GEC FUNDING RESTORED

Thanks in part to lobbying efforts by key national organizations, federal funding was recently restored for Geriatric Education Centers (GECs), which have played a critical role in workforce preparation for an aging society.

The last Congress eliminated funding for Title VII Geriatrics Health Professions Programs in fiscal year 2006. Thanks to the sustained activism by higher education groups and advocates for older people, as well as change in control of Congress, funding has now been restored to 2005 levels for fiscal year 2007 through House and Senate passage of a continuing resolution signed into law by President Bush in February.

This represents an extraordinary advocacy success, particularly given that continuing resolution law nearly always limits spending on programs only to those that were funded in the prior year.

A recent report indicated that just five of 145 medical schools in the US have departments of geriatric medicine, and only about 3 percent of graduating medical students have taken courses in geriatrics. Title VII funds support geriatric faculty fellowships, the geriatric academic career award program, and the nation's Geriatric Education Centers (GEC).

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

The Association for Gerontology and Higher Education (AGHE) has published "Brief Bibliography"
materials on CD-RO covering "Instructional Methods and Options in Aqinq" including the following:

-Aging in Literature: Compiled by Barbara Frey Waxman and Anne Wyatt-Brown.


-Distance Education: Compiled by Kathryn L. Braun and Melen R. McBride.

-Education and the Older Adult: Compiled by Jo Ann Luckie and Mary Alice Wolf.

-Interdisciplinary Education and Teamwork in Gerontology and Geriatrics: Compiled by Phillip Clark and Theresa Drinka.

-Teaching About Aging for Children and Youth: Compiled by Sandra L. McGuire and Catherine J. Tompkins.

For information on how to get these materials, visit: http://www.aghe.org/site/aghewebsite/content.php?type=1&id=8076

BUT I READ IT ON THE INTERNET...

A recent article in THE CHRONICLE REVIEW (Chronicle of Higher Education, Mar. 9, 2007) includes an article by Peter J.M. Nicholson, "The Intellectual in the Infosphere," which notes that "The growing decline in deference to traditional sources of authority is a nearly universal feature of advanced societies. It transcends every specific, local instance."

For full text, visit: http://chronicle.com/temp/reprint.php?id=34w45d52l916kdqbd4pvhsyn0kmrhxnm

The problem here applies to "traditional sources of authority" in academe as well (e.g., peer-reviewed journals). More and more, we see students including websites (and Wikipedia) in their written work. But saying "I read it on the Internet" is NOT a satisfactory answer to justify one's sources of knowledge.

So how do we help students evaluate what they find on the Web? It's one more instance of the need to develop critical thinking. To help your students look at the following helpful guides:

"The Good, The Bad, & The Ugly: or, Why It's a Good Idea to Evaluate Web Resources" at:
DOES CREATIVITY DECLINE WITH AGE?

Here’s a topic that can provoke lively debate among students. Is it really true that "You can’t teach an old dog new tricks" or is there hope for continued growth and creativity in later life?

For a collection of PowerPoint slides on "Aging and Creative Productivity" visit: http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/Simonton/MxAgCrProd.ppt

Take a look at Ithaca College’s “Creative Aging Project” featured at: http://www.ithaca.edu/aging/aging_project.php

For a broad compendium of websites and other resources to address the question, look at: http://www.sagepub.com/moody5study/02Creativity_WebLinks.pdf

Here are a few of the best books on the subject:


COURSE OUTLINES OF INTEREST

"Aging, Inequality, & Society:"


"The Biology and Behavioral Neuroscience of Aging:"
GERONTOLOGY CURRICULUM GUIDE

New York State Gerontology Curriculum Resource Guide contains free lesson plans designed for high school teachers who teach about gerontology. Faculty at other levels can also benefit. Completely cross-indexed; available at: http://www.ithaca.edu/aging/guide/introduction.html

AGING IS GOOD BUSINESS

Why don’t more academic gerontology programs pay attention to the world of business? It’s a good question, but some institutions are coming up with positive answers. The University of North Carolina-Greensboro now has a joint program between the School of Business and Gerontology, directed by Prof. Janice Wassel. Prof. Neal Cutler, Dean of the American Institute for Financial Gerontology, has recently joined their faculty.

UNC-Greensboro is sponsoring its second one-day annual summit meeting (Apr. 11, 2007) around the theme of "Aging is Good Business" with a focus on "Boomers Coming of Age" and innovative choices for residential living styles. The Conference is inviting professionals in gerontology, lifestyle product design, housing, furnishings, interior design, building, architecture, leisure and entertainment, human resources, marketing, city planning, and other fields to this event.

This year's "Aging Is Good Business" Summit also serves as the pre-conference for the Southern Gerontological Society, also in Greensboro, April 11-14, 2007. For details, visit: http://www.uncg.edu/gro/agingisgoodbusiness.html

AARP's Office of Academic Affairs is sponsoring a national network of faculty interested in business and aging. For details, contact teachgero@yahoo.com

BOOKS OF INTEREST

Learning in Later Life


LEARNING LATER, by Brian Findsen (Krieger, 2005).
LEARNING LATER, LIVING GREATER: The Secret for Making the Most of Your After 50 Years, by Nancy Merz Nordstrom (Sentient Publicationsm 2006).

This electronic newsletter is edited by Harry (Rick) Moody at the AARP Office of Academic Affairs. TEACHING GERONTOLOGY contains items of interest to improve the teaching of aging in higher education. To submit items or request subscription changes, contact hrmoody@aarp.org