

Career Resources: MS Dementia & Aging

Research

Practitioner

Long Term Care



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Why pursue a graduate degree in Dementia and Aging?

The MSDA is a 33-hour, online, interdisciplinary degree (with courses from Sociology, Long Term Care, and Communication Disorders) and housed in the sociology department. Successfully completing the MSDA will be useful for anyone who currently works or wants to work with the aged community, or conduct research on dementia and aging. Graduates can manage various communities, programs, agencies and organizations for the growing aging population, or conduct research on dementia, gerontology, and aging. According to the U.S. Census, the number of elderly has surpassed the number of teenagers for the first time ever in the United States. Because of this significant demographic change, there are more jobs available for people to help and work with senior citizens, and a need for more scholarly research about aging and the aged.

Successfully completing the MSDA will be useful for anyone who currently works or wants to work with the aged community, or conduct research on dementia and aging. This innovative program will produce graduates who can manage various communities, programs, agencies and organizations for the growing aging population, or conduct research on dementia, gerontology, and aging. According to the U.S. Census, the number of elderly has surpassed the number of teenagers for the first time ever in the United States. Because of this significant demographic change, there are more jobs available for people to help and work with elders, and a need for more scholarly research about aging and the aged. The MSDA program has three tracks: (1) Dementia and Long-Term Care; (2) Practitioner; and (3) Research. Each track offers different pathways for students upon graduation. Each targets a specific student audience and is designed to advance career and professional aspirations.

(1) The **Dementia and Long-Term Care Track** is designed for students whose professional goals correspond with the long term care certificate, but who also want cutting-edge knowledge about dementia and a master's degree to supplement the certificate. A student in this track may be interested in certification as a nursing home administrator. Dementia and Long-Term Care allies the Long-Term Care certificate with core coursework from the Department of Sociology to provide a social model of care approach to students who want to work in extended living environments when they graduate.

(2) The **Practitioner Track** contains a curricular offering for students whose interests are in careers related to dementia and prefer a wider variety of elective courses related to dementia and aging issues, rather than long-term care. A student in this track may be interested in roles such as health educator, or patient advocate. Students with undergraduate degrees in helping and health professions (social work and occupational therapy) may also pursue this track in order to expand skill sets and employment opportunities. The Practitioner track offers an in-depth education involving coursework from all participating departments and allowing students to work in any facility or organization whose concern is the health and well-being of the individuals affected by dementia.

(3) The **Research Track** focuses on research skills and dementia-related courses and is the track that students who want to pursue an academic doctorate in gerontology or aging should elect. It will provide advanced research knowledge to accompany the cutting-edge information offered in the core dementia and aging courses. The Research track offers coursework that will prepare students for doctoral programs in Gerontology, Sociology, Dementia Studies, or related fields.

Alumni Spotlight & Student Testimonials:

“Having a full understanding and perspective of the barriers (i.e. cultural barriers, discrimination, etc.) that older individuals face throughout their life course, increases the likelihood that the needs can be accommodated. Among many things, the MSDA presents views on ageism, the cultural expectations/perspectives that elders have on aging, how to communicate with elders, and end of life care. The most incredible thing about the MSDA program is the push to counter the outdated medical model that is presented and the evolving alternative approaches to care that help elders in late life. Ultimately, the foundation of the MSDA program truly equips leaders within the long-term care field with resources that will not only impact the delivery of care within facilities, but recognition of the resources that the care team needs.” **Marcus Mercer, MSDA ‘17**
Director of the Ranch at the Marbridge Foundation

“This MSDA program provides great material to help a student understand the aging process and provides an insight on what can occur in the mind of an elderly individual. The material provided by each professor is well organized and has a significant purpose, which makes it easier for the information to be remembered. My professors are individuals who truly care about this subject and they always provide personal experiences to help their students understand it clearer. During the program, I felt the support from the faculty and it was very comforting.” **-Elizabeth Cantu, MSDA ‘17**

“The MSDA program helped sharpen my researching and writing skills, particularly in the field of geriatric caretaking and medicine. I am currently working at a health care think tank in Austin (TMF Health Quality Institute) that develops and implements quality improvement projects to lessen the cost and better the delivery of care for Medicare beneficiaries. Because of the MSDA program, I am able to contribute new ideas for projects for TMF to pursue that will better health care for older adults. I am confident that my MSDA degree will continue to help open doors for me in the future as my career continues to advance.” **- Erin Van Landingham, MSDA ‘17**
Proposal Specialist, TMF Health Quality Institute

"Pursuing a Master's degree in dementia and aging was one of the best decisions I made. I learned a lot about the caring for the elderly, all the ups and downs that come with aging, financial burdens, and much more. Most importantly, it taught me to appreciate and embrace aging, as it is a beautiful thing. The professors throughout the program were by far the best professors I have ever had. They made my first time taking an online course an excellent experience with their continuous support and open communication. I also got to meet some of the many very bright and talented students through networking events.

