:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurs 351</td>
<td>Altered PSY Mod Clinical 1</td>
<td>M T or T W</td>
<td>Various Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurs 461</td>
<td>Community Health Clinical</td>
<td>M T or T W</td>
<td>8:00 - 4:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gero 4/698</td>
<td>Practicum: Nursing Home Administration</td>
<td>ARR</td>
<td>ARR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gero 694</td>
<td>Alternative Plan Paper</td>
<td>ARR</td>
<td>ARR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Wall Street Journal Examines Use Of Estrogen To Treat Menopause-Related Memory Loss**

Wall Street Journal published an article on treatment of memory loss by estrogen therapy. This new treatment is practiced by Gayatri Devi, a New York-based neurologist and psychiatrist. In fact she has treated several menopausal women who are experiencing memory loss and said that the "majority of them do respond to estrogen." The *Journal said that*, the "phenomenon" of memory loss during menopause is not "surprising" because cortical areas of brain have estrogen receptors that are responsible learning, memory and mood control. Also, estrogen stimulates growth of dendritic spines that allow neurons to communicate, and the hormone also increases the concentration of neurotransmitters. A 1996 study at *Columbia University* published in the *Lancet* found out that older women taking an estrogen replacement were 50% less likely to develop Alzheimer's disease. According to the *Journal*, many scientists believe that estrogen can shield women's brains for about 10 years post menopause.

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Reprinted with kind permission from [http://www.nationalpartnership.org](http://www.nationalpartnership.org)
Minnesota State University, Mankato’s Center on Aging will be hosting its 3rd annual Chesley Lecture. The Chesley Lecture is named for Betty Chesley, who is a long time resident of Mankato. The lecture will take place on Monday April 7, 2008 at 5:30 pm where there will be a reception with refreshments and hors d’oeuvres with the featured speakers starting at 6:00 until 8:00 pm. The location is at the Country Inn and Suites, which is located in Mankato just North of Hwy 14 and Hwy 22 intersection, on Premier Drive.

This year’s theme is “Living Well in the Midst of Change and Loss”. The two guest speakers will be Dr. Tom Gillaspy and Dr. Pauline Boss.

Tom Gillaspy serves as the State Demographer in the Minnesota Department of Administration. He lectures widely on the profound impact the demographics of aging will have on our society.

Pauline Boss is Professor Emeritus in Family Social Sciences at the University of Minnesota and past President of the National Council on Family Relations. Her books, which will be available at the lecture, deal with ambiguous loss, the “frozen sadness” we have when we cannot really know what we have lost.

Certificates of continuing education will also be provided:
- Nurses - 2 contact hours
- Social Workers - 2 CEH’s
- Nursing Home Administrators - 2 clock hours (pending approval)

Please register online at chesley-lecture@mnsu.edu or by phone at 507-389-1796 by April 5, 2008. Cost is $10 per person ($5 students) that will be collected at the door (cash or checks only).

For more details call 507-389-1796.

Gerontologist Research: Training and Learning for Older Adults in the Workplace

by Andi Lassiter, Assistant Professor, Psychology

Both researchers and management practitioners need to better understand the issues facing older adults in the workplace. To meet this need, students and faculty in the Psychology Department have been conducting applied research designed to better understand the training needs and learning preferences of older adults at work.

Andi Lassiter, Assistant Professor of Psychology first examined this research issue with MSU alumnus, Katie Fairchild. Katie was interested in studying how older adults learn new information, while Andi wanted to apply this question to the workplace. They were both surprised to find little evidence suggesting how training programs should be designed for older workers. Katie’s research involved surveying employees age 55 and over regarding their learning preferences and specific training design features that older adults thought would be most helpful for learning at work. Results of this survey found 74% prefer to learn by concrete experience and active experimentation. In other words they don’t want to just watch someone or just listen to a lecture; rather, older adults want to be actively involved with their learning experiences.

Following that study, Andi has continued to explore how training programs should be structured to meet the learning demands of older adults. Previous research has found that older adults learn differently from younger workers. Further, workplace training for older adults must consider declines in vision and physical abilities.

Currently, Aimee Pierce, graduate student in the Industrial/Organizational Psychology program, is conducting thesis research examining how older workers and younger workers differ in terms their participation in professional development opportunities. The data are still being analyzed for this research, but the hope is that such information will contribute to furthering our understanding of older adult training and learning in the workplace.
The Alzheimer's Association reports that 10 million American baby boomers, or one in every eight, will develop Alzheimer's in their lifespan. The article also approximate that presently as many as 5.2 million people are living with Alzheimer's in the United States, including up to 250,000 under the age of 65. These figures are taken from 2008 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures which is published in the current online issue of Alzheimer's & Dementia, the journal of the Alzheimer's Association. The report said that, in the US, a person develops Alzheimer's every 71 seconds (set to be every 33 seconds by 2050). These facts and figures put the disease as the seventh leading cause of death for all Americans, and the fifth leading cause for those over the age of 65. The disease affects individuals and the family: 70 per cent Alzheimer's affected individuals live in home, and are looked after by family and friends. The total cost of Alzheimer's and other dementias, including direct (eg Medicare, Medicaid) and indirect (eg caregiver lost wages and out-of-pocket expenses, and decreased business productivity costs) is estimated to be more than 148 billion dollars a year. This excludes the estimated 10 million caregivers who provide about 89 million dollars a year in unpaid services to people with Alzheimer’s.

www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/101030.php
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