

Gerontology

By the year 2030, 1 in 5 Americans will be age 65 and older. This rapid change in our country's population is introducing 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, 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 Sociology degree and the graduate certificate in Gerontology are **REQUIRED** to contact faculty advisors in **BOTH** the [Institute on Aging](#) and [Sociology](#) 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. A student might be approved to instead do an independent research project as part of their thesis. The application and additional instructions are here: <https://www.pdx.edu/institute-on-aging/internship>.

Coursework

Below is a map of the sociology master's coursework with the gerontology certificate included, designed to take two years to complete. **Course offerings are not guaranteed and may vary by term.** Questions about whether a course counts as an elective that is not listed on this sheet must be directed to the IOA for more information and approval.

YEAR 1		
Term	Course	Credits
FALL	SOC 590 Social Research Strategies	4
	SOC 591 Theoretical Perspectives in Sociology	4
	507 Professionalization Seminar	1
WINTER	SOC 592 Qualitative Methods	4
	SOC 593 Quantitative Methods	4
	507 Professional Seminar	1
SPRING	SOC 569 Sociology of Aging	4
	AGE Elective	4
	507 Professionalization Seminar	1
Total for Year 1		27
YEAR 2		
Term	Course	Credits
FALL	507 Professionalization Seminar	1
	AGE 558/658 Perspectives on Aging	3
	AGE 556 Health Aspects of Aging	4
WINTER	507 Professionalization Seminar	1
	SOC 566 Sociology of Death and Dying	4
	SOC 500/600 Elective	4
SPRING	SOC 503 Thesis Credit (with thesis advisor)	8
	SOC 507 Professionalization Seminar	1
Total for Year 2		26