specifies preparatory work that programs should undertake prior to applying for accreditation. Based on insights gained from the first round of AGEC accreditation reviews at the master’s, baccalaureate and associate levels, Section VI of the Handbook has been revised to clarify expectations about the self-study. Specifically, greater emphasis has been placed on 1) following the Standards outline in Section V of the Handbook, 2) insuring that all relevant information is contained in the self-study and, 3) requiring that the complete document, including appendices, is submitted well in advance of the site visit. This presentation describes the content and revisions in Section VI, as well as the process for submitting the self-study.

**ASSESSMENT OF THE AGEC STANDARD**

**DEMONSTRATING STUDENT LEARNING**

Robert J. Maiden,¹ and Jan Abushakrah², 1. Alfred University, Alfred, New York, United States, 2. Portland Community College, Portland, Oregon, United States

Addressing the gerontology program’s experience in measuring and integrating the competencies in their curricula is a fundamental challenge in program evaluation. Using the AGHE Gerontology Competencies for Undergraduate and Graduate Education is the key. We will demonstrate how one identifies the learning outcome measures across the curriculum based on the competencies by adumbrating a four-step process. First, it entails developing a written statement of the key learning outcomes, expressing them in objective, measurable terms. Second, the learning outcomes are assessed. Third, the results of the assessments are posted in a matrix format across a four or five year period. Fourth, the results of the learning outcome assessments are discussed, evaluated, and implemented in a formative process to improve teaching and learning. In addition, the results can be applied in a summative way to evaluate and improve the gerontology program.

**SESSION 2105 (SYMPOSIUM)**

**LIVING IN RURAL CONTEXTS: TOWARD A CRITICAL INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE ON RURAL AGING**

Chair:  Kieran Walsh, NUI Galway, Galway, Ireland, Ireland

Co-Chair: Mark Skinner, Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario, Canada

Despite a growing focus on rural ageing, international literature in this field remains underdeveloped in critical and interdisciplinary perspectives. Reflecting traditional divisions across geographic, gerontological and health literatures, how we understand experiences of growing older in rural settings can still be characterised by a narrow, applied approach. This has implications for our capacity to disentangle multifaceted lived realities from rural contexts, and macro socio-economic and structural environments. There then remains questions about the ways in which the study of rural ageing needs to develop to direct policy, research and practice agendas to be a more critical reflection of these complexities. This symposium aims to draw together interdisciplinary critical perspectives on ageing and rurality as a means to advance this development. It will consider different theoretical approaches and major cross cutting challenges in relation to rural ageing. Burholt and Scharf will examine how critical gerontology has raised awareness of the heterogeneity of rural ageing across social justice elements of demography, resources, recognition and representation. Keogh and Walsh address these same elements in relation to the empirical intersection of exclusion and change in the production of a new rurality for older people. Cutchin and Rowles present a pragmatist theoretical perspective to encapsulate the essence of rural integration within an ever-changing milieu. Poulin et al offer a critical approach to rural gerontological health that emphasizes intersectionality in the formation and development of older adult health. Herron and Skinner explore the intersectional construction of dementia and mental health in rural settings for older adults.

**CRITICAL SOCIAL GERONTOLOGY AND RURAL AGING**

Vanessa Burholt,¹ and thomas ScharF², 1. Swansea University, Swansea, United Kingdom, 2. Newcastle University, Newcastle, England, United Kingdom

This paper examines the extent to which critical gerontology has raised awareness of the heterogeneity of rural ageing in High Income Countries (HICs) and compare this to our knowledge of the issues that are associated with rural ageing in Low to Middle Income Countries (LMICS). We will draw on Nancy Fraser’s social justice framework to summarize key issues around: (1) Demography (such as globalization, urbanization, counter-urbanization and rural population ageing); (2) Resources (individual material and social resources; community resources such as access to services); (3) Recognition (social status, cultural visibility through social participation and cultural worth through valued social roles); (4) Representation (in social, health and rural development policies; and in private sector and NGO approaches). We argue that an intersectional approach that takes into account location and context (structural/economic/political) alongside other dimensions of oppression and/or privilege can provide a better understanding of the experience of ageing in rural areas.

**PROCESSES OF EXCLUSION AND NEW RURALITY: COMMUNITY CHANGE IN THE LIVES OF RURAL OLDER PEOPLE**

Sinead Keogh,¹ and Kieran Walsh², 1. National University of Ireland Galway, Galway, Ireland, Ireland, 2. Irish Centre for Social Gerontology, Galway, Galway, Ireland

Rural settings are sites of rapid change. Now sharing many of the processes that characterise their urban neighbourhood counterparts, older people’s rural communities, even those in remote locations, are being altered by forces driven by gentrification and population churn. While the potential for displacement is apparent, the extent to which older people respond to these processes is not well understood. The degree to which these shifting contexts produce new exclusionary mechanisms for older people to contend with and new opportunities for them to exploit has yet to be sufficiently explored. This paper aims to address the intersection of exclusion and community change in the production of a new rurality for older people. The analysis will 1) present an
overview of the relevant international literature, and 2) high-
light the current and emerging exclusionary processes that
are impacting on the lives of older people using data from
individual narratives and time-use diaries.

