SESSION 4395 (SYMPOSIUM)

AGHE GERONTOLOGICAL COMPETENCIES, PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, AND ACCREDITATION FOR GERONTOLOGY EDUCATION

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It is essential that there is a well-educated and trained workforce in gerontology. A major step was taken with the development of AGHE Gerontological Competencies that are now being used to design courses and programs. International examples will be presented. In addition, these competencies are being used to develop dimensions of program evaluation for accreditation. To this end and in partnership with the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education the Accreditation for Gerontology Education Council in (AGEC) was formed. Four features of this process will be presented (1) the history of curriculum development starting with the Foundations Project, multiple iterations of the Standards Document, Competencies and how these have led to application in course and program design and the formation of the accreditation council;(2) the design of the accreditation council including its mission, vision, international outreach, organizational chart, Board of Governors, and its procedures for accreditation and reaccreditation; (3) the implementation of accreditation for gerontology degree granting programs by the AGEC including preparing for accreditation, curriculum mapping, and the council’s focus on quality control; and (4) the outcome focusing on what accreditation does for the program regarding marketing and what it does for the students.

HISTORY, DEVELOPMENT, AND DESIGN OF THE FIRST GERONTOLOGY ACCREDITATION ORGANIZATION (AGEC)

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Throughout its history, accreditation has served as the nongovernmental process of educational quality assessment and enhancement, through educational institutions and programs, governed by the principle of voluntary commitment to self-evaluation and peer review, in a manner that engenders confidence and trust among the public it serves:by 1. fulfilling that purpose by requiring clear statements of objectives and thorough and candid self-evaluation reports of institutions and programs 2. providing due process in program reviews and appeals,3. provide wide dissemination of information concerning the purposes, practices and decisions of accreditation, and 3. assuring competent personnel on accrediting bodies and site visit teams. The accreditation process is intended to be open and standardized. With this design plan in mind, the Accreditation for Gerontology Education Council (AGEC) was created in 2016 and is the only global accrediting body for gerontology degree programs. This presentation provides the overview for this innovative new 5013c organization.

INTEGRATION AND ASSESSMENT OF THE GERONTOLOGY EDUCATION COMPETENCIES (GECs) INTO THE CURRICULUM


Educational outcomes must shift from knowledge acquisition to professional skill competence to develop a well-educated and trained workforce in gerontology to meet the issues and needs presented by the demographic imperative aging poses. A brief history of the development of the AGHE GERONTOLOGY COMPETENCIES for UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE EDUCATION will be followed by a discussion regarding the many ways that the competencies can be worked into existing course structures new courses, Degree, Certificate and Concentration programs.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will:
(1) Know the reasons for and the consensus-based process for development of the GECs;
(2) Identify important components, processes, and possible outcomes of competency based gerontology education linked to professional competencies in the contexts within which gerontologists work;
(3) Identify ways GECs can be integrated into curriculum and used as the basis for assessing programs, student learning, and student self-assessment.

ACCREDITATION IN THE EU: A FIRST STEP IN BENCHMARKING GERONTOLOGY PROGRAMS


The Dutch and Flemish accreditation systems of higher education regulate educational quality of programs. Foundations include Dublin descriptors and ten general competencies of higher education. AGEC is an important body for benchmarking gerontology programs in an international context. This will enhance improve faculty and student movement and exchange. For that reason, a Dutch BSc program in Applied Gerontology applies Associate for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) competencies in 3 different ways: (1) as input of programs’ core competencies; (2) as core for the development of learning outcomes; and (3) as input for learning objectives in classes. We present our method of mapping Dublin Descriptors; general competencies of higher education regulate educational quality of programs.