

University of Idaho

Master of Science in Gerontology

Graduate Program Handbook

Academic Year 2026-2027

Delivery Fully online	Format Remote, primarily asynchronous	Plan Non-thesis
Credits 30	Completion As little as 1 year	Entry terms Fall, Spring, Summer
Unit SHAMP / Nursing	Capstone Applied project	Updated March 2026

School of Health and Medical Professions (SHAMP)
Department of Nursing
College of Graduate Studies

This handbook is intended to support prospective and current students in understanding program structure, expectations, university requirements, and degree-completion processes.

Handbook Use and Policy Notice

This handbook supplements the current University of Idaho catalog, College of Graduate Studies (COGS) regulations, and other university policies. In the event of any conflict, the most current official university policy, catalog language, and published deadline control. Because university requirements may change, students are responsible for reviewing linked policies and consulting program leadership when questions arise.

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I. Introduction

Welcome to the University of Idaho Master of Science in Gerontology. The program is housed in the School of Health and Medical Professions (SHAMP), within the Department of Nursing, and administered in coordination with the College of Graduate Studies. It prepares students to respond thoughtfully and effectively to the opportunities and challenges associated with an aging society through advanced, interdisciplinary study of aging, older adulthood, and age-informed systems of care and service.

The M.S. in Gerontology is designed for students and working professionals who want to strengthen their knowledge of the biological, psychological/cognitive, social, ethical, and systems-level dimensions of aging. Because the program is fully online and designed for flexible progression, it is accessible to students across Idaho and beyond who seek rigorous graduate training while balancing professional and personal commitments.

This handbook is intended to help students understand how the program works from admission through graduation. It outlines degree requirements, advising structures, academic expectations, capstone processes, university policies, and the support resources available to students enrolled in the program.

Program leadership and key personnel

Thomas J. Farrer, Ph.D., ABPP - Interim Director, Master of Science in Gerontology; core faculty

Liz Bryant, M.S. - Key personnel / program support

Program identity and orientation

- Interdisciplinary and applied: the curriculum integrates scholarship and practice relevant to health care, community programs, policy, public service, and related aging-focused sectors.

- Online and accessible: the program is remote and primarily asynchronous, with structured deadlines and faculty engagement to support student progress.
- Student-centered: the degree can be completed in as little as one year (three semesters) on a full-time plan, or completed more gradually on a part-time plan.
- Competency-oriented: the curriculum is designed to align with the Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) standards and competency categories. The program is not yet accredited, but will seek accreditation when eligible.

II. Program Overview

Program at a glance

Degree Awarded at Graduation	Master of Science (M.S.) in Gerontology
Academic home	School of Health and Medical Professions (SHAMP), Department of Nursing
College oversight	College of Graduate Studies
Plan type	Non-thesis master's degree; capstone project required
Credits	30 total credits
Delivery	Fully online; remote and primarily asynchronous
Typical completion	As little as one year (three semesters) full-time; part-time completion available
Entry terms	Fall, Spring, or Summer
International visa status	Not eligible for students who require F-1 or J-1 visa status
Program contact	Thomas J. Farrer, PhD, Interim Director - tfarrer@uidaho.edu

Program mission and goals

The program responds to the growing need for professionals who understand aging from multiple perspectives and who can translate gerontological knowledge into practice, leadership, and systems improvement. Students develop the ability to analyze aging-related issues, evaluate evidence, communicate across disciplines, and design or improve programs and services that affect older adults.

- These commitments are reflected in the program's primary goals:
 - Advance graduate-level understanding of aging across biological, psychosocial, ethical, and systems domains.

- Prepare students to apply evidence-informed principles in clinical, community, administrative, educational, and policy settings.
- Support development of an aging-capable workforce in Idaho and beyond.
- Promote person-centered, ethical, and culturally responsive approaches to older adulthood.
- Prepare students to complete an applied capstone that connects coursework with real-world gerontology practice, evaluation, or research.

AGHE alignment

The curriculum is designed to align with the Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) Standards and Guidelines in Higher Education and with AGHE competency-based approaches to gerontology education. At a high level, the program addresses:

- Foundational competencies relevant to all fields of gerontology, including life-course and interdisciplinary perspectives, biological and psychosocial aspects of aging, humanities/ethics, and research literacy.
- Interactional competencies such as attitudes toward aging, communication with and on behalf of older adults, professional standards, and interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Contextual and employment-relevant competencies through electives and capstone work tailored to settings such as rural health, pharmacological management, program development, aging in the arts, community engagement, and care management.

