Interdisciplinary Intersections: Interpersonal Relations over the Life Course

Friday, September 21, 2007  Stewart Center  1:00 - 5:30 p.m.

Katherine S. Newman, PhD is the Malcolm Forbes Class of 1941 Professor of Sociology and Public Affairs and the Director of the Institute for International and Regional Studies at Princeton University. She is the author of eight books on topics ranging from urban poverty to middle class economic insecurity to school violence. In the summer of 2006, Newman completed a five country study focused on the prolonged stay of young people in their parents' homes in Western Europe and Japan which is the basis of her lecture and a forthcoming book.

Dr. Newman’s keynote address is co-sponsored with the Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

Mary Lee Hummert, PhD is Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Professor of Communication Studies at the University of Kansas, where she has also served as Associate Vice Provost for Research and as Graduate Advisor for the interdisciplinary PhD gerontology program. Dr. Hummert studies the social cognitive processes linking age stereotypes and communication. She has published in communication, psychology, and gerontology journals, and is the co-editor of two books on communication and aging.

Susan Charles, PhD is a life-span developmental psychologist who studies age differences and age-related trajectories of change in emotional experience in adulthood. She is currently an associate professor in the Department of Psychology and Social Behavior at the University of California, Irvine. Her research includes studying how cognitive and behavioral strategies of emotion regulation vary by age as well as how emotional experience is related to both perceptions and objective indicators of physical health and physical functioning among adults.

The symposium is co-sponsored by the Center for Families.

Watch your mailbox for the symposium brochure or contact the CALC office at 765-494-9692.
From the Director...
Dual-Title PhD: Entrée to Two Worlds

Kenneth F. Ferraro

Our dual-title PhD program in gerontology is now in its third year of operation, and I feel even better about it now than when we launched the program. There are two primary reasons for my enthusiasm.

First, our recent graduates have found their Purdue University credentials to be very helpful in furthering their professional development. Recent graduates now hold tenure-track faculty or post-doctoral research positions and tell us that their experience in the dual-title PhD program greatly aided their job search and their ability to work in interdisciplinary research teams.

Second, my enthusiasm for Purdue’s program grew via a recent conversation with a graduate of a PhD program in gerontology from another university. (Unlike Purdue, this other university’s program relies solely on the gerontology credential: a single-title PhD.) The individual was conveying her challenge as a “PhD gerontologist” to secure a university faculty position because most universities still do not see gerontology as an independent discipline. Moreover, she used a metaphor to describe being a PhD gerontologist: Frankenstein - the creation nobody wants! Her point was that perhaps the new gerontology PhD programs were “over-reaching”—creating an entity that is not welcomed in the academy.

Of course, I felt compassion for the very bright young woman who was sharing her plight, and perhaps it is not as bad as she currently depicts it to be. Time will tell. Nevertheless, I continue to feel a profound sense of confidence that a dual-title PhD in gerontology is the optimal way to educate our future leaders in the scientific study of aging and the life course. It provides entrée for each graduate to two academic worlds.

The dual-title PhD gerontology program maintains all the requirements of the discipline in which the candidate is studying, whether sociology, foods and nutrition, or health and kinesiology. That disciplinary home provides the doctoral candidate with an identity and widely-respected credentials from a Big Ten university. It also means that the candidate has the requisite disciplinary depth to succeed in today’s university marketplace. At the same time, the gerontology curriculum infuses the PhD with interdisciplinary breadth that uniquely qualifies our graduates for departments or centers that seek scholars with gerontology credentials.

Today’s big science endeavors usually involve interdisciplinary teams, and our dual-title PhD in gerontology requires that students have a working knowledge in more than one “scientific language.” It is no surprise, then, that our first graduates are finding positions within academia and are poised to contribute to interdisciplinary research teams studying aging. No Frankenstein here.
“The Psychology of Intergenerational Transfers”
National Institute on Aging, National Institutes of Health. R01AG027769, $1,532,990.

There are no laws in the U.S. requiring parents to help grown children. Yet, national data reveal that parents continue to provide financial assistance to grown children throughout life. In fact, middle-aged adults who have both elderly parents and grown children tend to provide more to the grown children than to their parents. Surprisingly, researchers have not examined why parents assist grown offspring. Moreover, there is limited information about the consequences of that support. Providing support to offspring may affect mental and physical health in positive ways (e.g., sense of purpose) or negative ways (e.g., feeling demanded upon). For example, it is easy to imagine the disappointment of a middle-aged parent who is inefficacious in assisting a grown child to attain markers of adulthood (e.g., job, partnership). By contrast, middle-aged parents may thrive when assisting offspring to achieve life goals such as education, career, partnership or raising children of their own. The Intergenerational Exchanges Study examines these issues.