My career goals including pursuing my Long-Term Care Administration certification, and one day, opening my own ideal dementia care neighborhood, especially to help those who do not have access to the care they are entitled to due to certain barriers." **- Payal B. Patel, MSDA ‘17**

Research career opportunities & connect with alumni via

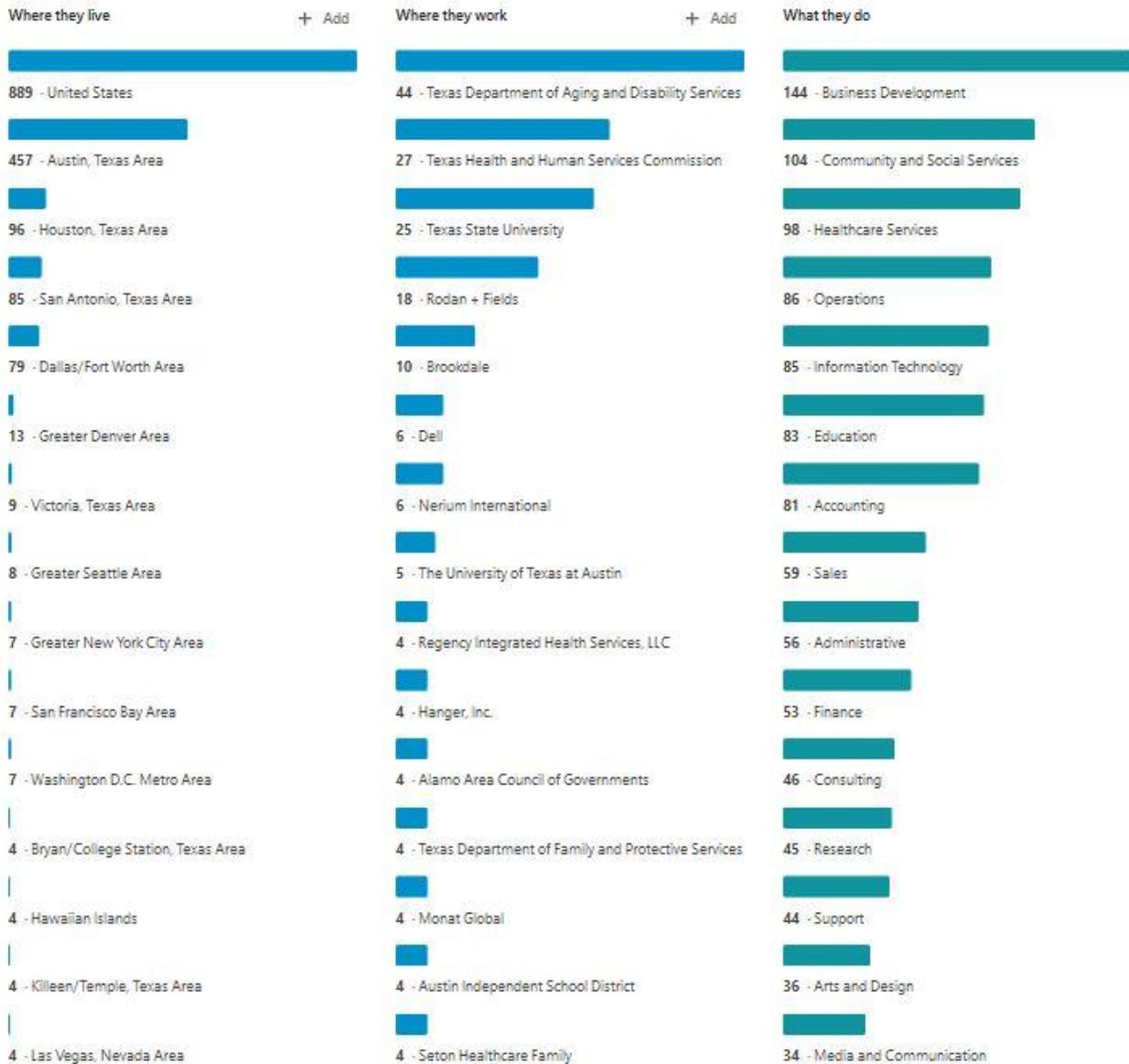


Texas State University Career Insights <https://www.linkedin.com/school/texas-state-university/alumni/>

