Advanced Diploma in Gerontology
Information Package 2018 – 2019

2-YEAR PART-TIME – DISTANCE ONLINE LEARNING

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
ADVANCED DIPLOMA IN GERONTOLOGY
All health professionals (Nursing, Rehab, Social Work and Human Services) who work with aging adults need specialized knowledge and training to effectively educate, assess and care for older people. They require tools and skills to meet the complex physical, social, environmental, cognitive and spiritual needs of the elderly. Health professionals need the ability to analyze trends and challenges in the field of Geriatrics, and the skills to work with multiple disciplines to proactively respond to these.

**SCOPE OF THE PROGRAM**

This interprofessional program is designed for health care professionals who work with older adults. Following an overview of the emerging field of Geriatric studies, participants will consider the elements that contribute to healthy aging and analyze factors that deter or undermine wellness. The course modules will help each student develop a conceptual framework for geriatric assessment in the spheres of psychosocial, physiologic and mental health. A choice of several electives will allow each person to enrich their personal educational needs.

**PROGRAM DESIGN**

This versatile Diploma Program will appeal to RN's, LPN's, RPN's, PT's or OT's, SW's or Human Services Diploma professionals working in any care venues who seek specialization in gerontological care and who desire to take elective courses of personal interest in gerontology. Some courses may also be credited as electives in other university programs.

Distance Education allows professionals the flexibility to immerse themselves in a dynamic specialty while pursuing other life and career goals. Self-paced study allows each participant to adjust their education to their lifestyle and learning needs. Variety and choice within course assignments encourages the student to pursue topics of personal interest. Online interaction with other health professionals enhances learning and application of course content, and allows professionals to appreciate varied scopes of geriatric practice.

The largest growing health cohort is the geriatric population. By 2030, 25% of Canadians will be over 65; 12% will be over 85 years of age. It is estimated that 75% of medical time will be spent with older adults by 2020 (Holroyd, Dahlke, Fehr, Jung & Hunter, 2009).
STUDENT POPULATION

FULL DIPLOMA
Nurses, RN’s, LPN’s or RPN’s, Registered Social Workers, Registered Physiotherapists and Registered Occupational Therapists, Human Services Diploma with a minimum of 1 year experience with adults. Professionals in other fields – please contact the program coordinator.

INDIVIDUAL COURSES
Health Professionals or students in human service fields who wish to take individual courses or who choose to work at a slower pace while completing course requirements.

TIME FRAME
This program can be completed within two years of part-time studies, and must be completed in four years. A new cohort for each certificate program is admitted in September of each year.

Semester 1: SEPT – DEC
GERO 200

Semester 2: JAN – MAR
IPHE 400

Semester 3: APR – JUNE
IPHE 402 + Electives IPHE 513 and 401 or 410
Semester 3: Two electives will be offered if enough participants enroll. If only one elective is offered, the choice will be made by majority selection.

Semester 4: SEPT – NOV
IPHE 501 or 504

Semester 5: JAN – MAR
IPHE 503 + Elective IPHE 512

Semester 6: APR – JUNE
IPHE 402 + Electives IPHE 513 and 401 or 410

Semester 6: Two electives will be offered if enough participants enroll. If only one elective is offered, the choice will be made by majority selection.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS THE COST OF THIS PROGRAM?
• The first base course is approximately $235.00. Thereafter, approximate costs of each 3 credit course are $655.00 and each 2 credit elective is $435.00.
• Books will be approximately $600 over the two year and will be supplemented by current journal articles and research.
• There are no extra course manuals. All other materials will be available on the computer site and can be printed by participants. The total cost of the diploma program will be approximately $4300 for 19 credits of courses.

NOTE: This could be contrasted with a normal cost of $4000 - $5000 for one year + $1,000 for books of college or university studies.

NOTE: Based on inflation, an increase of no more than 2% may be added to courses per year.

