that gerontologists recognize the ageism present in how older adults and the aging process are viewed, as this ultimately impacts how they are treated. Data from 1,609 undergraduate surveys from the multi-institution, multi-year Gerontological Literacy Network can assist in our understanding emerging professionals’ perspectives. Results indicate students incorrectly associate aging with loss of function and a reliance on assistive devices (canes 29.3% and glasses 19.6%), physical changes (balding 27.3% and wrinkles 30.3%), and greater likelihood of being male (32.5%). Aging is thought of as time passing (16.1%) and death (14.2%). Findings reveal a need to reframe students’ understanding of aging from that of decline to recognizing the strengths associated with age.

AGEISM FIRST AID: AN ONLINE COURSE DESIGNED TO ADVANCE GERONTOLOGY AND COMBAT AGEISM WITHIN THE HELPING PROFESSIONS

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Ageism First Aid is an online course designed to combat ageism, advance Gerontology, and generate revenue for Gerontology programs and GSA/AGHE activities. The project was funded by a grant from the Retirement Research Foundation and sponsored by the AGHE Academic Program Development Committee. The AFA course content is informed by developmental, social, and cognitive psychology, sociocultural and cognitive linguistics, speech-language science, and geriatrics. The content cultivates ageism awareness by replacing the common misconceptions about aging that underlie ageism with facts. The content also cultivates cultural consciousness and uses concise common language accessible to learners of diverse backgrounds. During this symposium, participants will be introduced to the course content and explore the benefits of this multidisciplinary approach to curriculum development. The results summary of the AFA course pilot will be presented as evidence of the course efficacy. Participants will leave able to utilize AFA within their institutions and local Aging Networks.

FROM WRINKLES TO WISE: DISRUPTING AGING PERCEPTIONS AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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What words come to mind when students are asked about aging? Wrinkles, grumpy, gray. What words come to mind when students are asked about aging after Disrupt Aging Classroom? Wise, wisdom, opportunity. Disrupt Aging Classroom is a successful curriculum created by AARP Connecticut and Borrow My Glasses to help dispel the myths of aging among college students in multiple disciplines. In comparison to a control group, pre-and post-test results show college students’ perceptions of aging change to a more positive frame after being exposed to this intervention administered in the classroom. There is also evidence to suggest that this program has a positive effect on behavior with students reporting they talked differently about aging and acted differently toward older adults since participating in this program. Presenters will describe the curriculum as well as the evaluation design and results collected in 2018-2019 from this successful intervention program.

TERMINOLOGY USED BY EMPLOYERS AND JOB SEEKERS FOR AGING-RELATED POSITIONS

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Our aging society calls for a workforce capable of meeting older adults’ diverse needs. Yet the extent that employers seek out a workforce with aging-related training or education is unclear, as is how people with such backgrounds search for positions. We describe an exploratory content analysis of job postings to understand how employers are searching for applicants with aging-related backgrounds, and compare job posting keywords to terms used by a sample of aging-trained job seekers/employees. Results showed 35% of aging-related job postings used keywords expressing preference for applicants with aging-related backgrounds; the most commonly-occurring terms were “gerontology,” “Assisted living” + “adult day” + “director” + “nursing home administrator,” and “elderly.” Job seekers also cited “gerontology” as a term used to search for positions, along with “aging,” “older adults” and “seniors.” Findings suggest that employers should use more positively-conned terms to attract applicants with aging-related backgrounds, rather than terms like “elderly.”

WORKING WITH OR WITHOUT AGING SPECIALISTS: WHERE ARE THE GERONTOLOGISTS?

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One question asked by generations of gerontology doctoral students is what types of employment can be secured after completing the PhD in Gerontology. The Gerontology Education Longitudinal Study (GELS) has surveyed graduate students and alumni of the various doctoral programs in order to understand the career trajectories of graduates. Of 102 alumni surveyed in 2014 (42% response rate), the majority (60%) were not working with other people who had degrees in gerontology, yet 51% report working with at least some people who have experience with aging and older adults. On the job, graduates say that their duties require knowledge and mastery of public policy issues, health and medical aspects related to aging, and psychological theories. As aging experts, it is inherent in their work to combat ageism and reduce age-related stereotypes. As such, gerontologists are using substantive content expertise within their careers and serving as experts in aging.

SESSION 685 (SYMPOSIUM)

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF OBESITY THROUGH THE LIFECOURSE ON LATER-LIFE FUNCTIONING AND DEPENDENCY

Chair: Carol Jagger, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom