



# GERONTOLOGY

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## Current Statistics:

- 100 Minors
- 20 Certificate Students
- 14 MA Students
- 6 Core Faculty
- 29 Affiliate Faculty
- 3 Part-Time Instructors

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## From the Program Director...

*Dr. Dena Shenk*

Welcome to the spring 2012 issue of the UNC Charlotte Gerontology Program Newsletter. The Gerontology Program at UNC Charlotte was created over 25 years ago and began offering a minor in gerontology in 1986. The Master of Arts in Gerontology and Graduate Certificate Program in Gerontology have been offered since 1995. The program has graduated a total of 112 undergraduate minors in gerontology, 59 students with a Graduate Certificate in gerontology, and 63 students with a Master of Arts in Gerontology. These graduates work in a broad range of positions through-

out the Charlotte region and state, as well as across the country and internationally. One of our MA alumni, Lydia Hill, is spotlighted in this issue of the newsletter. Other MA graduates have gone on to complete doctoral programs in gerontology and related fields. These include Dr. Meldrena Chapin in Architecture, Dr. Sue Friguglietti in Occupational Therapy, and Dr. Larry Watts in Theology. The most recent is Dr. Ling Liou who graduated with her doctoral degree in Adult Development and Aging in December from Virginia Technical University.

I hope you will be able to join us for the upcoming Careers in Aging event on Monday, April 2 during national Careers

in Aging Week. A light dinner will be served at Madison Saints Paradise South Senior Living, one of our long term community partners. The event will include a roundtable of program alumni who will discuss their career paths and positions with current and future students. We will hold our annual induction of students into Gamma Psi, our chapter of Sigma Phi Omega (SPO), the national gerontology honor society, recognize this year's graduating gerontology students, and offer thanks to our service learning sites and internship site supervisors. Please plan to join us for this annual celebration.



## Announcements and Upcoming Events

**April 2, 2012**

[Careers in Aging Event](#)

**Madison Saints Paradise South, Charlotte, NC**

**April 13, 2012**

**Guest Speaker: Dr. Glen Elder, Jr.**

**Fretwell 480 C, UNCC**

**(see article on page 2)**

**April 19-22, 2012**

[Southern Gerontological Society Meeting](#)

**Nashville, Tennessee**

**August 21, 2012**

**Orientation and Graduate Student Meeting**

**Barnard 244, UNCC**

**(see detailed information on page 4)**

**September 9-12, 2012**

**South East Area Agency on Aging Association (SE4A) Conference**

**Grove Park Inn, Asheville, NC**

## From the Undergraduate Coordinator...

*Dr. Cynthia Riffe Hancock*

As the [Undergraduate Program](#) Coordinator I'm excited to see the third issue of our UNC Charlotte Gerontology Program newsletter. Once again I want to thank our work-study student, Michelle Stanley, for her excellent effort in helping us to create this issue. Our undergraduate minor continues to grow and attract new students from various disciplines to the field of aging studies. We currently have a record 100 minors representing over 20 major areas of study across the University. I recently approved 30 minors for graduation this spring – another record! It is very exciting to see our minors move into the community to do great things with older adults. As you meet them please feel free to ask them about their gerontology experience at UNC Charlotte.



Some exciting news is that our Aging and the Lifecourse class is now an approved UNC Charlotte service-learning course. It is one of only a handful of courses to receive this formal designation from the University. Each year approximately 80 students have the opportunity to spend time with a conversation partner in our local partnering long term care communities. We are pleased and proud to be able to continue this experience for our students each semester.

Our Gerontology Club/Sigma Phi Omega Honor Society continues to have a positive presence in the campus and local community. Please note that Sigma Phi Omega is a National Gerontology Honor Society for students AND community partners. If any of our community partners have an interest in membership in our Gamma Psi chapter of SPO, please contact me for further information.

## Spotlight on Faculty: William Brandon

*Written by Michelle Stanley*



Dr. William Brandon is the Metro-lina Medical Foundation Distinguished Professor of Public Policy and he is a prominent figure in the UNC Charlotte community. His credentials in both Public Health and Political Science led him to Gerontology. When Dr. Brandon was a professor at a medical school, he ended up teaching a course on aging. He enjoyed the subject so when he came to UNC Charlotte he volunteered to teach Gerontology classes.

Dr. Brandon has had several contracts with the state-level Medicaid program to conduct surveys and to do evaluations. Medicaid mostly involves healthy mothers and children, but there are some elderly that are dual-enrolled in Medicaid and Medicare. Dr. Brandon also teaches a graduate course in Aging and Public Policy that focuses on the ways of thinking about public policy, principle issues, examining public policies in terms of income maintenance, and housing for long-term care.

