

University of Hawai'i Center on Aging

Status Report and Summary

Introduction

The University of Hawai'i-Manoa Center on Aging (aka Center or COA) was established by the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents in 1988 to address the needs of older adults in the State of Hawaii. Historically, the Center brought together people and resources within the state of Hawaii to advance health care, public policy, education, legal concerns, research and other issues dedicated to understanding the aging processes and to address the needs of older adults in Hawaii. Reductions in the UH budget that began in the 1990s limited its sustainable business model. In 2008, COA received an endowment from the Barbara Cox Anthony Trust in the amount of two million dollars. Supplementing these funds with additional grants and contracts, the Center seeks to strengthen its statewide scope of interdisciplinary activities in research, education and public service to improve the lives of the elder citizens of our state and region.

Mission of the Center on Aging

The mission of the Center on Aging is to enhance the well-being of older adults through interdisciplinary and collaborative efforts in research, educational programs, and service to the community. Most often, Center's initiatives focus on the integration of research, education, and service with a focus on the multicultural populations of Hawaii and the Pacific Region. We:

- Promote collaborative and interdisciplinary research within the university and others academic and community partners. Our focus is often on applied, translational and community engaged research.
- Develop innovative programs of interdisciplinary gerontological education and practice.
- Provide state-of-the art information to policy makers, program managers, clinicians and the general public.

Faculty represent a broad array of disciplines: Public Health, medicine, law, social work, disability studies, family resources, sociology, political science, public administration, nursing, and others.

The Centers areas of focus are;

- Health services and policy research
- Behavioral and social sciences and related research from professional schools
- Culture, diversity and community engagement research.
- Work force and educational models in gerontology

Purpose and Charge of the Gerontology Education Task Force

The purpose of this task force is to advise the Center on Aging on directions and strategies that will stimulate and build the university's capacity for providing gerontological instruction and for educating professionals for careers in aging. The charge of the task force is to consider the most efficient ways to institutionalize this support to the center. A stronger COA is in line with the UHM strategic plan for education, knowledge creation, and knowledge dissemination by utilizing its resources to advance knowledge on aging.

Background and Present Status of COA

This section provides a brief background on the history and establishment of the Center on Aging. We end with a number of key issues that the Education Task Force may consider for their discussions and deliberations. Attachments provide additional information on: (1) Inventory of aging courses on the UH Manoa campus; (2) Aging courses taught in fall 2010; and (3) Gerontology partners across campus.

History

The University of Hawai'i made its first commitment to a center that would focus on issues of aging with the development in the late 1970s of the Hawaii Gerontology Center housed in the Chancellor's office. Administered by Dr. Sharon Miyashiro and located on the ground of the Kuakini Medical Center in Honolulu, it laid the groundwork for a multidisciplinary center focusing on research and training.

In July 1988 the Center on Aging, now known by its present name, was re-established as a free standing unit of the UH Manoa under the direction of Drs. Anthony Lenzer and Joan Dubanoski. Staff included a full time director, full time associate director, specialist, an associate researcher (.25 FTE) and a full time secretary. Its goals were to stimulate and coordinate interdisciplinary aging research, provide gerontological instruction, and promote collaboration between the university and community organizations concerned with aging. Certificate programs in aging were established at undergraduate and graduates levels, awarding more than 175 certificates in aging. These graduates contribute greatly to the much needed workforce in aging. Administratively housed at the COA is the Hawai'i chapter of the national organization Sigma Phi Omega (SPO), national academic honor and professional society in gerontology. This society recognizes excellence of those who study gerontology and aging and the outstanding service of professionals who work with or on behalf of older persons. COA and SPO and other organizations sponsor an annual "Careers in Aging" seminar geared towards helping UH students understand career opportunities in the field of aging.

In 1993, the Center was transferred to the School of Public Health. Reduced funding eliminated the paid positions at the Center for all positions except the secretary. Stipends were paid to volunteer directors Dr. Lawrence Koseki and later Dr. Kathryn Braun who ran the center until 2009. In spite of a very small budget, COA secured numerous grants and contracts from

national and local government and other funders. Faculty and faculty affiliates authored more than 100 publications in areas related to end-of-life care, Native Hawaiian, other Pacific Islander, and Asian American aging, cancer, and program evaluation. Center provided technical assistance to the community with training, evaluation and research in areas related to successful aging and caregiving. Between 1995 and 2004 and under the direction of Dr. Braun, COA brought in nearly three million dollars from grants and contracts..

The 2004 Strategic Business Plan (SBP) for the Center on Aging sponsored by the Chancellor's office, and authored by the UH College of Business, recommended that Center further develop its (1) research and educational focus, (2) establish a permanent placement within the university, and (3) and secure adequate funding. Specifically the plan looked at the compelling opportunities to work with underserved groups of Native Hawaiian, other Pacific Islanders, and Asian and Asian American elders. COA's purpose as articulated in this Business Plan was to develop an interdisciplinary group of faculty with expertise in aging to conduct research on the issues facing these and other vulnerable older adult populations.