This study involves over 600 adults aged 40 to 60. These individuals will complete interviews regarding the help they exchange with their aging parents and their grown children. We will also interview at least one of the elderly parents and all of the participant’s grown children to better understand the nature of their exchanges. The study considers what the parties exchange, who receives more (parents or grown children), why middle-aged adults help their parents and grown children, and each of the party’s feelings about these familial help patterns.

Lynn Fellowships 2007-08

The Graduate School has allocated funding for two Lynn Fellowships for interdisciplinary studies in the Gerontology Program. Used as a recruitment tool for promising students in the dual-title PhD program, CALC has selected two fellows from among five applicants for the upcoming school year.

Joong Hyun Ryu
Health & Kinesiology
Dr. Jeffrey M. Haddad, advisor

Ting-Ying Yang
Consumer Sciences
Dr. Sharon DeVaney, advisor

We look forward to meeting these new students and welcoming them to campus.
Dan Mroczek, PhD, Associate Professor, child development and family studies

My major interests are in adult development and aging, especially personality and emotional development in the adult years. One of the main findings from my research over the past few years is that there are considerable individual differences in personality and well-being trajectories over long periods of time (10 to 20 years). I have a number of statistical and methodological interests such as longitudinal design, daily diary and experience sampling techniques, multilevel modeling (including growth-curve models), and proportional hazards models. Most of my research is funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), in particular the National Institute on Aging (NIA).

Susan Chen, PhD, Assistant Professor, agricultural economics

I am principally an applied microeconomist, with main research interests in the fields of health and labor economics. My current research program includes projects on the econometric evaluation of social programs that affect the labor force participation of older married couples. I am also one of the instructors in the Spatial Econometrics field in the Department of Agricultural Economics. Research in this area includes the effect of (spatial) accessibility to healthcare professionals on health outcomes, and the effect of the food landscape, (accessibility to grocery stores and restaurants), on the prevalence of obesity.

Min Zhang, M.D., PhD, Assistant Professor, statistics

Having witnessed the revolutionary effect of quantitative methods in life sciences during my study and research in both basic and clinical medicine, I cherish the important role of biostatisticians in bridging the gap between statistical and biomedical sciences. I am developing statistical and computational methodologies to facilitate biomedical research, especially in the areas of neurodegenerative diseases and cancer in which I had lots of experience in medical school. My current research interests include, but are not limited to, developing novel statistical methods for high dimensional data (such as microarray and mass spectrometry) and incomplete data, quantitative trait loci mapping, association study, and physician profiling.

Cleveland G. Shields, PhD, child development and family studies

I spent 19 years doing research and clinical work at the University of Rochester Medical Center in the Departments of Family Medicine and Psychiatry. My work focused on the relationship between family functioning and health, particularly how families cope with cancer and on physician-patient communication. In July 2006, I returned to Purdue, from which I graduated in 1987 with a PhD in marriage and family therapy. Currently, I am conducting a study of physician-patient communication with cancer patients and oncologists. I am also conducting research with Vickie Champion, DNS at the IU School of Nursing on the effect of patient activation interventions, and am also planning interventions with couples who are coping with cancer of one spouse. With my graduate students, I am conducting a study, with Dr. Paul Helft at IU Cancer Center, examining oncologist-patient-family interaction when giving prognostic information.
Research Grants - Faculty Associates
Academic Year 2006-2007

Wayne W. Campbell, foods and nutrition, from National Pork Board, “Protein Intake, Weight Loss, Meal Patterning, and Appetite in Overweight Men.” $150,000

Wayne W. Campbell and A. D. Rosen, foods and nutrition, biological sciences, from American Egg Board, “Protein Intake, Weight Loss, Meal Patterning and Appetite in Overweight Men.” $165,000


Wayne W. Campbell and Elsa M. Janie, foods and nutrition, from U.S. Whey Protein Research Consortium, “Influences of Whey Protein on Body Composition, Glucose Metabolism, and Appetite in Middle-Aged Adults at Risk for the Metabolic Syndrome.” $1,102,251


Sharon A. Devaney, consumer sciences and retailing, from North Dakota State University, “Financial Security for All.” $5,500

Nancy E. Edwards and B. M. Wall, nursing, from Health Resources & Services Administration, “Nurse Practitioner Education in Rural Indiana Settings.” $21,365

Stephen J. Elliott, industrial technology, from American National Standards Institute, “JTC1 Maintenance Contract.” $7,000