Dr. Brandon's message for Gerontology students and supporters of the program is that "work in this

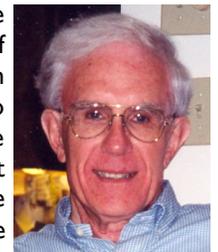
area is incredibly important and there is going to be much more need, just because the baby boomers are retiring and there are going to be more numbers of elderly in the U.S." Dr. Brandon insists that healthcare for the elderly is a very important subject and Medicaid and Medicare are only one side of the healthcare system. He says that the maintenance programs, such as social security, SSI, and private pensions are equally important.

Dr. Brandon's areas of study may seem like they are split in different directions, but he enjoys trying to bring them together and insists that it is fun because you are never doing the same thing.

## Community News: Glen Elder, Jr.

*Written by AviElle Raymore*

Dr. Glen H. Elder, Jr. is a Howard Odum Distinguished Research Professor of Sociology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a research professor of psychology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and a fellow of the Carolina Population Center. Dr. Elder is a pioneer in the field of life course studies. His early experiences in Cleveland during World War II and adjusting to his family's transition to rural farm living in Pennsylvania led to his interest in the impact of social change on human lives. Dr. Elder began his first longitudinal studies in the 1960s; and beginning with his first book, *Children of the Great Depression* (1974, 1999), he has contributed to the development of life course theory through theoretical and empirical work. *Children of the Great Depression* traced the impact of the depression and wartime experiences on individuals from their early years to middle age. Throughout his career, Dr. Elder has investigated the impact of the Great Depression on American lives, disadvantage in both rural and urban America, and military experiences in life course and the health of veterans. His books (authored, co-authored, co-edited) include *Children of the Great Depression* (1974, 1999), *Children in Time and Place* (1993), *Developmental Science* (1996), *Children of the Land* (2000), and *The Craft of Life Course Research* (2009). **Dr. Elder will be giving a presentation at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte on Friday, April 13 at 10 AM in Fretwell 480C. His visit is being co-sponsored by the Gerontology Program.**



## Alumni Spotlight: Lydia Batson Hill



Lydia Hill is a graduate of the Gerontology Master's program at UNCC. Since graduating from UNC Charlotte, Lydia has worked at several marketing jobs until she was offered a job at Senior Living Communities as the Vice President of healthcare marketing. She travels to different communities in North Carolina, South Carolina, Indiana, Georgia, and Florida. In the communities and assisted living facilities, she looks into problems with their healthcare marketing and fixes them. Lydia also helps fill the facilities with residents.

Lydia's master's degree has assisted her in her marketing job by familiarizing her with the language that is necessary in healthcare. Her master's degree has also helped her with her credibility among family members. The families that she assists tend to trust her more because of her knowledge in Gerontology.

In her personal life, Lydia has many hobbies and interests. She loves music and she and her husband go to concerts all of the time. She also loves hiking and camping. Lydia enjoys reading both for fun and for knowledge, playing with her dog, and spending time

with her 2 year-old son at nature museums, birthday parties, and Monkey Joe's.

When asked about the one piece of advice that she has for students that are thinking about enrolling in the Gerontology Master's program, Lydia replied with the statement "to think outside the box." She continued by stressing that you try to absorb all of the information that you get from your teachers. She also said that you should try to apply what you learn to the real world as much as you possibly can. Lydia ended her advice with the statement, that a Master's degree in Gerontology can really help you "sell yourself", because you have shown your compassion for older adults.

## Gerontology Club/Sigma Phi Omega Gamma Psi News

This spring the Gerontology club has been busy putting together many events in which students can take part. In January the club hosted a campus wide blood drive where 874 units of blood were collected and the record at UNCC was broken again for the 3rd year in a row. The Gerontology club would like to thank everyone who was involved in making the blood drive such a success.

The Gerontology club also hosted a Valentine's Day card making party where they made 50 cards to give to seniors living in local senior living facilities. To continue spreading the Valen-

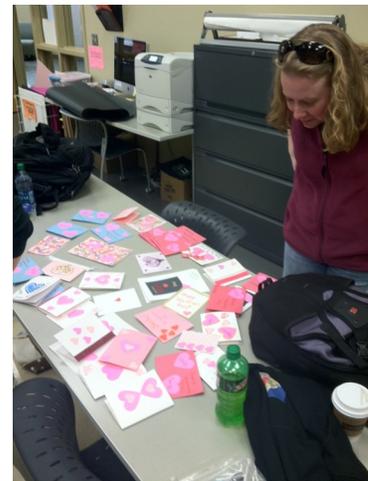


entine's day love, the club decorated and assisted with a Valentine's dance at Plantation Estates.

In March, the Gerontology Club participated in the 2nd annual Students4Giving Continuing Education Conference. The topic of this event was "Trauma Across the Life Course." The area experts discussed trauma intervention, service provision, and secondary trauma.

