Director’s Note

I’m on sabbatical this semester. When a professor takes sabbatical it is usually for research or a project but it is also a time to renew enthusiasm for the work we do. That seems to be working. I feel like I’m sitting on the sidelines watching how the Center on Aging machine keeps ticking along. I’d like to take a moment to list the highlights so you might be grateful for them, too. Pam Evans may be the best advisor on campus. Over and over and over again students talk about how much she has helped them. You must think of her as your greatest resource for getting the most out of the gerontology program. We have the most amazing instructors: Dr. Maggie Syme, Laci Cornelison, Stephanie Gfeller, Katie Sigman, Qingling Lee. They are dedicated to helping you learn. They meet monthly to discuss teaching and attend all kinds of professional development to improve their instruction. I’m also grateful for the support the College of Human Ecology provides. We are really an interdisciplinary unit that serves the entire campus but we feel lucky to be housed in Human Ecology—it’s a great fit for us. We’ve got some really talented students also working with us—Sally Hodges, Christina Wilson and Kelli Stallbaumer. They make gerontology student life better behind the scenes. I hope by now that you’ve discovered many of these benefits and have told your friends about us. We’d love to see more students join our fabulous program and I look forward to coming back next January refreshed and excited to do my part.

Gayle

Advising note

I’ve been in and out of the office this semester caring for a parent who is going through some medical issues. Thanks for your understanding and working with me remotely at times. Be sure to take note of a couple of spring 2018 classes we have highlighted in this newsletter. I encourage you to attend the Personhood & Dementia event coming up on November 2 in the Bluemont Hotel. You can come and go to the sessions as your schedule allows. You’ll get to hear some great speakers and attend some interesting interactive workshops.

As Thanksgiving will be here soon, I’m thankful that every one of you will one day be out in the world making a difference in the lives of older adults, including me!

Pam
Gary Glazner, founder of the Alzheimer’s Poetry Project, will guide us through an interactive day of poetry making, as we learn to use poetry to increase interaction and encourage joy in dementia care. Gary emphasizes simple poetry techniques combined with a variety of activities, including dance, exercise, storytelling, and visual art to facilitate new and positive ways of communicating with people in all stages of dementia.

Karen Clond of the Alzheimer’s Association will also share her work with Memories in the Making, a fine arts program in which people with Alzheimer’s disease create art to boost self-esteem and open the channels of communication with loved ones.

This is a great opportunity for students who are interested in caregiving, dementia, Alzheimer’s, creative arts, poetry, painting, or all of the above. Feel welcome to come and go as your schedule allows.

FREE! ALL ARE WELCOME—NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED.
GERON 400 Biogerontology

This course provides an introduction to the processes involved in physical aging. From theories of aging through the effects of age on systems of the body, including chronic and acute disease, and ending with a focus on health promotion this course will prepare students to better understand their aging clients/patients problems. It will also help students to better cope with their own parents’ and grandparents’ aging as well as their own. Gaining a better understanding of the process of aging in combination with biology will be a major benefit to any pre-health students interested in working with older adults. This course, previously offered only online, will be available SPRING 2018 in a classroom setting.

ENGL 450-A Topics: Literature of Aging

Not your typical “reading” class.

- “You don’t have to be an English major to take this class. It is a manageable workload and you will learn so much.” (Katie)

- “The writing is mainly in the form of shorter essays. They were challenging, but they made for tests that had clear expectations. The discussions were a really great part of this course; the literature itself along with everyone’s experiences and perspective, added to the meaning of the work.” (Madeline)

- “This course takes the concepts you have learned in other gerontology courses and presents it in a new form that helps relate it to everyday life.” (Hope)
Gerontology Student Ambassadors represent the Gerontology program by recruiting new students, and networking with faculty, alumni and business professionals. Ambassadors assist with various events and may be asked to meet with student groups or to give a short presentation in a class about the secondary major in gerontology. To schedule an ambassador to speak, please contact the Center on Aging at gerontology@k-state.edu.

If you have a genuine interest in gerontology and interacting with others, consider becoming a Gerontology Student Ambassador. Ambassador applications are accepted in February/March and notified about selection in April to serve in the next academic year.

Gerontology Student Organization

The goals of the GSO are to actively recruit students to the Gerontology secondary major and maintain student interest in Gerontology by providing opportunities to connect with local and state gerontological opportunities. Students wishing to participate in GSO can be part of the email listserv which will keep students updated on volunteer activities, local fundraisers, and more. There will no longer be monthly Gerontology Club meetings as a result of this change. Please email Sally Hodges at sjhodges@k-state.edu for more information.
GAIN EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH OLDER ADULTS

- The Gerontology Student Organization will be volunteering at Stoneybrook Retirement Community on Thursday, October 26 and Thursday, November 30 at 6:30 pm.

- At Home Assisted: http://www.athomeassisted.com/employment/
- Big Lakes Developmental Center: https://biglakes.org/jobs/
- Meadowlark Hills: http://www.meadowlark.org/giving/volunteer
- Memory Care Unit at Via Christi Village: Contact Jason Rodriguez at jason.rodriguez@ascension.org or 785-473-3531

WISH OF A LIFETIME

In May of 2017, the Gerontology club raised over $500.00 to help Earl Parker, 89, fulfill his dream of seeing a Mosquito airplane for the first time. Mr. Parker has had a love for airplanes since he was 14 years old and working in an airplane equipment plant in Detroit, Michigan. Since then, he has never stopped learning everything he can about airplanes and is even able to recognize a plane by the sound of the engine.

With the help of the gerontology club, Mr. Parker was able to attend the Warbird’s over the Beach Airshow and climb into the cockpit himself to picture what it may have been like to fly such an incredible piece of machinery.

The club has had connections with Wish of a Lifetime for the past two years and hopes to continue working with the organization in the future. For more information, visit www.wishofalifetime.org

Kansas State University prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex (including sexual harassment and sexual violence), sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, ancestry, disability, genetic information, military status, or veteran status, in the university’s programs and activities as required by applicable laws and regulations. The person designated with responsibility for coordination of compliance efforts and receipt of inquiries concerning the nondiscrimination policy is the university’s Title IX Coordinator: the Director of the Office of Institutional Equity, equity@k-state.edu, 103 Edwards Hall, 1810 Kerr Drive, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506-4801. Telephone: 785-532-6620 | TTY or TRS: 711. The campus ADA Coordinator is the Director of Employee Relations and Engagement, who may be reached at charlott@k-state.edu or 103 Edwards Hall, 1810 Kerr Drive, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506-4801, 785-532-6277 and TTY or TRS 711. Revised Aug. 29, 2017.