1-2014

AHHS 420.01: Geriatric Health Issues

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Course Description: This course will present a review of normal aspects of aging, common health problems associated with aging, and common pharmacological and non-pharmacological treatments of these problems in older persons. Students will complete 44 hours of online modules for the 3-credit course.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of the course the student will be able to:

1. Identify normal changes of aging associated with biological systems.
2. Describe normal psychosocial aspects of aging.
3. Identify pertinent aspects of health promotion as related to aging.
4. Describe nutritional issues associated with aging.
5. Identify and discuss end-of-life issues.
6. For selected body systems, describe common pathologies of aging, usual signs and symptoms, alternative signs and symptoms in the elderly, usual non-pharmacological and pharmacological treatments, adaptation of treatments in the elderly, psychosocial issues associated with the health problems, and special rural or ethnic issues associated with these problems.

Teaching Strategies: The modules were developed by the Montana Geriatric Center using various experts in aging throughout the state. The modules vary in length and take 2 to 4 hours to complete. Each module consists of text; in addition each contains web site readings, case studies and discussion questions. In addition to reading the modules, students must complete a pre-test and a post-test over the material (up to an hour’s time is allowed for each test) and must participate in online class discussion. Each student must post a primary response to the discussion question for that module, and must respond to one or more of their classmates’ posts.

Required Readings: Each module includes text and website readings. Additional articles can be made available through electronic reserve.

Assessment: There will be a 20 (2 hour modules) or 40 (4 hour modules) point quiz over each module for a total of 200 points possible on the quizzes. Students will take each quiz initially as a pre-test for no score and will take the same quiz after studying the module for the actual points. Discussion questions worth five points each will be posted for each 2-hour module and each case study for a total of 85 points possible; each student needs to select one question per module and post a well developed one paragraph response. Students also need to post a reply to another student’s response to get full credit. Graduate students must complete two additional online modules in their chosen area of study, select a topic from those modules, and write a 4 to 6 page paper on the contributions that his or her discipline can make to the care of the elderly in that area. The paper must be referenced to the health care literature.

Class Meetings: During those weeks designated as Catch Up Week, the students and instructor will meet face to face in the classroom as needed, for a review of the modules covered since the last class meeting. The class meetings will be held at a time to be arranged with the students.
Grading:
90-100% - A, 80-89 – B, 70-79 – C, 60-69 – D, <60 – F

Schedule of Modules:
Week of:
   January 27  Biology of Aging – 2 hours
                Health Promotion and Aging – 2 hours
   February 3  Psychosocial Aspects of Aging – 2 hours
                End of Life Issues – 2 hours
   February 10 Catch Up Week
   February 17 Nutrition of Aging – 2 hours
                Patients as Partners – 2 hours
   February 24 Late Life Depression – 2 hours
                Screening for Depression – 2 hours
   March 3     Catch Up Week
   March 10    Cognitive Decline and Dementia – 2 hours
                Screening for Cognitive Impairment – 2 hours
   March 17    Respiratory Disorders – 4 hours
                Respiratory Case Study – 2 hours
   March 24    Catch Up Week
   March 31    Spring Break
   April 7     Overview of Geriatric Health Screening – 2 hours
                Screening for Diabetes – 2 hours
   April 14    Screening for Lipid Disorders – 2 hours
                Screening for Osteoporosis – 2 hours
   April 21    Catch Up Week
   April 28    Cancer in the Elderly – 4 hours
                Oncology Case Study – 2 hours
   May 5       Endocrine Disorders – 4 hours
                Endocrine Case Study – 2 hours
   May 12      Finals Week