HOW IS THIS COURSE OFFERED?
• All courses are offered on-line through the Moodle learning management system.
• Computer requirements, a “Getting Started Manual” and on-line tutorials for this kind of e-learning are available at https://moodle.selkirk.ca

HOW MUCH TIME WILL I NEED TO SPEND PER WEEK ON COURSE WORK?
• To complete the Diploma, each participant will take five 3 credit core courses and a minimum of two 2 credit electives.
• Each 3 credit course will require about 7 – 10 hours of work per week, depending on your personal pace of study and the types of assignments due for that week.
• Each 2 credit course will require about 4 – 6 hours of work per week, depending on your personal pace of study and the types of assignments due for that week.
• Each course will require some online responses or “postings” to questions pertinent to the material being covered. This can be done within a designated period of time, e.g. 5 – 7 days.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF ONLINE LEARNING?
• While there are some due dates and times for assignments, learners can work at their own pace and schedule.
• There is opportunity for people from all over the country and many different jurisdictions of health disciplines to participate in each course. This encourages rich discussion and sharing.
• Assignments in courses will allow individuals to choose topics of interest to their particular work venues, and to apply theory to their own field of practise.

HELP! I HAVEN’T BEEN A STUDENT FOR A WHILE! WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT ME?
• Prior to starting the first course, there will be a “Readiness for Online Learning” survey for each student to complete.
• As mentioned earlier, there is a Student Moodle Tutorial available online http://moodle.selkirk.ca.
• Both the Course Instructor and the IT department can be reached via email.
COURSES

Core Courses (15 Credits)
Participants must take GERO 200, IPHE 400, IPHE 503 and 2 other core courses.

GERO 200-3 – Contemporary Issues in Gerontology - Required Course
The rapidly aging population of industrialized countries will impact or change all aspects of our society over the next 50 years. This course will provide a historical perspective and overview of aging in Canada. A study of theories of gain, demographic trends and current research will lead to an exploration of the implications of aging in our culture.

Prerequisites: Health or Social Science Students and Professionals.

IPHE 400-3 – Interprofessional Care of the Older Adult - Required Course
This course will detail the unique roles and functions of geriatric care by exploring historical underpinnings, societal needs, and current issues. Two conceptual models for care of acutely ill, chronically ill or frail elders will provide groundwork for use of assessment tools and critical analysis. A focus on health promotion and wellness in later life will guide and direct leadership in the care of older adults. Web, electronic and journal resources that support practice will be identified.

Prerequisites: GERO 200, IPHE 400 is preferable. Nurses, PT’s, OT’s, SW’s, HS Dip.

IPHE 501-3 – Psychosocial Issues in Aging
As people age, cognitive and affective function can be impacted by life events, role change, personal choice and behaviour, acute and chronic disease, or environmental stressors. With a view to helping the older individual attain their optimal level of wellness, this course will explore those psychosocial issues through the lens of two theories: Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and Successful Aging. Readings and course dialogue will help gerontological professionals develop strategies to assess coping ability, identify risk factors that undermine independence and well-being, and promote psychosocial health.

Prerequisites: GERO 200, and IPHE 400 are preferred. Nurses, PT’s, OT’s, SW’s, HS Dip.

IPHE 402-3 – Physiological Function in the Aged
This course focuses on the normal changes of aging in all body systems. Select chronic diseases or conditions and their treatment modalities will be reviewed. Using Carol Miller’s (2009) Model for Promoting Wellness in Older Adults, an exploration of potential risk factors, iatrogenic complications, and functional challenge will lead the professional caregiver to critically think about how to enhance health function. The compounding effect of acute illness on chronic health problems will also be examined.

Prerequisites: . GERO 200, and IPHE 400 are preferred. Nurses, PT’s, OT’s, SW’s

IPHE 503-3 – Delirium, Dementia and Depression – Required Course
This course will look at current theories of causality, presenting behaviours, risk factors and therapeutic approaches for each of these conditions. The impact on the family and professional caregivers will be assessed. Dementia care and interventions will focus on methods to enhance and retain patient abilities.

Prerequisites: GERO 200 and IPHE 400 are preferred. Registered Nurses, PT’s, OT’s, SW’s, HS Dip.

IPHE 504-3 Social and Environmental Contexts Influencing Aging
This course focuses on the broader context of an aging person’s life. Topics will include senior-appropriate housing, financial viability, changing family dynamics, caregiver assessment, and culturally diverse responses to aging, driving and more. Discussion will encompass societal responsibility, health policy and responsiveness to the needs of an aging population.