In April, the Gerontology Club will be having their annual SPO Induction ceremony during the Careers in Aging event at Madison Saints Paradise South. This event will include discussions with program alumni about their career paths and positions. The celebratory event will also include recognizing this year's graduating gerontology students, celebrating Dr. Foos' upcoming retirement, and recognizing the service learning and internship sites and site supervisors.

On April 26th, the club will be hosting a "Vintage Hollywood Dance" at Atria Merrywood. It is requested that everyone dress up as an iconic person from the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. This will more than likely be our last event for the spring semester, so we look forward to seeing everyone there.



### Meet our Club Officers...

[Ally Fuller](#), Co-President

[Avery Reep](#), Co-President

[Patricia Morsch](#), Vice President

[Christine Churchill](#), Senator

[Austin Jenkins](#), Secretary/Treasurer

The Gerontology club is currently preparing to vote for next year's club officers. If you are interested in being considered, please e-mail one of the current club officers.

## Recognitions...



### Thank You To:

Dr. Paul Foos, for dedicating 38 years of his life to teaching students and for his dedication to the UNC Charlotte Gerontology Program. Dr. Foos is retiring from the Psychology Department after this academic year and he will definitely be missed in the UNC Charlotte community and Gerontology Program.

Dr. Julie McLaughlin who has taken a position in the Sociology Department at Queens University in Charlotte. She wants everyone to know "while this is a good opportunity for me, I will certainly miss the students and my colleagues at UNC Charlotte. I have truly enjoyed my time here."

### We welcome new Faculty Affiliates:

Dr. Martha Bramlett  
Lecturer in Nursing

Dr. Maria-Carla Chiarella  
Lecturer in Psychology

Dr. Aravind Kalais  
Assistant Professor in Electrical and Computer Engineering

Dr. Dorothy Smith-Ruiz  
Associate Professor in Africana Studies

### May 2012 MA Graduates:

Julia Homan  
Patricia Morsch

### Certificate Graduates:

Tonia Cable  
Alexandra Fuller  
Holly Merchant  
Teresa Russell  
Emily Stark  
Ashley Stevens  
Nancy Vendley

### Minor Graduates:

Paige Bicket  
Kristin Boatright  
Melissa Bullock  
Regina Cameron  
Danielle DelPiano  
Anna Dionne  
Linzy Greene  
Adrienne Hardwick  
Rajay Hutsona  
Amy Jamerson  
Emily Keating  
Katie Lail  
Aileen Lovett  
Lacey Montee  
Makenzie Mullinax  
Nick Norton  
Avery Reep  
Abbie Rees  
Neely Reid  
Melissa Ritzel  
Amelia Sawyer  
Chelsea Scott  
Jessica Shamp  
Timothy Smith  
Wendy Star  
Matt Sturge  
Deb Tillman  
Christiana Walters  
Brittany Wilson

### Congratulations to:

Julia Homans, who will be graduating with her MA in May, is the new Activities Director for [Unlimited Possibilities Family Care Home](#).

Chanel Jackson, MA is the new Memory Care Director for [Emeritus Senior Living](#) at Eastover.

Dr. Ling Liou (MA Gerontology) graduated in December from Virginia Technical University with a PhD in Adult Development and Aging.

Dr. Louise Murray has been recognized by [AGHE](#) for exemplary part-time teaching.

Dr. Cynthia Hancock has been elected to serve on the Board of Directors as Member-At-Large of [Sigma Phi Omega](#), the National Gerontology Honor Society.

### Graduate Program Orientation

The Gerontology Program will hold an Orientation for new graduate students on Tuesday, August 21 at 3:00 in Barnard 244. This is right before the first meeting of Gerontology 6600-Current Issues in Gerontology. All Gerontology graduate students are encouraged to attend. This meeting is mandatory for new graduate students or anyone who has not attended a gerontology orientation session previously.

## Interested In Learning more about or Applying to the Graduate Program in Gerontology?

### CONTACT US:

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**WEBSITE:**  
[gerontology.uncc.edu](http://gerontology.uncc.edu)

**FACEBOOK:**  
UNCC SPO/Gerontology Club

### To apply to the program:

All program information can be found at [gerontology.uncc.edu](http://gerontology.uncc.edu). You can submit your application to the program through Apply Yourself on the UNC Charlotte Graduate School website:

### Please note the following changes in policy:

Applicants to the Graduate Certificate Program in Gerontology, who are already enrolled in another UNC Charlotte Graduate program, will not be required to submit letters of recommendation as part of their application.

For students applying to the MA in Gerontology after completing the Graduate Certificate in Gerontology with a GPA of at least 3.0 and no grade lower than a B, it will be possible to waive the GRE or other standardized test score requirements.

For further information about applying to the MA or Graduate Certificate Program in Gerontology, please contact Dr. Shenk at [dshenk@uncc.edu](mailto:dshenk@uncc.edu) or 704-687-4349.