**New Post-Baccalaureate or Post-Master’s Certificate Proposal**

**Certificate Cover Sheet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certificate Name:</th>
<th>Interprofessional Gerontology Certificate</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td>This certificate program is designed for graduate students wishing to work in the field of aging or community members wishing to expand their career with a gerontology focus. The interprofessional curriculum provides an overall view of the aging process and examines specific changes common to older adults and the broader psychological and social issues they face.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Participating Departments</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Nursing, Counseling Education, Fine Arts/Music Therapy, Business, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Social Work, Psychology.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong># Semester Hours</strong></td>
<td>15 credits hours. Three hours in each of five courses</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>Cohort On-going Entry - New</td>
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<tr>
<td>Begin Term</td>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Location of Courses</strong></td>
<td>Asynchronous and Synchronous delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Market</strong></td>
<td>Graduate Students enrolled at RU, both as degree seeking and others from the community seeking the Interprofessional Gerontology Certificate Program and or seeking elective credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Number of New RU Students</strong></td>
<td>8-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Contact Person</strong></td>
<td>Virginia Burggraf</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Proposal Routing**

1. Departmental Curriculum Committees (following departmental protocol for approval)
2. College Curriculum Committees (following college protocol for approval)
3. Professional Education Committee (if it includes a professional education component)
4. Extended Education (if it contains an extended education component)
5. Distance Education (if it utilizes distance or other instructional technologies)
6. Submit this form to the RU Graduate College Academic Course & Program Review Committee (ACPR), along with the following documentation:
   - Cover Sheet for (ACPR) Committee
   - New Certificate Narrative
   - New Certificate Budget

**Attached:** New Certificate Narrative
New Certificate Budget
New Graduate Certificate Proposal

Certificate Narrative

Proposal Title: Interprofessional Graduate Certificate in Gerontology

Certificate Administration:

The certificate will be administered and coordinated by the Radford University School of Nursing under the leadership by Professor Virginia Burggraf. A newly developed Radford University Gerontology Interprofessional Consortia will continue as partners to the certificate development and implementation. The Consortia includes faculty within the following departments: Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Social Work, Music Therapy, Psychology, College of Business and Economics, and Counselor Education (see Appendix A for list of members). Once established, the Interprofessional Graduate Certificate in Gerontology will be available to all graduate students at Radford University. Bi-monthly meeting will address and evaluate course offerings and ways in which the program can be enhanced.

Certificate Need, Description and Scope of Program

Statement of Need

By 2030, it is expected that older adults over age 65 will comprise approximately 20% of our population (Administration on Aging, 2011). In the United States, and worldwide, the fastest growing age segment is 85 years and older (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010; National Institute on Aging, 2008). Individuals living beyond 85 in the United States can expect to utilize a number of social, educational, and medical resources for which our society is poorly prepared. For example, it is estimated that one in three adults over age 85 have Alzheimer’s disease (Alzheimer’s disease Research, 2012). Physical and mental disability in late life appears to have a direct impact on residents of southwest Virginia. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2000), the traditional coal mining regions of southwest Virginia, eastern
Kentucky and southern West Virginia reported the nation’s highest rates of disability among persons over age 65 (55-78% of persons reporting one or more disabilities). Therefore, the current and future exponential increase of older adults in potential need of physical and mental health services necessitates the need for advanced training in gerontology. The purpose of the proposed Interprofessional Graduate Certificate in Gerontology is aimed at providing advanced educational, applied, and research training to prepare students for what to expect in the human service field of gerontology.

**Review of Current Virginia Graduate Certificates in Gerontology**

Among all Virginia State Colleges and Universities, there are three graduate certificate programs in gerontology. Two of the three programs (VCU and GMU) are primary urban based. In addition, two of the programs have a research-based curriculum (e.g., Virginia Tech). GMU’s certificate is strongly focused in the area of social work and policy and aging. VCU has a strong interdisciplinary focus and pairing with other graduate programs, such as occupational therapy, counseling, and social work. As far as can be determined, none of the programs have an integrated certificate with nursing, and GMU offers an online distance learning option for their Gerontology Certificate. All programs state that non-degree seeking students may enter, but only GMU appears to have a curriculum not strongly focused on research and students currently enrolled in another graduate degree program. None of the programs focus on the need to serve older rural residents living with physical and mental disability in southwest Virginia. See attached program curricula for further review.

As Radford University grows their applied and rural-focused graduate degree programs, we would be remiss not to consider offering specialized training in the field of gerontology. To date, there is no centralized location for graduate students to seek additional training in gerontology. However, dispersed across graduate programs, there is a great variety of courses that focus in the area of aging and rural health. The certificate will ‘centralize’ already in-place resources to allow access to advanced graduate training in gerontology.
Target Population and Recruitment

Students in graduate programs at Radford University, who desire to expand their knowledge and expertise in gerontology, will be the target students who can enroll in the certificate program. Expected enrollees will be graduate students primarily advised by gerontology consortia faculty. The prerequisite will be the minimal 2.75 GPA required and student interest in furthering their careers with gerontology focuses. Faculty in the Gerontology Interprofessional Consortia will be directly involved with teaching the third and fourth courses for the certificate. We expect to enroll 5-6 RU graduate students in the first year, with 3-5 additional students from the community at large. It is also anticipated that these courses be offered as graduate electives across campus. The demographic realities of an older aging population in the New River Valley (NRV) will demand that businesses, agencies, schools and individuals explore working with this population of consumers. It is further anticipated, in the future, that students may be required to take electives in their graduate programs, and may enroll in the varied courses and not necessarily pursue the certificate.

Certificate Scope and Sequence

The Interprofessional Graduate Certificate in Gerontology is designed to recruit currently enrolled graduate students and potential non-degree students from the community. The certificate will employ an interdisciplinary/interprofessional gerontology framework, whereby courses will be organized to reflect biological, psychological, and sociocultural, therapeutic milieus and the functional and life changing challenges that face individuals as they age. A total of 15 credit hours (five 3credit hour courses) will be required for completion of the graduate certificate in gerontology. Two core interdisciplinary courses will cover (a) Topics in Aging 1 and Topics in Aging 2 (GERO 601 and GERO 602) which will be team taught by the gerontology consortia faculty members. One guest lecture per semester is required by each participating faculty member. Topics in Aging 1 (GERO 1) will consist of a semester of three hour lectures on varied aging topics. Participating faculty lectures will offer
a discipline-specific approach to a current topic of interest in aging (i.e., economics of aging, psychosocial challenging of aging, physical changes of aging, retirement and role changes, economics, reminiscence and life review, functional status, caregiving, etc.). Topics in Aging 2 (GERO 602) will use the same topics but incorporate a case study and intervention discussion and paper on the lecture topics in GERO 601. The team teaching Topics in Aging 1 will offer this one lecture approach and develop the case studies for Topics in Aging 2 and grade their student papers from their specific department. The third and fourth courses will be GERO 603, GERO 603: Scientific Inquiry. GERO 603 will be cross-referenced with existing graduate courses that emphasize aging content. This course will be taken twice within two different disciplines. The final certificate course GERO 604: Scientific Exploration is the gerontology practica/internship. This is designed by the advising graduate faculty member within her or his specific specialty. Following the completion of these courses the student will have completed the 15 credit Interprofessional Graduate Gerontology Certificate or obtaining a grade(s) in particular course(s).