Search: "Aging"

893 alumni

✓ Aging Clear all



Job Boards:

Texas State University Career Services-Handshake:

<http://www.careerservices.txstate.edu/>

American Society on Aging (ASA):

<https://careers.asaging.org/>

Texas Dept. of Family & Protective Services-Adult Protective Services:

<http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Jobs/default.asp>

Capital Area Council of Governments:

<http://www.capcog.org/employment/>

Federal Jobs-USA Jobs:

<https://www.usajobs.gov/>

Texas Health and Human Services:

<https://hhs.texas.gov/about-hhs/jobs-hhs>

The Gerontological Society of America (GSA):

<https://agework.geron.org/jobseeker/search/results/>

Family Eldercare (Central Texas):

<https://www.familyeldercare.org/our-story/careers/open-positions/>

LeadingAge Texas:

http://www.leadingagetexas.org/?page=Members_CareerCenter

Meals on Wheels:

<https://jobs.mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org/>

National Institute on Aging (NIA):

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/about/careers>

Oceans Healthcare:

<https://oceanshealthcare.com/>

Texas Association of Nonprofit Organizations:

<https://tano.org/career-center/job-listings/#s=1>

Mission Capital:

<https://missioncapital.org/community-open-positions/>

Career Development Resources:

Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) <https://www.aghe.org/resources/careers-in-aging>

Learn about Careers in Aging: <https://www.aghe.org/images/aghe/ciaw/learnaboutcareersinaging.pdf>

Exploring Careers in Aging: A Roadmap for Students:

<http://www.apa.org/pi/aging/resources/careers/index.aspx>

Non-academic Careers in Aging for Emerging Scholars and Professionals:

<https://www.geron.org/images/gsa/documents/espononacademic.pdf>

Finding Your Gerontology Career Niche: <https://www.geron.org/images/gsa/espocareerniche.pdf>

Tools for Building a Solid Career in Gerontology:

<https://www.geron.org/images/gsa/documents/espoprecon2016.pdf>

Business and Aging blog, Exploring Careers in Aging: <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/12089.html>

Retooling for an Aging America: http://businessandaging.blogs.com/ecg/2007/01/careers_in_aging.html

101+ Careers in Aging: http://businessandaging.blogs.com/ecg/101_careers_in_aging/index.html

American Health Care Association (AHCA) and National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL) Career Learning Center:

<http://careers.ahcancal.org/jobseekers/resources/blueskyLMS/index.cfm>

PRACTITIONER

This degree track contains a curricular offering for students whose interests are in careers related to dementia and aging but prefer a wider variety of elective courses related to dementia and aging issues, rather than long-term care. A student in this track may be interested in roles such as health educator, patient advocate, or direct care.

Sample Job Ads:

Program Specialist

General Summary

This position organizes community education, volunteer training and diversity outreach, facilitates support services, and oversees the collection of information needed for timely and accurate provision of services.

Essential Job Functions

- Identify, recruit, train, and manage high impact volunteers to deliver general education programs to families as well as professional caregivers (including scheduling, organizing, managing and evaluation) in the area and surrounding counties.
- Establish key partnerships in the area and surrounding service area for volunteer recruitment and outreach.
- Recruit and train volunteers for diversity outreach, focusing on one or more of the Associations identified priority populations.
- Provide training and oversight for Programs, Support Groups and Community Presenter volunteers.
- Engage in Physician Outreach activities in local service area.
- Learn and utilize the Personify database of constituents, keeping events and participants up to date.
- Oversee updating the education event calendar and coordinate with the distribution throughout the service area.
- Provide Contact Center and Helpline back-up as needed.
- Provide monthly data and statistical reports to Director, Programs and Advocacy.
- Support local Advocacy efforts on the Federal and State levels as directed.
- Schedule and oversee educational conferences in local region according to the direction of the Program Director.
- Other program duties as required.