RETHINKING RURAL GERONTOLOGY THROUGH
A DEWEYAN PRAGMATIST PERSPECTIVE
Malcolm Cutchin,¹ Malcolm P. Cutchin,¹ and
Graham D. Rowles², ¹. Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan, United States, 2. University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky, United States

Rural aging as we have conceived of it in the geronto-
logical literature of the past 50 years no longer exists, if it ever
did. In this presentation, we contribute toward a reframing
of the discourse on rural aging through a critique of estab-
lished views of rural aging as an ecological, cultural, and phe-
nomenological experience. We argue that each view is limited
in its ability to encapsulate the essence of rural living and
community. Our critique provides a context for a dynamic
perspective on rural aging that embraces the situational
uniqueness of each rural environment. We introduce that per-
spective, based in John Dewey’s philosophy, and grounded in
the idea of situationally defined manifestations of place inte-
gration within an ever-changing milieu. We conclude with a
discussion of key implications, including how this perspective
reshapes the roles of researchers and older rural residents in
the process of ongoing rural gerontological inquiry.

LEVERAGING CRITICAL RURAL GERONTOLOGY
TO IMPROVE RURAL GERONTOLOGICAL HEALTH
Laura Poulin,¹ and Neil Hanlon², ¹. Trent University, Ontario, Peterborough, Canada, 2. University of Northern British Columbia, Prince George, British Columbia, Canada

A critical approach in rural gerontology has led to a
better understanding of the complex interplay between older
adults unique aging experiences and the multidimensional
and dynamic communities in which they live. The evolution
of critical rural gerontology will be explored, outlining why a
similar approach is needed in rural gerontological health. In
particular, rural gerontological health literature must expand
beyond a deficit focus that homogenizes older adult health
experiences and recognize the complexities of negotiating
older adult health within multidimensional rural spaces.
Inherent in this approach is recognizing the intersectionality
of older adult health as well as the need to study rural ger-
ontological health as an experience enhanced and inhibited
by interactions within and across formal health services, in-
formal social services and informal care. This approach will
contribute to innovations in policy and practice addressing
the burgeoning interest of how to effectively care for older
adults in rural settings.

EXPLORING THE CRITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS
OF ARTS-BASED APPROACHES IN RURAL DEMENTIA
CARE
Rachel Herron¹, ¹. Brandon University, Manitoba, Canada

People living with dementia can experience significant
barriers to meaningful participation in their communities,
particularly in underserviced rural and small-town settings.
Drawing on a multi-method pilot study employing observa-
tions, diaries, focus groups and interviews in rural Canada,
we examine the potential of an innovative dance program de-
veloped by Baycrest Health Sciences and Canada’s National
Ballet School, to transform the experiences of people living
with dementia and the rural places in which they live. Our
findings identify moments, processes, and places of trans-
formation throughout the program including moments of
individual self-expression; changing interactions with staff,
volunteers, and carers; and changing relationships with home
and community. We argue that art-based programs can chal-
lenge dominant assumptions about people living with de-
mentia and contribute to the creation of more just health and
social care in rural places. In doing so, we illustrate the value
of critical arts-based approaches to aging in rural places.

SESSION 2110 (SYMPOSIUM)

OPEN SCIENCE AND TRANSPARENT RESEARCH
PRACTICES: IMPLICATIONS FOR GERONTOLOGY
Chair: Derek M. Isaacowitz, Northeastern University,
Boston, Massachusetts, United States
Discussant: Jonathan W. King, National Institute on Aging,
Bethesda, Maryland, United States

Scientists from many disciplines have recently suggested
changes in research practices, with the goal of ensuring
greater scientific integrity. Some suggestions have focused on
reducing researcher degrees of freedom to extract significant
findings from exploratory analyses, whereas others concern
how best to power studies and analyze results. Yet others in-
volve ensuring that other interested researchers can easily ac-
cess study materials, code, and data, to help with re-analysis
and/or replication. These changes are moving targets, with
discussions and suggested practices ongoing. However, aging
researchers have not yet been major participants in these
discussions, and aging journals are just starting to consider
open science policies. This symposium, sponsored by the GSA
Publications Committee, will highlight transparency and open
science practices that seem most relevant to aging researchers,
discuss potential challenges to implementing them as well as
reasons for doing so, and will consider how aging journals
may implement these practices. Open science practices to be
considered include: preregistration, open data, open materi-
als and code, sample size justification and analytic tools for
considering null effects. Presenters from a range of areas of
aging research (lab, secondary data, qualitative) will show ex-
amples of open science practices in their work and will dis-
cuss concerns about, and challenges of, implementing them.
Then, editorial team members will discuss the implications
of these changes for aging journals. Finally, discussant Jon
King will give NIA’s perspective on the importance of encouraging
open science practices in the aging field.

OPEN SCIENCE IN GERONTOLOGY: IMPLICATIONS
FOR PUBLISHING
Derek M. Isaacowitz¹, ¹. Northeastern University, Boston,
Massachusetts, United States

One big push in open science is to change journal prac-
tices to encourage a more transparent and replicable sci-
entific record. I will start by considering why these issues
are important from the perspective of a journal editor. The
Transparency and Openness Promotion Guidelines were