Prerequisites: GERO 200, and IPHE 400 are preferred. Registered SW’s, Nurses, PT’s, OT’s, HS Dip.

Electives (4 Credits)

IPHE 401-2 – Spirituality in Aging
As the physical body ages, it declines and deteriorates. In contrast, the Human Spirit continues to develop and mature until the end of life. This course examines the importance of Spirituality in aging, and its effects on health, wellness and achievement of meaning in life. Current research and tools to assess spiritual needs will be examined. Roles and opportunities for caregivers to promote the spirituality of aging persons will be explored.

Recommended for all interested professionals

IPHE 410-2 – Medication Use and Abuse
Most aging people use medication (prescription or over-the-counter) to treat a variety of chronic or symptomatic problems. This course seeks to define the professionals’ role in medication management with aging clients. An understanding of the pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics related to the aging body will assist the gerontological caregiver in understanding drug reactions. Reasons for drug misuse and abuse will be explored, and principles and strategies developed to improve drug regime compliance. Tools to assist with medication profile analysis will be presented.

Recommended for Nurses or other interested professionals

IPHE 512-2 – Mental Health, Addictions and Wellness in Later Years
Mental decline is not synonymous with old age. Mental health may be negatively affected by particular mental illnesses, by depression, by stress and poor adaptability, or by medical factors. Mental wellness and brain health can be boosted by timely assessment and diagnosis with appropriate treatment, education or social support. This course will explore vulnerabilities that predispose older adults to mental distress or illness with a focus on stabilizing and improving ability to problem-solve, improving ability to sound personal decisions, and maintaining personal integrity and dignity.

Recommended for all interested professionals
IPHE 513-2 – END-OF-LIFE CARE AND PALLIATION

Palliative care is the unique way caregivers think, respond, and act as they give skilled and compassionate care to a dying person and the support system of that person. The course begins by helping each professional understand their own perceptions of death and palliation by reflecting on their experiences with dying people. Each participant will gain specific and current knowledge about symptom assessment and management, and how to deal with selected palliative emergency situations. Particularly unique aspects of caring for the dying, i.e., family care, communication, grief, and self-care will be explored.

Recommended for Nurses or other interested professionals

PROGRAM FORMAT

Participants must complete the Program within 4 years from starting date. A minimum of 19 credits are required for program completion. In Spring semester of Year One or Two, participants may take one core course and one elective, or two electives to complete the program within two years. In all other semesters participants would normally take one course at a time.

TRANSFERABILITY

Credential Granted: Advanced Diploma in Gerontology

Educational Contingencies:

a. Prior-learning assessment will be considered.

b. The College will seek articulation of one or more course credits towards completion of some degrees in BC and Alberta.

PROGRAM INSTRUCTORS

All instructors are practicing professionals in the field of gerontology or related fields and are able to provide up-to-date practical experience and knowledge.

HOW TO APPLY FOR THE GERONTOLOGY PROGRAM

Applicants may apply online at www.selkirk.ca/program/gerontology or by emailing distancehealth@selkirk.ca

Notification of your acceptance into the Program will be made by letter when your application has been approved by the Program Coordinator. Once accepted, you may register for the first course or elective.

Register by July 31st to ensure your seat in the next available cohort.

HOW TO REGISTER FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL COURSE

Individuals or organizations that would like to register their employees may pay by credit card (MasterCard or VISA), or arrange for invoicing by: Telephoning 250.365.1324 from 9 am - 4 pm Monday to Friday.

WITHDRAWALS AND REFUND POLICY

Students may withdraw without penalty from a course if requested 10 business days before course start date by contacting the Program Coordinator by telephone or in writing.

Students who want to withdraw and receive a refund must provide a written request to the Program Coordinator stating the reasons and enclosing the receipt. Refunds are subject to an administrative charge of 20% of the course fee. No refunds are permitted after course materials have been sent to students.

Alternatively, at the discretion of the Registrar, students can be issued a “deferred fee credit”, valid for one year for 100% of the program registration fee.

The College reserves the right to substitute a fully qualified instructor should scheduling problems arise, and to make minor topic changes to the program. Program fees are also subject to change at the time of registration.
CONTACT

PROGRAM COORDINATOR
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