Stephen J. Elliott, industrial technology, from Upek, Inc., “UPEK Enrollment Testing.” $3,100

Stephen J. Elliott and E. J. Delp, industrial technology, electrical & computer engineering, from National Institute of Justice, “The Use of HDTV for In-Vehicle Cameras.” $201,852

Stephen J. Elliott, industrial technology, from Upek, Inc., “Upek Test Report.” $1,732

Kenneth F. Ferraro, sociology and anthropology, from Gerontological Society of America, “The Psychology of Intergenerational Transfers.” $55,058


James C. Fleet, foods and nutrition, from PHS-NIH National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, “Intestinal Calcium Absorption: Molecular Mechanisms.” $261,800

James C. Fleet, foods and nutrition, from National Institutes of Health, “Vitamin D Status and Prostate Cancer.” $443,393

James C. Fleet, foods and nutrition, from National Institutes of Health, “Intestinal Calcium Absorption: Molecular Mechanisms.” $253,857

Alan M. Friedman and B. A. Craig, biological sciences, statistics, from Dartmouth College, “SEI(Bio): Integration of Multimodal Experiments for Protein Structure.” $103,003

Lawrence T. Glickman, veterinary pathobiology, from National Institutes of Health, “Epidemiology of Indoor Air Pollution and Human Health.” $45,946

Harm HogenEsch, veterinary pathobiology, from 3M Pharmaceuticals, “Investigation of Noval Aluminum-Based Adjuvants.” $25,000

Harm HogenEsch, veterinary pathobiology, from National Institutes of Health, “Adenoviral Vector-Based Pandemic Influenza Vaccine.” $121,420

Suresh K. Mittal and Harm HogenEsch, veterinary pathobiology, from National Institutes of Health, “Adenoviral Vector-Based Pandemic Influenza Vaccine.” $316,296
Xinran Y. Lehto and Liping A. Cai, hospitality & tourism, from Harrison County Convention & Visitors Bureau, “The RO1 Study of Harrison County Welcome and Visitor Centers.” $30,500


Dorothy M. Morré, foods and nutrition, from NSE Products, Inc., “Testing of Human Saliva, Serum and Perspiration for ArNOX Activity.” $10,000

Dorothy M. Morré, foods and nutrition, from NOX Technologies, Inc., “Cytotoxicity Determination in Cell Culture of Selected Polyclonal and Recombinant Antiserum.” $10,000

Dorothy M. Morré, foods and nutrition, from Marshall Edwards Pty Ltd, “Testing of Effects of NV128 and NV5063 on tNOX Expression in Clinical Trial Samples.” $10,000

Daniel K. Mroczek, child development and family studies, from PHS-NIH National Institute on Aging, “Personality and Well-Being Trajectories in Adulthood.” $331,781


Fred E. Regnier, chemistry, from PHS-NIH National Institute on Aging, “Mitochondrial Proteomics of Aging.” $237,748

Fred E. Regnier, chemistry, from University of Texas at San Antonio, “Role of Oxidative Damage to Specific Molecules in Aging.” $75,000

Fred E. Regnier, chemistry, from the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, “Ellison Senior Scholars Award in Aging.” $112,500

Shirley Rietdyk, C. K. Rhea and James D. McGlothlin, health and kinesiology, health sciences, from University of Cincinnati, “Do Optical Properties of Obstacles Affect the Risk of Tripping in Construction Workers.” $4,970

Laura P. Sands and B. A. Craig, nursing, from Alzheimer’s Association, “Evaluating Community-Based Long Term Care for Medicaid Dementia Patients.” $239,964

Laura P. Sands, nursing, from VA Medical Center/San Francisco, “IPA for Dr Sands with Dr. Knight/SF VA Medical Center.” $27,763

David J. Waters, veterinary clinical sciences, from Gerald P. Murphy Cancer Foundation, “Activities that Support the Research and Communication Efforts of Professor David J. Waters.” $6,600

David J. Waters, veterinary clinical sciences, from Gerald P. Murphy Cancer Foundation, “Evaluation of a New Anticancer Agent III.” $5,267

Connie M. Weaver, foods and nutrition, from PHS-NIH National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, “Research Supplement to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research.” $39,809

Connie M. Weaver, foods and nutrition, from Bioanalytical Systems, Inc., “Twelve Week Study of Calcium Absorption Upon Oral Administration of Beta-Cryptxanthin (BXC) and Vitamin K in Ovariectomized Rats: Analysis of Bones.” $133,138

Connie M. Weaver, foods and nutrition, from Delavau LLC, “The Effects of Particle Size of Calcium Carbonate on Calcium and Bone Parameters in an Ovariectomized Rat Model.” $346,279