Program learning outcomes

Upon completion of the degree, students will be able to:

- Identify and explain developmental perspectives associated with aging.
- Compare and contrast biological and psychosocial aspects of aging and apply this knowledge in health and human service settings.
- Develop meaningful concepts, definitions, and measures for the well-being of older adults.
- Critically analyze ethical and professional standards in gerontology.
- Demonstrate effective communication skills in work related to older adults and community resources.
- Develop a gerontological perspective through knowledge integration and reflective learning.
- Collaborate with others to promote integrated approaches to aging.
- Promote quality of life, disease prevention and health, and engagement among older adults.

Admissions overview

Applicants must meet University of Idaho graduate admission requirements and the degree-specific expectations published by the program. The degree page indicates preference for applicants with educational backgrounds in health, medicine, and related fields.

- Bachelor's degree required.
- Minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0; applicants with a lower GPA may be considered under specific circumstances.
- GRE not required.
- Three references required.
- English proficiency documentation required when applicable under university policy.
- Applicants should also review general COGS application materials, including transcripts and any required statement of purpose or resume/CV.

Student expectations in an online program

- Check university email and Canvas regularly and respond promptly to time-sensitive communications.
- Meet course deadlines and participate consistently in asynchronous learning activities.
- Attend required virtual meetings, presentations, or onboarding events when announced by faculty or program leadership.
- Maintain professionalism in online communication, classroom interactions, and community-facing or applied work.
- Consult with an advisor early when work, family, health, or other circumstances may affect academic progress.

Co-curricular and professional development opportunities

Students are encouraged to take advantage of professional development and interdisciplinary opportunities available through COGS, SHAMP, and university-affiliated initiatives. Depending on student goals and availability, these may include faculty-guided capstone projects, community-engaged work, and connections with initiatives such as the Idaho Office of Underserved and Rural Medical Research, North Idaho AHEC, and Project ECHO Idaho.

Costs, tuition, and financial planning

Tuition and fees are set through university and State Board processes and may change from year to year. Students should review current University of Idaho tuition and fee information, consult Student Financial Aid Services, and confirm any program-specific charges at the time of admission or registration. Because cost-of-attendance pages include institution-wide estimates, online graduate students should verify the specific tuition structure that applies to their program. The MS in Gerontology was approved by the Idaho State Board of Education to have a program fee of \$18,000 for the entire degree program, which equates to \$600 per credit hour across the 30 credits required for graduation. Note that a prorated fee of \$600 per credit hour is applied to students who are part-time, and students may ultimately pay more than \$18,000 for the entire program if they elect to take more than the 30 credits. This total cost remains highly competitive across Gerontology MS programs nationwide.

III. Program Components / Degree Requirements

Degree structure

The M.S. in Gerontology is a 30-credit, non-thesis degree. In keeping with general University of Idaho requirements for the Master of Science, the degree includes at least 18 credits at the 5000 level and a non-thesis requirement. In this program, the non-thesis requirement is satisfied through the integrative capstone sequence.

Required courses

Course	Title	Credits
GERO 5001	Intro to Gerontology	3
GERO 5002	Research Methods in Gerontology	3
GERO 5003	Biological Aspects of Aging	3
GERO 5006	Health Promotion & Preventive Care in Aging	3

Course	Title	Credits
GERO 5007	Mental & Cognitive Health in Aging	3
GERO 5011	Integrative Capstone I: Applied Research & Practice	1
GERO 5012	The Ethics of Aging	3
GERO 5014	Integrative Capstone II: Project Implementation & Evaluation	2

Electives - select 9 credits

Course	Title	Credits
GERO 5004	Community Engagement & Leisure Arts in Aging	3
GERO 5005	Rural Health & Aging	3
GERO 5008	Designing and Evaluating Programs for Aging Populations	3
GERO 5009	Seminar on Aging in the Arts	3
GERO 5010	Pharmacological Management for Older Adults	3
GERO 5013	The Business of Geriatric Care Management	3

Capstone and applied learning

The capstone sequence is the culminating applied component of the degree. Capstone I focuses on identifying a gerontology-relevant issue, reviewing the literature, and designing a feasible and evidence-informed project. Capstone II focuses on implementation, evaluation, and communication of results. Depending on student goals and site opportunities, the capstone may take the form of an applied project, program-development effort, community-based initiative, internship-aligned deliverable, quality-improvement or evaluation project, or other approved gerontology-focused work.

