

Gerontology

By the year 2030, 1 in 5 Americans will be age 65 and older. This rapid change in our country's population is creating exciting opportunities for professionals with the expertise to create new ways of understanding and embracing aging in the twenty-first century. Gerontology addresses the social issues, problems, policies, and programs affecting the quality of life for our rapidly aging population. The Graduate Certificate in Gerontology enables professionals to empower the older adults in our community.



A World of Career Possibilities

Employment possibilities in the field of aging services are vast, and many opportunities for entrepreneurship in this field are yet to be discovered. They include positions at international, federal, state, and local levels of government, as well as positions in nonprofit and for-profit organizations in many areas, including: housing and long-term care, planning for age-friendly communities, behavioral health, aging services, workforce development, and caregiving.

[Portland State University's Institute on Aging \(IOA\)](#) faculty are global leaders on the cutting edge of social science research on aging. Students have the opportunity to work directly with IOA faculty on publicly and privately funded research.

Program Requirements

The [Graduate Certificate in Gerontology program](#) is offered by the Institute on Aging (IOA). The certificate requires a minimum of **18** credits, including three core courses (11 credits), two elective courses (6-8 credits), and an internship placement or an independent research project (1 or 3 credits). For more information and to **apply for the program**, please go here: <https://www.pdx.edu/institute-on-aging/how-apply>.

Students interested in pursuing a MPA:HA degree and the graduate certificate in Gerontology are **REQUIRED** to contact faculty advisors in **BOTH** the [Institute on Aging](#) and [MPA:HA](#) department to plan next steps.

Experience

Gerontology program internships are **80** hours and must be with a program or agency that has a primary focus on older adults. Students must **complete an application form** and submit it to the IOA **ONE TERM PRIOR** to the start of the internship. The IOA director must approve all internships. In rare cases, a student might be approved to instead do an independent research project. The application and additional instructions are here: <https://www.pdx.edu/institute-on-aging/internship>.

The Integrative Field Experience for MPA:HA students is offered with two options. The integrative experience must be health-specific.

Option 1: PAH 509 Organizational Experience: For students who have had limited or no administrative experience, or those who wish to complete an applied field experience.

Option 2: PA 512 Case Analysis: For students who have had at least three years of full-time administrative or management experience in public, nonprofit, and/or health care organizations. Advisor approval is required.

Gerontology Specialization/Certificate Courses

MPA:HA students must complete **at least 30 credits that are health care specific by graduation**. MPA:HA students must also fulfill a **Diversity Requirement (1 course, must be approved by your faculty advisor) and Elective Courses (4 courses, must be approved by your faculty advisor)**. Psychology of Development and Aging or Sociology of Aging meet the Diversity Requirement. Electives must include aging-specific courses. For each elective course, students will write a paragraph on how that course will help their career/professional development. Students with little or no experience in the health care sector, are advised to take PA 504 Cooperative Education in the first 12 months.

Course Number	Course Title
Required Courses (39 Credits)	
PA 511	Public Administration
PA 533	Public Policy: Origins and Processes
PA 534	Administrative Law and Policy Implementation
OR	Health Care Law & Regulation
PAH 577	Perquisites: PAH 571, PAH 574
PA 540	Administrative Theory and Behavior
OR	Prerequisite: PA 511
PAH 541	Organizational Behavior in Health Services Organizations
PA 551	Analytic Methods in Public Administration I
PA 552	Analytic Methods in Public Administration II
	Prerequisite: PA 551
PAH 570	Health Administration
PAH 571	Health Policy
	Prerequisite: PA 574
PA 513	Administrative Ethics and Values
OR	Prerequisite: PA 511
PAH 573	Values and Ethics in Health
	Prerequisite: Completion of 30 PA / PAH Graduate credits
PAH 574	Health Systems Organization
PA 582	Public Budgeting
PA 586	Introduction to Health Economics
	Prerequisite: PA 574 or Other Approved Finance Course (Ex: Economics of Aging)
PA 590	Human Resource Management in the Public Sector
OR	Prerequisite: PA 511
PAH 580	Health Services Human Resources Management
	Prerequisite: PAH 574
Diversity Requirement (4 Credits)	
PA 562	Psychology of Adult Development and Aging
OR	
SOC 569	Sociology of Aging
Gerontology Courses (12 Credits)	
AGE 556	Health Aspects of Aging
AGE 558	Perspectives on Aging
AGE	Aging Elective
AGE	Aging Elective
Integrative Experience (6 Credits) Prerequisite: 42 credits before starting PAH 509 or PA 512	
PAH 509	Organizational Experience
OR	
PA 512	Reflective Practice