Minimum Requirements

- Bachelor's degree in health care management, social work, psychology, counseling, nursing, gerontology or related field; or equivalent work experience.
- 1-3 years experience implementing and delivering community programs.
- 1-3 years experience working in Alzheimer's or dementia field preferred.
- Experience recruiting and training volunteers.
- Experience in training and instructional presentations.
- Bilingual in Spanish preferred.
- Demonstrates 2 or more years of experience working for or with health systems and understands relevant aspects of health systems operations, such as quality improvement, person-centered care, access to care, and payment and policy issues

Manager Resident Activities LTC

POSITION SUMMARY

Develops and implements an organization's programs. Assesses needs and ensures that program objectives are met. Coordinate activities of program committees and/or other groups to plan procedures.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Plan and implement activities in the following categories: physical (exercise), social, recreational, intellectual/educational, creative, entertainment, religious, service/volunteering and special requests of the residents.
- Organize and facilitate a committee of residents and community members to work on issues of planning for activities and volunteer needs.
- Facilitate socialization among residents.
- Invite and/or remind residents to participate in planned activities.
- Promote activities in a way that piques residents' interest.
- Chaperone activities outside the facility.
- Conduct/Lead activities as needed.
- Train, support and instruct other staff members to conduct activities.
- Complete the activity assessment in collaboration with Resident Services Coordinator for each resident within one week after move-in. Update annually.
- Provide input for the resident assistance plan and volunteer plan.
- Plan, coordinate and help implement decoration of the facility for special events, seasons and holidays.
- Identify and requisition needed supplies for planned activities.
- Coordinate with the kitchen food needs for scheduled activities.
- Assist with planning and implementing marketing events that promote the facility to potential residents.
- Assist in the development of a newsletter.
- Maintain a schedule for the company vehicle.
- Maintain a schedule for use of the common areas.
- Arrange transportation for activity outings and regularly scheduled group trips.
- Drive the company vehicle for resident activities and appointments, if necessary.
- Identify areas within the facility or activity program that could benefit from the support of volunteers.
- Identify and contact local organizations that could benefit from the talents of residents.
- Develop policies and procedures for utilization of volunteers.
- Maintain a list of volunteer positions needed.
- Write position descriptions for identified positions.
- Recruit specific volunteers to meet facility needs.
- Recruit resident volunteers to meet the needs of the facility and other organizations in the community.
- Train and supervise volunteers.
- Establish and carry out a regular resident/community volunteer recognition program.
- Accept on-call responsibilities as assigned by supervisor.
- Carry out other duties as assigned by supervisor to ensure operation of the program to meet the residents' needs.
- Oversees entire facility.

Senior Center Coordinator

General Summary

The Senior Center Coordinator manages the operational, financial, personnel and related administrative activities of the Senior Center. An engaged and active participant base keeps this individual on their toes, ensuring that the visitors and members of The Center are met with current and innovative approaches to support aging in the community. This individual, sensitive and aware of the evolving needs and interests of aging residents. Each day, they will be surrounded by artists, performers, storytellers, technical gurus, historians, and friends, while facilitating support to an inclusive social and learning environment for people of all ages and backgrounds.

Essential Functions

Collaborates with a representative group of staff, participants, Senior Center Commission and advisory groups and community members to develop, articulate and promote a vibrant vision for The Center that establishes meaningful engagement and active support for older adults and generates enthusiasm for The Center within the community.

- Recruits, hires, supervises and evaluates staff. Plans staff training as needed, and coordinates/oversees the activities of individuals providing volunteer services to The Center's programs.
- Participates in select Center programs and maintains day-to-day interactions with participants and visitors. Demonstrates and encourages exemplary customer service.
- Represents the Center and actively participates with community-based groups, committees, and boards that focus on aging-related issues, including the Senior Center Commission and as staff liaison to Friends of The Center's Board of Directors. Serves as the City spokesperson in the community on aging and services.
- Manages and allocates space for internal and external users of The Center, including responding to facility user requests and complaints. Oversees rental usage agreements and tenant contracts and manages use and terms of independent contractor agreements.
- Prepares, administers and monitors the department's operational and capital budgets.
- Develops participant and community-based evaluation strategies to assess current programs and services for relevance, access, and cost, analyzes program results and implements changes. Encourages participant involvement in planning and delivery of programs and services.
- Establishes and maintains effective partnerships with other City departments and divisions; local businesses, organizations, hospitals, and educational institutions, to enrich programs and services.
- Reports to the City Council and County Board of Supervisors on operations, programming, and proposed changes and requests.