Study plan

All degree-seeking graduate students must have a Study Plan on file with the College of Graduate Studies and Degree Audit. In accordance with current university policy, master's students must formally appoint a major professor and file the Study Plan by the end of the first year of attendance. Students should work with their advisor/major professor to

ensure that the Study Plan accurately reflects coursework, timing, and capstone plans. Students can track their progress toward degree completion in Degree Audit.

Representative full-time plan (three semesters)

Term	Recommended coursework	Credits	Focus
Semester 1	GERO 5001, 5002, 5003, 5006	12	Foundational and research base
Semester 2	GERO 5007, 5012, one elective, GERO 5011	10	Applied, ethical, and capstone planning
Semester 3	Two electives, GERO 5014	8	Implementation, evaluation, and completion

The full-time plan above is representative. Because students may begin in fall, spring, or summer and course scheduling may be adjusted, students should confirm the sequence with their advisor each term.

Representative part-time plan

Term	Illustrative coursework	Credits
Term 1	GERO 5001 and GERO 5002	6
Term 2	GERO 5003 and GERO 5006	6
Term 3	GERO 5007 and one elective	6
Term 4	GERO 5012, one elective, and GERO 5011	7
Term 5	One elective and GERO 5014	5

Students may take an alternative part-time path depending on transfer credit*, work schedule, prior preparation, and the timing of elective offerings. Individual advising is essential. * Note that the MS in Gerontology at UI will consider transfer of credits from another graduate-level gerontology program.

Relationship to the graduate certificate pathway

The M.S. curriculum is intentionally aligned with a gerontology certificate pathway associated with SHAMP (pending SBOE approval of the Certificate in Gerontology). Certificate coursework is drawn from the M.S. curriculum and is designed to support stackable and workforce-relevant training. Students should verify the current availability, approval status, and effective date of any certificate option at the time of enrollment, as certificate offerings may have separate implementation timelines and requirements.

IV. Selection of Major Professor

Under current College of Graduate Studies policy, all master's students must formally appoint a major professor within the first year of enrollment. For non-thesis master's students, selection or assignment by the end of the first semester is strongly encouraged.

In the M.S. in Gerontology, students ordinarily begin with advising support from program leadership and/or a designated faculty advisor. As students move toward the applied capstone, a major professor or faculty sponsor is identified to guide the student's academic plan and capstone progression.

- **The major professor or faculty sponsor's role typically includes the following responsibilities:**
 - Assist the student with course planning, progression, and timely completion of the Study Plan.
 - Help the student identify an appropriate capstone focus, scope, and timeline.
 - Advise on research approvals, community partnerships, ethics, and scholarly or professional expectations relevant to the capstone.
 - Review progress and intervene early if academic or professional concerns arise.

Students who wish to request a change of advisor or major professor should first discuss the matter, when feasible, with the current advisor and then consult the Interim Director or appropriate program administrator. If the Interim Director is the advisor involved in the concern, the student may seek guidance from the Department of Nursing chair or other designated SHAMP administrator. Any formal change must follow current COGS procedures and forms.

V. Forming the Degree Committee

Because the M.S. in Gerontology is a non-thesis degree, a standing graduate committee is not routinely required for all students. Instead, students typically work with a major professor/faculty sponsor and, when appropriate, may receive input from additional faculty members or community-based mentors connected to the capstone.

In special circumstances - for example, if a student's capstone is unusually interdisciplinary or if additional oversight would benefit the student's progress - the program may recommend a formal advisory group or graduate committee. If a formal committee is required, it will be constituted in accordance with current COGS policy regarding membership, graduate faculty status, and approvals.

- Students remain responsible for working closely with their major professor/faculty sponsor even when other mentors or site supervisors are involved.
- Community partners may contribute to project design and implementation, but faculty retain responsibility for academic evaluation.
- Any committee or advisory structure must be free from conflicts of interest and must support the student's educational progress.

VI. Non-thesis Requirement (NTR) and Final Capstone Expectations

Students in the M.S. in Gerontology do not complete a thesis or dissertation. The degree's non-thesis requirement (NTR) is fulfilled through successful completion of the capstone sequence and any associated final deliverables required by the program and course instructors.

The NTR is satisfied through completing all of the following requirements:

- Successful completion of GERO 5011 (Integrative Capstone I: Applied Research & Practice).
- Successful completion of GERO 5014 (Integrative Capstone II: Project Implementation & Evaluation).
- Submission of a final written or equivalent scholarly/professional product in the format required by the faculty sponsor and course instructor.

- Completion of any final presentation, dissemination, or reflection component required for the capstone.

