GERONTOLOGY, MASTER OF SCIENCE (M.S.) WITH A CONCENTRATION IN ASSISTED LIVING ADMINISTRATION

Leadership of assisted living communities requires administrators to exhibit both technical expertise and a compassionate approach to delivering high quality services and support to residents, families and employees. Evidence from the field highlights assisted living administration as a career with a growing demand, high job satisfaction and many opportunities. Because many individuals working in these settings lack gerontological education, pairing administrative training with a Masters in Gerontology degree allows students to apply their knowledge of aging and older adults in ways that will not only enhance their success as an assisted living administrator, but will also enhance the sector as a whole through innovation, strong leadership and the promotion of elderhood. Students enrolled in this NAB-accredited program will be prepared to sit for the national NAB core and residential care/assisted living exams.

Student learning outcomes

1. **Connect gerontological theory to practice:** Students will demonstrate a holistic theoretical understanding of adult development and elderhood from a biological, psychological, social and spiritual perspective. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge to real work challenges connected to aging and the provision of aging services, using a strengths-based, person-centered lifespan orientation.
2. **Integrate diversity, equity and inclusion in gerontological practice:** Students will demonstrate knowledge of how discrimination, oppression and marginalization at the individual and institutional levels, based on age and intersectional identities, impacts health and longevity. Students will demonstrate the ability to act as an advocate by shaping authentic, person-centered attitudes (both their own attitudes and the attitudes of others) about aging and elderhood and to challenge institutional discrimination.
3. **Develop critical-thinking and problem-solving:** Students will demonstrate the ability to apply critical thinking and problem solving using gerontological research to evaluate best-practice approaches and the effectiveness of policies and services that support elders, their family members and the community.
4. **Uphold professional and ethical standards:** Students will demonstrate the ability to engage in an on-going, self-reflective process of their professional gerontological practice. Students will demonstrate the ability to uphold professional standards through individually and collaboratively applying ethical decision making processes.
5. **Identify and respond to community need:** Students will demonstrate knowledge of older adult services and will be able to make contributions to community identified needs through the successful delivery of services and effective communication with elders, their families, the community and the public. Community engagement will take the form of field work, research, grant writing, experiential learning opportunities, education and training.
6. **Care, Services and Supports Domain of Practice:** Students will demonstrate knowledge and skills in promoting quality of care, quality of life and providing ancillary services as they relate to senior living and health services organizations.
7. **Operations Domain of Practice:** Students will demonstrate knowledge and skills in financial management, risk management and human resources management as they relate to senior living and health services organizations.
8. **Environment and Quality Domain of Practice:** Students will demonstrate knowledge and skills in the care setting and regulatory compliance for senior living and health services organizations.
9. **Leadership and Strategy Domain of Practice:** Students will demonstrate knowledge and skills in leadership and organizational strategy as they relate to senior living and health services organizations.

VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs

The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the **Graduate School website** and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students.

Degree candidacy requirements

A graduate student admitted to a program or concentration requiring a final research project, work of art, thesis or dissertation, must qualify for continuing master's or doctoral status according to the degree candidacy requirements of the student's graduate program. Admission to degree candidacy, if applicable, is a formal statement by the graduate student's faculty regarding the student's academic achievements and the student's readiness to proceed to the final research phase of the degree program.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following degree candidacy policy as published in the VCU Graduate Bulletin for complete information and instructions.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on degree candidacy requirements.

Graduation requirements

As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on graduation requirements.

Apply online today. (https://www.vcu.edu/admissions/apply/graduate/)

Admission requirements

Applications are accepted in the fall, spring, and summer semester on a rolling basis.

Degree:	Semester(s) of entry:	Deadline dates:	Test requirements:
M.S.	Fall	June 1	
	Spring	Nov 1	
	Summer	Mar 1	

In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School (https://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/admission-graduate-study/admission-requirements/), applicants must meet the following requirements.

The program is open to qualified students who have earned a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university or the equivalent, and maintained a minimum GPA of 3.0. A successful work experience may strengthen the admission credentials of applicants with marginal records. All applicants will complete an interview with Department of Gerontology faculty.

Degree requirements

In addition to general VCU Graduate School graduation requirements (https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/), students must complete a 30-credit hour curriculum based on the core curriculum and can include the following optional specialty area of study:

This concentration provides students with a foundation of knowledge, skills, and experiences in the long-term care continuum. Students enrolled in this program will learn about assisted living, home and community-based services, and nursing home care. Educational content is provided that informs students about the different types of services that exist. Through coursework and experiential learning, students enrolled in this program will be prepared to sit for the national core of knowledge and Residential Care/Assisted Living licensing exams. This concentration is accredited by the National Association of Long Term Care Administrator Boards. Completion of this program does not guarantee a graduate will obtain a license to practice. Licensing requirements and decisions are at the discretion of each individual state.

Students should consult with their advisers for guidance with scheduling. It is required that students seek advising to determine the appropriate sequencing of the curriculum.

Curriculum requirements

Course	Title	Hours
Core courses		
GRTY 601	Biological and Physiological Aging	3
GRTY/PSYC 602	Psychology of Aging	3
GRTY 603	Social Gerontology	3
GRTY 604	Problems, Issues and Trends in Gerontology	4
GRTY 605	Social Science Research Methods Applied to Gerontology	3
GRTY 606	Aging and Human Values	3
Additional requirements		
GRTY 643	Business Plan Writing	2
GRTY 644	Administrator Residency	1-4
Restricted Electives		
GRTY 638	Long-term Care Administration	3
GRTY 639	Human Resource Management and Leadership for Gerontologists	1
GRTY 640	Financial Management for Gerontological Leaders	1
Total Hours		**30**

The minimum number of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 30.

Contact
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Program website: gerontology.chp.vcu.edu/programs/mastersprogram/ (https://gerontology.chp.vcu.edu/programs/mastersprogram/)