Candidate Requirements

Bachelor's degree or equivalent in social work, recreational services, gerontology, comparable field from a DOE recognized accredited school required. Three years' experience in senior services and administration. Must pass criminal background check. Master's degree or equivalent in gerontology or a Master's degree in another area with a certificate in aging studies from a DOE recognized accredited school preferred. One-year experience in fundraising or equivalent preferred.

Guardianship Care Manager

Position Details:

Make a positive impact in our community!

Eldercare Co. supports seniors and adults with disabilities in Central Texas. We are recognized experts in aging and are mission-driven in providing quality client-centered services to our community.

Our employee benefit package includes:

- employee-paid medical, dental, and vision health insurance
- vacation, sick, and personal time off
- 11-paid Holidays
- 403(b) plan with discretionary 5% employer match
-

Experienced professionals who reside in the Austin area (NO RELOCATION ASSISTANCE) and share our core values of integrity, stewardship, collaboration, compassion, excellence, passion, and commitment are invited to apply for the following employment opportunity.

The Care Manager, Guardianship is responsible for developing, assessing, facilitating and monitoring all components of assigned caseloads of incapacitated adults receiving Guardianship services.

Essential Responsibilities include:

Complete intake paperwork on eligible clients, including assessment with medical and cognitive impressions with assessment of indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation

Establish and maintain client charts and electronic records

Establish, monitor, and revise client care plans

Make appropriate referrals for services needed to support client

Conduct monthly monitoring visits in the home, day habilitation or medical settings

Provide guardianship services with continuing assessment of wards to ensure that our wards live in a safe environment, enjoying an optimal quality of life

Work in collaboration with estate services in the establishment of budgets, bank accounts, and other services required to manage finances and provide for basic needs

Provide direct services to crime victims including, but not limited to, crisis intervention, assistance with Crime Victims' Compensation, assistance with Texas VINE, legal assistance, victim advocacy and information and referral

Participate in on-call rotation

Supervise volunteers in establishing and maintaining a supportive relationship with ward, and effective monitoring and advocacy

Minimum Education, Skills, and Experience Required:

- Bachelor's Degree in Human Services or related field
- 2 years of experience in direct client services, case management, and utilizing resources for adults who are elderly, disabled, or victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation
- Experience working under pressure while maintaining a positive attitude, providing exemplary customer service, and meeting deadlines
- Ability to work independently, effectively respond to changing priorities, and complete assignments
- Proficient in Microsoft office software applications and Outlook

LONG TERM CARE

This track is designed for students whose professional goals correspond with the long-term care certificate, but who also want cutting-edge knowledge about dementia and a master's degree to supplement the certificate. A student in this track may be interested in certification as a nursing home administrator.

Sample Job Ad:

Long Term Care Administrator

RESPONSIBILITIES: Manage all business-related activity to achieve the Senior Care Centers vision and supporting strategies and assures that the company image as an ethical and high quality provider of health services is maintained.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- To assure resident safety
- Current licenses as required by state law
- Familiarity with long-term care and/or health care services
- Valid driver's license and proof of insurance
- Ability to understand, remember and carry out verbal and/or written instructions in English
- Ability to speak clearly and hear well enough to communicate with sources
- Ability to complete assignments while having constant interruptions
- Must be capable of performing the Essential Functions of this job, with or without reasonable accommodation

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

- Directs the location staff to provide high quality in daily care which meets/exceeds all internal/external standards within budget parameters, including but not limited to nursing services, physical plant and environment
- Listens to family questions and concerns, assists with resolving issues and explains related company actions and decisions
- Completes daily rounds to assess resident climate and to address complaints or other issues; refers these issues to appropriate department head or other personnel
- Drives Quality Assurance program in the center and ensures the implementation of follow up or corrective action
- Intervenes as appropriate in potentially threatening situations and follow-up with staff after crisis has been resolved
- Oversees preparations for licensure certification surveys
- Scopes renovation needs of the facility and gains appropriate support for renovations
- Manages the admissions process and marketing activities within the facility; utilizes marketing support to determine the use of marketing resources for the facility and the use of staff for facility specific tasks related to the approved corporate marketing programs
- Ensures maintenance of high quality mix by reviewing census and case mix daily

