

YSU offers new gerontology certificate program

A new program aimed at health care professionals who work with the elderly is now being offered by Youngstown State University.

The certificate in applied gerontology in YSU's Department of Sociology and Anthropology is a one-year program designed primarily for health care workers who already have a bachelor's or master's degree and are interested in continuing education in the field.

"This certificate will be well received by a large community of professionals who are always looking for continuing education opportunities" said John White, chair of the sociology and anthropology department. "It should help attract students to YSU and act as a retention tool."

Licensed health care and mental health care professionals must participate in college courses, workshops or seminars to maintain their Ohio licenses, said Steve Katros, an administrative assistant in the sociology and anthropology department. Such professionals include nurses, nursing home administrators, social workers, counselors, dieticians, activity professionals, and occupational and physical therapists.

Gerontology, or the branch of science that deals with aging, is within the discipline of sociology, Katros said. Although some university gerontology programs are offered from the department of health and human services, most are under the umbrella of sociology, he said.

Katros said the program was the personal project of Beverly Gartland, a YSU professor of sociology and anthropology, who based her need for the program on the rising age in population. The program, which includes 21-semester hours of class work, was in the works for nearly two years before starting in the spring with five students.

Katros said the department hopes there will be 20 to 25 students enrolled in the program this fall.