What students should expect

- Identification of a gerontology-relevant problem, need, program, or intervention area.
- A literature-informed project rationale and plan.
- Appropriate consultation with faculty and, when relevant, community or organizational partners.
- Completion of required research, privacy, or site approvals before implementation or data collection.
- Implementation and/or evaluation of the approved capstone project.
- Clear communication of results, outcomes, lessons learned, and implications for aging-focused practice or systems improvement.

The capstone presentation component is not a formal thesis defense. Depending on the project and course structure, students may present in a live virtual session, a recorded presentation, a slide-based briefing, a poster format, a written report with presentation notes, or another approved dissemination format.

Students whose capstone work involves human participants, identifiable data, protected health information, or external organizations must obtain all necessary approvals before beginning project activities. Failure to secure approvals may delay degree completion.

Examples of Capstone Projects:

Capstone projects in the M.S. in Gerontology are individualized, applied scholarly projects that address real-world issues in aging through methods such as program evaluation, needs assessment, policy analysis, mixed-methods inquiry, quality improvement, or other evidence-informed approaches. The following are examples of capstone projects, but students should work directly with their major professor to plan and structure their project to fit their career interests.

- **Needs Assessment of Dementia-Related Services in a Rural Region**
Conduct a mixed-methods assessment of service availability, access barriers, and referral gaps for older adults living with dementia and their care partners.
- **Program Evaluation of a Fall Prevention Initiative for Community-Dwelling Older Adults**
Evaluate implementation, participation, and outcomes of a fall prevention program using participant data, stakeholder interviews, and evidence-based benchmarks.
- **Determinants of Social Isolation in Later Life: A Community-Based Assessment**
Analyze risk factors, protective factors, and service gaps related to loneliness and social isolation among older adults in a defined community.
- **Barriers to Healthcare Access Among Rural Older Adults**
Examine transportation, cost, technology, and workforce barriers affecting access to healthcare and develop evidence-informed recommendations for local systems.
- **Digital Health Literacy in Older Adults: Development and Pilot Evaluation of an Intervention**
Design and pilot a digital health literacy curriculum focused on telehealth, patient portals, and online health navigation, with pre-post outcome assessment.
- **Caregiver Burden and Support Needs in Family Dementia Caregiving**
Assess burden, unmet needs, and support preferences among family caregivers and propose a structured caregiver support model.
- **Aging in Place Readiness: Environmental and Social Determinants of Home-Based Independence**
Evaluate the barriers and supports influencing older adults' ability to remain safely in their homes, with recommendations for local aging services.

- **Medication Management Challenges in Older Adults with Multimorbidity**
Investigate medication-related challenges, health literacy issues, and care coordination needs among older adults managing multiple chronic conditions.
- **Assessment of Age-Friendliness in a Rural or Mid-Sized Community**
Evaluate a community using an age-friendly framework and produce a strategic report on transportation, housing, communication, social participation, and civic inclusion.
- **Quality of Life in Assisted Living: Resident Perspectives and Program Implications**
Use interviews, surveys, or observational methods to examine factors associated with quality of life in assisted living settings.
- **Dementia Knowledge, Attitudes, and Stigma in Community Stakeholders**
Assess perceptions of dementia among community members, service providers, or students and develop recommendations for targeted education.
- **Evaluation of Intergenerational Programming for Older Adults and Students**
Design and assess an intergenerational initiative, examining outcomes related to attitudes toward aging, social connection, and perceived meaning.
- **Older Adult Nutrition Risk and Food Access in a Community Setting**
Analyze food insecurity, nutritional risk, and barriers to healthy eating in older adults and propose interventions appropriate to the local context.
- **Bereavement and Adjustment in Later Life: A Community Partner Project**
Assess the experiences and support needs of bereaved older adults and develop evidence-based recommendations for grief support programming.
- **Workforce Preparedness for Aging Services in a Regional Health System**
Evaluate training needs, perceived competencies, and workforce gaps among professionals serving older adults in healthcare or community agencies.
- **Long-Term Care Staff Perspectives on Person-Centered Dementia Care**
Examine staff knowledge, attitudes, barriers, and training needs related to person-centered care in long-term care or memory care settings.
- **Analysis of Transportation Equity for Older Adults in Rural and Frontier Areas**
Conduct a policy and systems analysis of transportation models serving older adults, with recommendations for improved equity and coordination.
- **Community Readiness for Supporting Older Adults with Cognitive Impairment**
Evaluate how well a community or service network is prepared to identify, support, and refer older adults with mild cognitive impairment or dementia.
- **Assessment of End-of-Life Planning Knowledge and Preferences Among Older Adults**
Study awareness, attitudes, and barriers related to advance care planning, with recommendations for education or service delivery improvement.
- **Policy Analysis of a State or Local Aging-Related Issue**
Conduct a policy analysis on an issue such as caregiving, housing, elder abuse, long-term services and supports, or dementia care, culminating in a policy brief and implementation recommendations.

