ACCREDITING GERONTOLOGY PROGRAMS IN CANADA? LET’S DO IT!
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In Canada, no known efforts are currently being made to develop regulations of gerontology professionals. However, new innovations and actions on the behalf of aging individuals will, in future, require the organized development and utilization of gerontological competencies, knowledge, and education, spurring further action to ‘move with the times’ and develop a professional, gerontological identity and framework. It is our hope that this will occur sooner, rather than later. How can Canadian organizations work with the Accreditation for Gerontology Education Council (AGEC) to support the future development of gerontology as a profession in Canada? First steps in the initial process will be outlined and encountered opportunities and challenges will be discussed.

WHAT HAVING AN AGEC ACCREDITATION CAN DO FOR YOU!
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The innovative 5013c accreditation body, Accreditation for Gerontology Education Council (AGEC), is the first of its kind with its global purview of gerontology programs. The purpose of AGEC is to serve as an accrediting entity for bachelors and masters programs, both nationally and internationally. AGEC uses competitiveness involving skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary to educate a prepared workforce in the gerontological field. While this is a critical function, how is receiving an AGEC accreditation perceived by academic institutions? This paper will discuss survey results examining perspectives from both students and administrators. The survey examining attributes of institutions which influence student attendance decisions involved a sampling of graduate students and administrators from the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) member institution directory. The discussion of results will highlight the perceived benefits and value-added to degree programs attaining an AGEC accreditation.

SESSION 4400 (SYMPOSIUM)

A CROSS-SPECIES AND CROSS-NATIONAL EXAMINATION OF SEX DIFFERENCES IN HEALTHY AGING
Chair: E.M. Crimmins, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California
Co-Chair: S.N. Austad, The University of Alabama at Birmingham, Gardendale, Alabama
Discussant: C.E. Finch, University Southern California, Los Angeles, California

Sex or gender is an important determinant of aging outcomes. However, the role of sex or gender is not well-understood as it represents both distinct biological and social differences in life circumstances. Within human populations, a widely accepted generalization is that men have higher mortality while women have worse health; however, researchers have recently questioned whether this is, in fact, true. While female-life expectancy exceeds male life expectancy in virtually every country, the gender differences in health and life expectancy are quite variable. Symposium participants Drs. Saito and Lee, relying on newly available data from national populations in a number of countries including Japan, the United States and India, will discuss gender differences in multiple aspects of human health. Animal research often points the way to understanding mechanisms underlying human health. Laboratory animals also show marked sex differences in aging and longevity, but until recently those differences have been virtually ignored. Dr. Austad will discuss these sex difference patterns across species and note how laboratory species can be employed to provide insight into human sex differences. Increasing numbers of animal studies have found that drug treatments that extend life and preserve health surprisingly have sex-specific effects. That is, males but not females may be affected or vice versa. Dr. Kennedy will describe a specific example, female mouse health and longevity being preferentially affected by manipulation of the TOR cellular network, and present data on the reason for this sex difference.

USING SEX DIFFERENCES IN AGING IN LABORATORY ANIMALS TO UNDERSTAND HUMAN SEX DIFFERENCES

Women live longer than men in virtually all places and at virtually all times. Often, if not always, women suffer fewer functional limitations and illnesses than men, however. This has been called the mortality-morbidity paradox. Common laboratory animal species from small roundworms to mice have been used historically to dissect general underlying mechanisms of aging. Yet because none of these commonly used species have a uniform survival advantage of one sex over the other, it has been assumed that they could not be useful for investigating mechanisms involved in the mortality-morbidity paradox. This assumption is false. I will present several new experimental paradigms that use the known conditional variability in sex-biased survival in laboratory species to understand mechanisms underlying the mortality-morbidity paradox.

SEX DIFFERENCES IN BIOLOGICAL AGE: JAPAN AND THE U.S.
Y. Saito2, J. Kim1, M. Levine1, Y. Zhang1, E.M. Crimmins1, 1. University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California, 2. Nihon University, Tokyo, Japan, 3. University of California Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California

Chronological age is a significant predictor of mortality; however, recent research indicates that biological age is a better predictor of mortality and once it is controlled chronological age no longer predicts mortality. Biological age may