

Proposal: Care of Aging Persons Selective
Course Director: Linda D. Nelson, Ph.D., ABPN

Goal:

The goal of this selective is to teach beginning medical students about medical and mental health care of geriatric patients. Course format is designed to facilitate interaction between students and older adult participants from a local retirement center. The course runs over a 6-week session, for 1.5 hours/week. Each week an expert presenter conducts a one-hour lecture on one aspect of diagnosis or treatment of medical conditions in the elderly. This lecture is followed by a 30 minutes of small group discussion, led by the presenter.

Objectives:

1. Improve attitude of medical students toward elderly patients and geriatric care
2. Increase knowledge in the area of geriatric medicine
3. Encourage an exchange of ideas and information between students and older adults.
4. Increase knowledge of mental health issues in aging.
5. Promote awareness of geriatric resources available to patients, including placement, long term care planning, legal, medical specialty, and social

Evaluation of Objectives:

1. Maxwell-Sullivan Attitude Scale (MSAS; Maxwell & Sullivan, 1980), pre-/post tests administered beginning/end course
2. Exam Questions (6), at end of course
3. Process (observation)
4. Exam questions (2), at end of course
5. Exam questions (2), at end of course
6. Overall: Faculty Evaluations

Outcomes:

1. Increase knowledge of geriatric medicine
2. Improve attitude of students towards older adult patients
3. Increase awareness of developmental aspects of aging
4. Foster a collegial, warm atmosphere between older adults and medical students

Topics:

1. Normal, healthy, successful aging
2. Functional status
3. Gait and balance
4. Dementia