Connie M. Weaver, foods and nutrition, from University of California-San Francisco, “Subcontract with the University of California, San Francisco Citrate Pilot.” $129,856

Connie M. Weaver, David Elmore, Richard D. Mattes, George P. McCabe, and Charles R. Santerre, foods and nutrition, physics, College of Science - administration, from PHS-NIH National Center for Complimentary and Alternative Medicine, “Botanical Center for Age-Related Diseases-Year 8.” $1,253,668


Wei Zheng, health sciences, from National Institutes of Health, “Choroid Plexus as a Target in Metal-Induced Neurotoxicity.” $60,054

Wei Zheng, health sciences, from Vanderbilt University, “Biomarkers of Early Onset of Manganese Neurotoxicity.” $173,512

Wei Zheng, health sciences, from National Institutes of Health, “Choroid Plexus as a Target in Metal-Induced Neurotoxicity R01 ES08146 Supplement.” $76,866
2006-2007 Showalter Trust Awards:
Mike Kane, James Fleet and Shawn Donkin, computer and information technology, foods and nutrition, animal sciences, “Transcriptional Regulation Profiling of Genes Relevant to Prostate Cancer Progression.” $73,581

2006-2007 Clifford Kinley Trust Awards:
Karen Fingerman and J. Jill Suitor, child development and family studies, sociology and anthropology, “Parental Support of Young Adult Offspring.” $19,915

2006 Purdue Research Foundation Awards
Wayne W. Campbell, foods and nutrition, “Dietary Protein and Age: Effects on Muscle Gene Expression.” $15,011

Michael G. Flynn, health and kinesiology, “Inflammation, Inflammatory Mediators and Diabetes: How Does Exercise Intervene?” $15,011

Paula Y. Goodwin, child development and family studies, “Perceived Importance and Likelihood of Marriage Among Young African American Women.” $15,011

Lyle L. Lloyd, educational studies, “Development of a Pause Insertion Algorithm for Improving the Capacity of MathSpeak to Disambiguate Mathematical Expressions.” $15,011


Howard N. Zelaznik, health and kinesiology, “A Developmental Perspective on Obstacle Crossing.” $15,011

2007 Purdue Research Foundation Awards
James G. Anderson, sociology and anthropology, “Role Conflict between Family Members and Nursing Staff in the Long Term Care Setting: Effect on Nursing Job Satisfaction.” $15,292

Susan E. Chen, agricultural economics, “Does Location Matter? The Link between Obesity and Access to Food.” $15,292

Xinran Y. Lehto, hospitality & tourism management, “Marketing Indiana Agricultural Tourism Experience to Family Travelers: A Push and Pull Approach.” $15,292

Roseann M. Lyle, health and kinesiology, “Health Care Provider Physical Activity Prescription Intervention.” $15,292

Melanie Morgan, communication, “What Communication Strategies are Helpful for the Grieving, Why are Those Strategies Helpful, and Can these Skills Be Taught?” $15,292

Carolyn C. Perrucci, sociology and anthropology, “Consequences of Gender and Racial Workgroup Segregation on Perceived Job-Related Well Being of Women Workers.” $15,292

Joseph Thomas, III, pharmacy practice, “Associations between Use of Anticholinergic Medications and Health Outcomes in Nursing Home Patients with Dementia.” $15,292


Summer Faculty Grants: 2007
Jeffrey Haddad, health and kinesiology, “Can Thinking be Hazardous to your Health? The Effects of Cognition and Aging on Postural Stability.” $7,000

Jessica Huber, speech, language, and hearing sciences, “Influence of Planning and Syntax on Breath Pausing Patterns.” $7,000

Seed for Success Awards: 2006-2007
Wayne W. Campbell (PI), foods and nutrition, Elsa M. Janle, “Influences of Whey Protein on Body Composition, Glucose Metabolism, and Appetite in Middle-Aged Adults at Risk for the Metabolic Syndrome.”

Karen L. Fingerman (PI), child development and family studies, “The Psychology of Intergenerational Transfers.”


Don’t miss these upcoming events!

Center on Aging and the Life Course Fall Symposium
Interdisciplinary Intersections:
Interpersonal Relations over the Life Course
September 21, 2007
Stewart Center
Purdue University, West Lafayette

The 60th Annual Scientific Meeting of the
Gerontological Society of America
November 16-20, 2007
San Francisco, California

Association for Gerontology in Higher Education
2008 Annual Meeting
Baltimore, MD
February 21-24, 2008
Renaissance Harborplace Hotel