- Provides input to facility Business Development department on marketing call plans, amount/type of marketing training needed for facility and request for advertising budget and its use
- Represents the facility in communication, public relations and marketing calls in the community
- Organize the functions of the nursing home through appropriate departmentalization and the delegations of duties; establishes formal means of accountability
- Promotes and maintains pro-active, positive employee relations programs
- Maintains frequent, daily informal interaction and provides positive feedback to staff while they are working; maintains an open-door policy in dealing with staff
- Follows, interprets and enforces corporate personnel policies
- Communicates clearly and responsively on issues arising in the facility to decision makers who are outside of the facility and follows-up to minimize impact of issues
- Recruits, interviews, hire and trains department heads and other facility personnel
- Manages the performance management process within the facility; ensures employees are compensated for merit within Senior Care Centers pay guidelines
- Terminates or redeploys staff for performance related issues or unethical behavior
- Follows up on all complaints of sexual harassment as appropriate
- Prepares annual budget with Regional Vice President of Operations or other corporate representative by reviewing past years budget and the plan it supports by meeting established census, revenue and expense targets; provides input to purchasing for all budgeted capital expenditures and purchases above guideline amounts
- Reviews financial statements monthly and identifies items which do not fall within established parameters; identifies cause of budget discrepancies and reviews with department head
- Communicates budget and provides assistance/guidance to department heads in maintaining appropriate budget levels; teaches/coaches department heads in meeting financial requirements and documentation guidelines
- Tracks and holds accounts receivable reviews monthly to see that they are collecting in a timely manner
- Maintains compliance with corporate internal audit report
- Installs and manages facility procedures/systems consistent with Senior Care Center's needs
- Oversees completion of forms, reports, etc., including state licensure reports, monthly financial reports, Public Health or Department of Labor surveys, plans of corrections, responses to corporate request, replies to resident council and others as needed
- Reviews and signs accounting records, payroll, incident/accident reports, resident trust fund reconciliation and resident funds approval
- Maintains an "On-Call" status for emergency situations
- Uses tactful, appropriate communications in sensitive and emotional situations
- Promotes positive public relations with patients, residents, family members and guests
- Use appropriate work place behavior; adhere to dress code at all times
- Agrees to comply with the Code of Conduct
- Supports and participates in common teamwork:
 - Cooperates and works together with all co-workers; plan and complete job duties with minimal supervisory direction, including appropriate judgment
 - Reports complaints, problems and concerns regarding co-workers, management or residents in accordance with company policy
 - Completes requirements for in-service training, acceptable attendance, uniform and dress codes including personal hygiene and other work duties as assigned

Nursing Home Administrator

This is a position where independent and organized people can help us shine. As an Administrator, you'll make connections with employees, motivating and inspiring them to adapt to change and achieve results. You'll manage all business-related activities of the location. This includes implementing strategies, systems and processes focused on providing the highest quality in health care services. This position takes strong innovative thinking and problem-solving skills. We make sure that working with us isn't just a good career move, but is fulfilling, too. You'll find a supportive environment that provides the resources needed to perform your leadership role at the highest level. We offer innovative technology, industry-leading benefits and significant opportunities to learn and grow.

Responsible For

- Management of all business-related activity to achieve the HCR ManorCare vision
- Supporting strategies, systems and processes
- Assures that the company image as an ethical and high-quality provider of health services is developed and maintained.

Qualifications

- Experience in an administrative or supervisory capacity within sub-acute or long term care.
- Experience in business administration is preferred.

Educational Requirements

Bachelor's degree in nursing home administration or related field required; Master's degree preferred; NHA License as required by state law.

Executive Director/Nursing Home Administrator

Under the direction of the Regional Director of Operations, the Executive Director leads and directs the overall operation of the community in accordance with resident needs, governmental regulations, and company policies, with the main objective of maintaining quality care for the residents and achieving business and financial profitability for the community.

Duties and responsibilities include census and revenue development, expense management, sales and marketing, human resources management and culture development, and management of quality systems.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in nursing home administration or related field, or the equivalent combination of education and experience
- Licensed TX NHA (Nursing Home Administrator) and a minimum of 5 years NHA or related management experience in a long term care community
- Experience collaborating with local health care partners
- Experience and ability to drive successful financial results
- Possess a strong knowledge of state, federal and local regulations as they pertain to long term care
- Demonstrated ability to engage and retain team members
- Ability to take initiative with minimal supervision and work independently
- Possess excellent leadership skills
- Computer proficiency.
- Strong oral, written, and interpersonal communication skills
- Ability to work well under pressure and multi-task
- Excellent organizational and time management skills

RESEARCH

The research degree track focuses on research skills and dementia-related courses and is the track for students who want to pursue an academic doctorate in gerontology or aging. It will provide advance research knowledge to accompany the cutting-edge information offered in the core dementia and aging courses.