2008 to Present

Despite recommendations as set for the by this Business plan and the good work of the Center, the state's economic challenges resulted in the center's limited growth. Subsequently, COA faculty and faculty affiliates met with several potential UH host sites to assess the best placement of the Center that would match the mission and objectives of the University and the COA for an interdisciplinary research and education center to best serve the State and region. Potential host sites included the Schools of Medicine, Law, Social Work, Nursing and Dental Hygiene, Tropical Agriculture, and Social Sciences. Based on the recommendation of these Deans and Directors, the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education began the process in 2008 of administratively moving the COA to the OVCGRE "to better reflect the interdisciplinary roles, functions, directions, and operations of the COA." In 2009, Dr. Braun moved to director emeritus status and Dr. Ostrander appointed Dr. Colette Browne, professor at the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work, as its Interim director on a .5FTE basis. Subsequently, two part time (.25FTE) staff were added in 2009: Christy Nishita, PhD, Research Coordinator and Marilyn Seely, Specialist, and Coordinator, Education and policy.

Suggested Key Questions for Discussion

1. Given the center's mission how can we best work with various schools, departments and units on UHM so that the educational needs for aging content are met?
2. Who should be our main target audience: students (undergraduate and graduate?), professionals in the field, the public, others?
3. Given different educational models used nationally to provide such content, what criteria should we use to evaluate varied approaches that are pragmatic and can best serve Hawaii?
4. Are present resources available to provide specific educational offerings?

5. How do we meet the needs of students for onsite and online learning? (i.e., partner with other institutions to buy courses as part of the aging curriculum at UH? Develop smart classes that are held simultaneously on site and online?)
6. In an interdisciplinary program what arrangements should be made to encourage partnerships? What barriers exist?
7. What is the role of service learning? What kind of hands-on training should be included? Standard field experience with community and government organizations? Interactive courses utilizing older adult mentors?

Attachment #1: Inventory of Aging Courses on UHM Campus as of fall 2010

Family Resources 334	Middle Age and Aging
Food Service and Nutrition 370	Lifespan Nutrition
Sociology 354	Survey of Sociology and Aging
Sociology 354	Survey of Medical Sociology
Sociology 453	Review of Sociology and Aging
Psychology 342	Adult Development and Aging
Social Work 726	Social Work Practice with the Aged
Social Work 727	Seminar in Social Work Practice with the Aged
Social Work 715	Therapeutic Strategies with the Older Adult
Law 521	Law, Aging and Medicine
Psychology 403 001	Seminar on the Psychology of Knowledge (Consciousness and the Art: In and Out of the Box: Cartoons, Creativity and Visual Imagination.
Psychology 403 002	Seminar on the Psychology of Knowledge
Psychology 625 001	Knowledge and Wisdom.
Psychology 625 002	Knowledge and Wisdom

Attachment #2: Aging Courses at UHM Campus fall 2010

LAW 521 - Law, Aging & Medicine (3 credits) Instructor: J. Pietsch

- PSY 403 001 - Seminar on the Psychology of Knowledge (*Consciousness & the Arts: In and Out of the Box: Cartoons, Creativity & Visual Imagination*) (3 credits) Restriction: Instructor Approval; Instructor: S. Shapiro
- PSY 403 002 - Seminar on the Psychology of Knowledge (*Consciousness & the Arts: In and Out of the Box: Cartoons, Creativity & Visual Imagination*) (3 credits) Restriction: Instructor Approval; Instructor: S. Shapiro
- PSY 625 001 - Knowledge and Wisdom (*Consciousness & the Arts: In and Out of the Box: Cartoons, Creativity & Visual Imagination*) (3 credits) Restriction: Instructor Approval; Instructor: S. Shapiro
- PSY 625 002 - Knowledge and Wisdom (*Lessons from the Dying*) (3 credits) Restriction: Instructor Approval; Instructor: S. Shapiro
- SW 726 - Social Work: Practice with the Aged (3 credits) Restriction: Major; Instructor: C. Browne

Attachment #3: Gerontology Partners on UHM Campus

- The Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work offers an advanced MSW curriculum that prepares students for professional advanced practice and is organized around four concentrations, one of which is gerontology.
- The UH Elder Law Program (UHELP), Richardson School of Law, consists of two components: the Elder Law course and the Elder Law legal services project. The course trains law students and others in the rapidly expanding field of elder law. The Elder Law legal services project provides direct delivery of limited civil legal services to older persons who are socially and economically needy
- The Center on the Family, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR), works closely with colleagues across disciplinary fields at UH Manoa and other academic institutions. Its focus is not limited to any age group, but looks at issues throughout the lifespan to include elders.
- The Department of Sociology, College of Social Sciences, has developed a concentration covering health and health service delivery in comparative frameworks within the Asian-Pacific basin that includes research on care programs for the frail elderly and family care giving for the chronically ill and the elderly, and on the impact of changes in types of health care coverage of needy populations.
- The Public Policy Center, College of Social Sciences, brings together expertise, commitment, and a strong and continuing desire to enhance the quality of community life through teaching, research, and civic engagement. It views public policy analyses as critical to sound public policy decision-making and that teaching and scholarly work are intertwined and should be continually linked to the community beneficiaries.
- The Department of Geriatric Medicine, JABSOM officially recognizes not only the strong preexisting academic and research programs of the geriatric program, but acknowledges that Hawaii is an aging state with the longest life expectancy in the nation. The fully accredited Geriatric Medicine Fellowship Program is one of the four largest fellowship programs in the country. More than 80 geriatricians have graduated from the program since its inception, with almost half of them currently practicing in Hawaii and the Pacific Region.
- The Gerontology Nurse Practitioner program, School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene, prepares students to provide comprehensive primary care services to elderly patients in a variety of settings including ambulatory, long-term care, and day programs. Electives prepare students to practice population care in both the community and in long-term care.