MEMO

TO: University Curriculum and Program Committee
FROM: Dawn Tarabochia, PhD, CHES
RE: Undergraduate Online Gerontology Program
DATE: October 29, 2013

This memo is in response to an email and phone message from Ann Ellsworth on behalf of the University Curriculum and Program Committee for additional information about the Undergraduate Online Gerontology Program.

1. The proposal for the gerontology certificate states “admission will be determined by the program director.” The committee feels this should not be a decision by one person. They require (a) more information and (b) specific criteria for admission selection.

Response: the admission process has been altered. A selection committee will review student applications. The committee will consist of the program director and two other individuals which may consist of: faculty from the online gerontology certificate program, faculty from the Department of Health and Human Development and/or the program manager from Extended University.

Specific criteria for student selection will include a review of student transcripts, student GPA and a written essay. Applicants will be awarded points based on the following criteria: year in school, GPA, ability to express in a written essay; a) reason for applying for the online gerontology certificate, b) interest in working with older adults, c) benefit of the certificate to future career goals. The cumulative score of the selection committee will determine admission to the undergraduate online gerontology certificate program.

2. A practicum experience is viewed as important; this appears to be absent. Address how this practicum would be part of the certificate you propose.

Response: a practicum is very important to the educational development and practical experience of students interested in the field of gerontology. Students in the gerontology certificate program will be required to complete three credits of practicum (equivalent to 135 hours). A variety of practicum sites will be available to students. Care will be taken to match students to the
practicum experience that will most benefit them in combining experience with older adults and the student’s program of study (i.e. a student in Health and Human Performance program who wants to attend physical therapy school will be provided the opportunity to shadow a physical therapist who works with older adults). Students will complete the practicum once all coursework (required and elective) in the gerontology certificate program has been completed. A practicum manual and student learning outcomes will be created to assist with the supervision and monitoring of practicum students.

3. **A statement about how it will be funded**—perhaps the from the Dean. **At any rate, the committee would like you to explain where the resources for this program will come from; they require specifics to know that the program can be sustained.**

**Response:** funding for the undergraduate online gerontology program has been provided by the Provost Office via a competitive call for the development of new online courses and/or new online programs. The certificate program was granted funding in May 2013. The email announcing this funding has been included.

With regard to sustainability, the online gerontology certificate program will be managed through Extended University. Extended University has had great experience in the management of online programming with the end goal of sustainability. Ms. Brown (the assigned program manager from Extended University) and I (as the program director) will work together to determine the best course for sustainability. Previous online programs (such as the Licensed Addiction Counseling program) have utilized application fees and course fees to work towards sustainability. The undergraduate online gerontology certificate program will utilize these strategies as well.

Please note that these changes have been made or added to the document for Level I Board of Regent approval.