

“Welcome to Gerontology, I’m Barbara Gillogly. You have stumbled upon probably one of the best programs in the United States; we are one of eight that have a designation of Program of Merit, which means we’re one of the best. We have both an AA degree and a certificate in Gerontology. And in each one of these we ask students to choose an area in which to focus. Gerontology is very multidisciplinary, and we ask students to choose one of six different focal areas. One is business, another one is case management and social services, healthcare, recreation, environmental design, and public policy and advocacy. And what this means is that the student will then select nine units in this area of concentration. So if you were going to focus on business, you would choose some business classes to add to your Gerontology core classes. At the same time, your fieldwork, then, would be in a placement that dealt with business, perhaps with an administrator or a marketing director in a long-term care facility, so that you’d have some experience in the area in which you’d like to focus.”

“My name is Karla Gustafson and my company is Ageless Designs; my company is primarily an interior design firm but I emphasize in *universal* design and aging in place. My favorite part of the job is that I’m able to find solutions for people that need it. Beyond going and figuring out someone’s color, and that they like the color blue, I’m actually able to offer something that enhances their life and gives them more freedom. Going to ARC helped me learn, through Gerontology, the needs and how to communicate to older adults and actually, to every individual, and to be able to ascertain what type of needs we have as we age. I would say no matter what ever else you’re studying, you should also go and take some Gerontology classes. I started off coming to ARC as an Interior Design student; taking Gerontology classes has broadened my horizons and has actually given me a much fuller expertise to give to clients. I think as we go on and, after we go out in the marketplace after we graduate - no matter what age it is that we’re graduating at - we’re going to be dealing with seniors more and more. As we’re seeing a growing phenomenon of people entering and growing to an older age, those are the people we’re going to have to be dealing with in society. So it’s important for us to understand every aspect of people as they age.”

“My name is Janet Kelly, and I’m the owner of ‘H.O.M.E. Agency,’ which is an acronym for Housing Options Made Easy for Elders. My business started fourteen years ago, and I love what I do; I love working with seniors. Placement Service for Seniors, our mission is that they don’t need us at all; that they stay home as long as they can and be safe. But when it gets to the point that they’re not safe, they’re not eating properly, not taking their medication or having falls, and can’t afford caregivers, then assisted living is the more cost-effective option. I love what I do because it’s giving back, it’s rewarding; it’s helping people. Ninety-nine percent of the time the outcome is a positive experience. And as for going into Gerontology: I started because people would ask when I would evaluate a client for housing needs, levels of care, etc., “Are you a nurse? Are you a social worker?” “No, I’m not.” And so I felt like I needed to add credence to my position, so that’s why I got my Gerontology degree. Starting a business and going to school was pretty crazy, but it helped *so much*. It gave me a knowledge of seniors, their needs. And I don’t think I would be as - well, I *know* I wouldn’t be as successful without having gone to Gerontology. What I think it’s really important to know... You know, this is your

passion. Also, I started at American River because I looked at Sac State, and there is a lot of duplication. I was able to get the A.A. degree in, of course, half the time. When I started writing my business and going to school, it was the best thing for me; very comprehensive. You know, the sky's the limit with the aging population, and it's going to continue to grow and grow and grow."

"All of our students complete an internship, which means you get hands-on training in some area of aging. This is important because when we start to work with seniors, it's totally than what you read about in a textbook. And we think it's important for students to try out different areas and different careers because it's just as important to know what you don't want to do as it is what you *do* want to do. This is a unique part of our program in that it allows you to get hands-on experience in an area of interest of yours. So if your area of interest is recreation with seniors, whether they're well seniors or ill seniors, a placement would be made that's appropriate to your interest. It could be within a senior center, an adult day healthcare center, or long-term healthcare facility."

"I am doing an internship at a Skilled Nursing program. I see the staff doing very busy work, but not really paying attention to individuals, or what's going on in the person's mind. So the Gerontology program helps us to understand how to communicate with older people and understanding them. That is the really important key to serve elderly people in a right way. I know Gerontology is a really new area, and not many people understand and/or see the value, but it's really, really important. And if the young people study - young people who want to serve and help other people, especially the "Baby Boomers" and the greater number of people that are going to be in the aging population - you can really reach the person, meet their needs and change their lives."

"Many of our students are middle-aged, either looking for a new career or adding Gerontology to a career they are already pursuing. The students who do the A.A. degree often transfer to a four-year institution. Those who opt for the certificate often already have degrees in some other discipline, and they want to add aging to their knowledge base. Since many of our students are working already, we try to schedule classes in the evening or on the weekends, with the exception of two classes that we offer in the afternoons. Many of our classes are offered online as well as on campus."

