

Interdisciplinary Academic Advancement Seminar for Junior Faculty Interested in Aging Research

at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA



SUMMARY

Target Audience

Junior faculty from various disciplines who are interested in aging research

Purpose

To help participants develop the skills necessary to succeed as academicians in the health professions and to become effective mentors for students and fellows

Program

Bimonthly seminars that focus on presentation skills, grant preparation, mentoring, management skills, and other aspects of academic life

History

The program has been ongoing since 2000

Operating Costs

Faculty time to teach bimonthly seminars; one hour/week of administrative staff time

Outcomes

Over 40 junior faculty have participated, with high rates of obtaining independent funding and being promoted

Available Materials

Cumulative Listing of Seminar Topics

For More Information

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Program Overview

The Academic Advancement Seminar was created to support the academic career development of junior faculty from various disciplines who are interested in aging research. The goal is to offer seminars that will help provide participants with progressive skills and prepare them for independence in research as well as academic leadership. The program is a forum for junior faculty from various disciplines to collaborate in and promote their aging-related research. The program also emphasizes skills for mentoring students and fellows.

Program Operations

Faculty from the UCLA Multicampus Program in Geriatric Medicine and Gerontology teach the one-hour, bimonthly seminars that focus on:

- oral and written presentation skills
- grant and manuscript preparation and administration
- management skills for leading a research program
- the ability to mentor the next cohort of trainees.

Trainees may bring sections of their research proposals, manuscripts, or new study ideas for the group to review and discuss. Alternatively, a topic such as “How to Communicate with the Media” may be presented by a guest speaker or by one of the junior or senior faculty members. Relevant resources are distributed to the trainees at the seminars. Information on funding opportunities and seminars of interest to researchers in aging are also distributed via a listserv.

Approximately 18-20 sessions are held every year. Course participation is mandatory, and attendance records are kept for trainees supported by research



training grants. Other potential seminar participants who have expressed an interest in aging or have received aging research grants are identified at the start of each academic year by current and former trainees. In addition, throughout the year senior faculty identify and invite junior faculty with an interest in aging to participate. The seminar is enriched by involving participants from a variety of disciplines and by welcoming new participants, and thus new perspectives, throughout the year.

Staffing Requirements

Each seminar is moderated by a senior faculty member from the Multicampus Program in Geriatrics and Gerontology. Usually two or three senior faculty attend each session. A staff member assists by maintaining a listserv of attendees and a schedule of meetings and topics to be presented, and by copying and distributing materials as needed.

Program Costs and Funding Sources

Senior faculty time to teach the one-hour seminars is included as part of their ongoing teaching responsibilities. In addition, approximately one hour a week is required of a Division of Geriatrics administrative staff member.

Process and Outcomes Data

41 junior faculty have participated in the seminar series since its inception. The program began in 2000 with 10 faculty members in geriatrics and has expanded so that in 2007-08 it included 31 faculty members in geriatrics, psychiatry, neurology, general internal medicine, endocrinology, oncology, rheumatology, emergency medicine, family medicine, public health, nursing, urology, and general surgery. Both formal and informal evaluations have been extremely positive and have guided modifications from year to year. In addition, many of the early participants have been

promoted, and funded as principal investigators.

Each year, the program has attracted trainees from new disciplines who are interested in issues of aging, which has helped to promote interdisciplinary collaboration within the institution.

The seminar has been a model for other institutions, such as the University of Texas Medical Branch Pepper Center.

Implementation Lessons

- Collaborations with programs for researchers in aging are helpful in identifying trainees, as is word-of-mouth among current and former trainees.
- Offering the seminars at the beginning of the day increases attendance of trainees who come from off-campus sites.

Available Materials

Tools/Resources

- Cumulative Listing of Seminar Topics

For More Information

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This document is part of a compilation of approaches to geriatrics recruitment, career development, and programmatic expansion, based on the work of the John A. Hartford Foundation "Centers of Excellence in Geriatric Medicine and Training." For more information, visit www.afar.org/recruitment or www.jhartfound.org.