Sample Job Ads:

Writer, The Center on Aging at State College

Job Description

The Center on Aging at State College strives to improve the lives of older adults through research, policy, and professional development. We provide workforce education and professional development services, including designing, conducting and evaluating training on issues related to aging and the life course.

We are seeking a smart, enthusiastic, flexible, and focused person to work as a Writer.

Qualifications:

The successful candidate will have a Master's degree (or, have a Bachelor's degree and significant experience) and outstanding writing skills, including developing complex, interdisciplinary projects involving multiple constituents. Must have a strong work ethic and the ability to collaborate effectively with internal and external partners. We seek someone who is highly organized, detail-oriented, and able to work independently and under pressure on multiple deadline-driven projects.

Required:

- Must have knowledge in one or more of the following areas: aging and life course, aging services and elder justice.
- Must write exceptionally well and have curriculum development and grant writing experience and skills.
- Must be able to design and develop curricula and training materials for human service professionals, supervisors and managers.
- Must be able to research and write grants; and write reports, presentations and other materials.
- Must be able to conduct literature and other evidence-based research on issues and opportunities relevant to aging and vulnerable adults.
- Must have a fundamental understanding of adult learning theory and instructional design
- Must be able to identify and assess key demographic, human services and community health issues, trends, and needs.
- Must be able to develop and implement a system to keep curricula and other materials updated and relevant
- Must have strong analytical, research and problem-solving skills.
- Must be able to create and execute project timelines.
- Experience and a track record of success with dual reporting structures is a plus.

Assistant/Associate Professor of Gerontology

Job Description

The Institute for Health, Health Care Policy and Aging Research, invites applications for a faculty position in gerontology or geriatric/palliative medicine with health care, services delivery and/or policy research experience or training. Candidates must have a strong interest in building a services

or policy research portfolio working collaboratively with a multidisciplinary group of social scientists, clinicians and policy scholars and a track record or high potential for federal funding.

The successful candidate will develop a program of research in any of several potential areas of research in gerontology or geriatric/palliative medicine including, but not limited to, behavioral health, minority health, health equity, trauma exposure, violence, biopsychosocial behaviors in prevention and treatment, chronic disease management and health outcomes, and evaluation of health policy and delivery system initiatives. Research addressing population health, translational scientific research, and the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups is highly desirable.

Study Coordinator- Alzheimer's Disease Center

Job Description

Bachelor's degree required. Focus of study in a relevant field such as, but not limited to, biological sciences, psychology, sociology, social work, or health care-related field preferred.

Previous work experience in customer service strongly preferred. Previous experience in a human subjects research or health care setting preferred.

The Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (ADRC) conducts research in the field of aging and dementia, and seeks to establish effective prevention, treatment, and diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. A research specialist is needed to activate and coordinate neuroimaging research studies involving cognitively healthy adults and those with memory impairment. This position will work in the lab of Dr. Johnson. The incumbent will work with a team of study coordinators that manage a large portfolio of research studies, and under the direction of the Neuroimaging Research Manager.

The School of Medicine and Public Health, and the Alzheimer's Disease Research Center have a deep and profound commitment to diversity both as an end, but also as a valuable means for eliminating health disparities. As such, we strongly encourage applications from candidates who foster and promote the values of diversity and inclusion.

Additional Information: Excellent attention to detail, and strong organizational and interpersonal skills required. Strong analytic skills preferred. Ability to communicate effectively, diplomatically, and in a culturally-sensitive way, in written and verbal forms with research participants, sponsors, faculty, researchers, staff, and students at all levels required. Excellent problem-solving, organizational, and computer skills required. Knowledge of University administrative policies and procedures, as well as federal human subjects protection regulations highly desirable. This position is expected to maintain confidentiality in all aspects of the job. Applicants' prior work experience should demonstrate attention to detail, teamwork, maturity, and flexibility.

Advice for MS Students Who Want to Apply to Doctoral Programs

Doctoral programs are more competitive than master's programs. What follows are tips on choosing the right program for you, and priorities of many graduate admissions committees at top doctoral programs. All of this information varies by department e.g. some value reference letters more than the academic statement.