"I work for California Health Advocates, which is an organization that specializes and focuses on MediCare. I work for a program called the Senior MediCare Patrol and our main emphasis is on MediCare fraud prevention. Another valuable class was my Ethics class, because I deal a lot with fraud in MediCare and you would be surprised at how many people don't *know* that they are being unethical. My Ethics class was great. And also my Speech class, because I have had to give testimony at the Legislature, and being ready to prepare a speech for two or three minutes was very valuable. If anyone is thinking about Gerontology, it is the perfect, how would I say, adornment, to those of us that have been in the workforce for many years. I have used my Gerontology education in conjunction with my previous work experience - it has taught me a lot. For instance, part of my job was to respond to a '1-800' line, and I was able to use my Validation techniques in my '1-800' line responses. So even the subjects that you may not think are

valuable, *are* valuable.”

“One of the missions of the community college is to meet community needs. The way we do that in Gerontology is that we are guided by our Community Advisory Board, and have been since the beginning of the program. The membership on the Board is diverse and reflects the aging network within our Sacramento area. We also provide continuing education for those who need to renew licenses and certificates. We offer these classes either all day on Saturday for nine hours, or students can opt to take them online, where it’s up for six days. And we can offer nine hours of continuing education for multiple licenses and certificates at thirteen dollars for nine units, or nine hours, and that is really a bargain. Another thing we do is to co-sponsor conferences and workshops. Annually, we co-sponsor the Alzheimer’s Workshop here on campus; we’ve also sponsored workshops on healthy aging and workshops on grandparents raising grandchildren.”

\*Video Clip “Relationships, at some point, come to an end. So loss is part of life, and grief is part of living. But it’s something that we tend to not want to do. When we’re grieving, we don’t look good, we don’t feel good, people don’t want to be around us, they don’t know what to say to us; we just wish we could turn it off and not have to feel it.”

“The Wisdom Keepers is a club that we have here on campus that is actually the club for the Gerontology department. We started it when we all were in class together. There was a group of about probably six or seven of us that really enjoyed getting to know each other and wanted to have opportunities to network. We decided that putting together a club would be something that we could do that would make a difference in terms of networking, and then also supporting the field of Gerontology. So the club now is built really around helping tutor and mentor other Gerontology students. We make truffles, where we do a lot of our networking, and those truffles we use for fundraising. The fundraising objective is to develop a scholarship; eventually we’d like to have an endowed scholarship so it’ll live on beyond us. We assist with educational activities like the Alzheimer’s Conference that the department co-sponsors every November. The Wisdom Keepers has a tremendous amount of fun together; we’ve become very close over the time that we’ve known each other. We have luncheons where we get together - we make our truffles and then get together and eat, share in terms of what’s going on in each other’s lives, and how school’s going and how our families are doing, etc.”

“I’m a part of the Wisdom Keepers Club which is formed by the Gerontology students in which students help each other and get lots of information about aging. I was so surprised by the quality we have, by the energy. Many people are middle-aged, like my age, who have been in society working in their specialties. They bring all of this experience and knowledge and skill into this Gerontology program. And they all want to help with Gerontology service.”

“We started the Wisdom Keepers on campus and I was lucky just to be part of the group. The idea for Wisdom Keepers is to actually encourage students. The best part about Wisdom Keepers has actually been the camaraderie; it’s really nice to actually be able to meet with different people in the Gerontology department. The nice part of the Gerontology department is that there’s people from all walks, ages and disciplines, so it

really gives you a fuller understanding of different people in our society.”

“Hi, I’m Rochelle Van Driel from the Gerontology office, I work as Dr. Barbara’s assistant in the office, and I’m here to tell you a little bit about financial aid today. If you go to the Financial Aid department on campus, you will be able to get locked into different types of monies that you can use to go to school here, and we have loans, grants, fee waivers and scholarships as well. The Gerontology office funds several scholarships each year through the Foundation office, and that money can be used to do whatever you want to for your schooling. So if you’re interested in hooking into some of that money, you need to be aware that they advertise one time a year for the scholarships, usually in the beginning of the year, in January. If there’s anything that you need about Gerontology, please give me a call: (916) 484-8518. Those are some of the things that we can help you with in the office; we’re happy to see you anytime. Please feel free to come up and visit us, and we’ll help you with the needs that you have.”

“For you to get started in this exciting field of Gerontology, I need you to schedule an appointment with me where we can sit down and work out a schedule for your first semester. And I believe after you complete that first semester, you’ll be eager to start planning the second one. So welcome to Gerontology, and I hope to see you in class. Thank you.”