First: How do you choose a program? Students should choose potential programs very carefully. The application fees are expensive. Find schools with the correct match of substantive areas, methods, and location that fit best. Consult with faculty, particularly with faculty in their area of expertise. Faculty can help identify schools in particular areas of specialization and may have first-hand knowledge about programs. Talk to your mentor and faculty with whom you have had sustainability classes.

Consider YOUR FIT with the program in terms of areas of specialization. Scan webpages and check out the AGHE site for ideas (<https://www.ghedirectory.org/>). There are several possibilities for MSDA students because of the interdisciplinary nature of our master's degree.

Examples include:

Ph.D. in Sociology at a program that emphasizes aging and gerontology, e.g. Purdue University

Ph.D. in Gerontology or Social Gerontology, e.g., University of Southern California, Miami University, University of Kansas, University of Massachusetts-Boston

Ph.D. in Social Work that has a concentration or certificate in aging, e.g. Florida State University

Ph.D. programs are very competitive, with a range from highly competitive (e.g., accepting 5 students from 120+ applications) to less competitive. All, however, are competitive. You should consider the importance of funding. Students are offered a range of funding from no funding at all to fellowships, tuition waivers, and GIA or GRA positions. Ideally, you want to apply to many programs in hopes that you will get the most funding possible. We know that many students receive financial aid for the undergraduate years so going on for the Ph.D. can be another financial burden without good funding. Finally, be aware that some doctoral programs do not accept or support students who work full-time. They are seeking applicants who are 100% committed to pursuit of the Ph.D.

Second: How can you make your application materials as competitive as possible? It is never too soon to start planning for your application to a doctoral program. You want to make your application as competitive as possible. You will be competing with many students who have a master's degree, very high GPA, and conference presentations. Doctoral programs are looking for good fits or "matches," not just outstanding skills. Each of these items is especially important for top-ranked doctoral programs. Occasionally applicants are rejected when a program has too many students working in a particular area of specialization.

1. For most Ph.D. programs, **GRE score** matters a lot, even though it is not a great predictor of future success. Students who fall below the minimum aren't even considered at many top Ph.D. programs. Find out about the minimum and average GRE scores for the program. Study for the

GRE. Take it seriously. Some students will take the GRE two times; this can be a gamble of sorts because some programs look at the lowest score, some average scores, while others take the highest score. Because of this “risk,” do the best you can the first time you take the GRE but if you don’t score well, then take it a second time.

2. **The statement of purpose** is central to the application. It a scholarly statement. Clearly articulate your intended research interests. If your research plans are not yet entirely specific, clarify the range of issues in the field that you are most interested in pursuing and sketch out plausible contexts for studying them. Avoid extended statements about personal history, except as relevant to your research plan (but be *brief*). Overall, your statement should demonstrate intellectual sophistication, good writing, and a sense of important research directions within sociology. It should discuss: Why this program? With which faculty might you work, and why? The statement should also discuss the student’s research agenda, and provide evidence of his or her methodological skills.

Go beyond describing why you are a great student. All of the applicants are great students. Doctoral programs aren’t really looking for great students; they are interested in budding *scholars*. Discuss why you are a scholar. Applicants should say what they want to study, how they see their scholarly contribution, and why they think the program is the best department to study those topics. Those who mention specific faculty members and who have clearly read their work get special consideration, especially if they are in areas that are popular. If someone says they want to study environmental policies and no one is teaching environmental policies, then the graduate admissions committee often rejects the application because no one teaches that topic. Show that you have actually read the faculty members’ work whom you mention, and the more recent research the better.

3. **Very high GPA:** For master’s students, the criteria are more stringent. You need a perfect or near perfect GPA for your graduate work.

4. **Positive and specific reference letters:** Be sure that your letters are from faculty who know enough about you to be able to write a supportive, accurate letter. When you ask for letters of support from faculty be sure to ask them for a POSITIVE letter. Find someone who can say more than “This student took my class and earned an A.” Lukewarm, brief, vague, or of course, negative letters are red flags for graduate admissions committees.

5. **Conference presentations, articles, and/or or potential articles:** MA or MS students need some experience presenting at conferences. There are many local and regional conferences that offer great opportunities for presenting ambitious course papers, or revisions of course papers (particularly empirical papers written in methods classes) but also go for larger conferences, if possible.