For additional information and resources, please contact the College of Graduate Studies and explore the following links:

Copyrights, Protectable Discoveries, and other Intellectual Property Rights

www.webpages.uidaho.edu/fsh/5300.html

Responsible Conduct of Research Education

VII. Academic Performance and Annual Review

Good standing and satisfactory progress

Graduate students remain in good standing when both the semester GPA and cumulative GPA are 3.00 or higher. Students are expected to make steady progress toward the degree through timely course completion, consistent engagement, appropriate professionalism, and advancement toward the capstone.

- Full-time graduate status is 9 credits in fall or spring and 6 credits in summer.
- Students should meet regularly with their advisor/major professor, especially before submitting the Study Plan and before beginning capstone work.
- Students enrolled part-time should still maintain at least annual advising contact to confirm progression and degree planning.

Probation and disqualification

Under current COGS policy, a graduate student is placed on academic probation after any semester or summer session in which a GPA below 3.00 is earned in courses on the graduate transcript, regardless of cumulative GPA. A student will be disqualified if a GPA below 3.00 is earned during the second consecutive graded term after being placed on probation.

Students on probation should communicate promptly with program leadership, review degree progress, and make a realistic recovery plan. Reinstatement after disqualification is governed by current university policy and requires appropriate recommendations and approvals.

Student Code of Conduct for the University of Idaho can be found at the following link:

www.webpages.uidaho.edu/fsh/2300.html

Incomplete and in-progress grades

The university grade of Incomplete is governed by current catalog policy and is used only in limited circumstances when a student has been doing passing work but, because of extenuating circumstances, cannot finish course requirements on time. Students should not assume that an Incomplete will be granted; it requires instructor agreement and follow-up completion by the deadline established under university policy.

In-progress (IP) grades are primarily associated with designated graduate research courses such as 5000, 5990, and 6000. They are not part of the standard required Gerontology curriculum unless a separately approved research arrangement is involved.

Program review and intervention

The program may review student progress at least annually, and more often when needed, to identify students who are excelling, students who may benefit from additional support, and students whose progress raises concern. Review may include GPA, successful completion of core coursework, capstone readiness, professional conduct, responsiveness to advising, and the student's ability to meet program milestones.

When concerns arise, the program may recommend additional advising, altered pacing, temporary delay of capstone enrollment, or other academic supports. Failure to respond to significant deficiencies in academic performance or professional behavior may result in program action consistent with university policy.

Representative milestone timeline

Milestone	Expected timing	Notes
Initial advising / onboarding	At entry	Review handbook, degree structure, technology, and first-term plan
Major professor appointed	Strongly encouraged by end of first semester; required by end of first year	Formal COGS process applies
Study Plan filed	By end of first year	Requires major professor approval
Capstone topic and readiness confirmed	Before or during GERO 5011	Topic should be feasible and aligned with program goals
Research/site approvals completed	Before implementation or data collection	IRB/site permissions as applicable
Graduation application and final clearance	Final semester	Students must follow published Registrar/COGS deadlines

VIII. Safety and Integrity in Research and Creative Activities

Although the M.S. in Gerontology is a non-thesis program, many student capstone projects involve literature-based inquiry, program evaluation, community-based work, interviews, surveys, educational interventions, or use of organizational data. Accordingly, students are expected to uphold high standards of research integrity, ethical conduct, privacy, and safety.

- Complete any required university or site-based training before beginning project activities.
- Obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval when a project qualifies as research involving human participants or when approval is otherwise required.
- Secure organizational/site permissions before using data, working with community partners, or implementing a project in a host setting.
- Protect confidential, sensitive, and identifying information, including health information, in accordance with law, policy, and site expectations.
- Discuss authorship, acknowledgments, data ownership, and dissemination expectations early with the faculty sponsor and any project partners.

Key university research resources include:

- Before starting research (required trainings and disclosures)
- Responsible Conduct of Research
- Office of Research Assurances
- Conflict of Interest policies
- Conflict of Interest in Sponsored Projects

For additional information and resources, please contact the College of Graduate Studies and the following links:

Copyrights, Protectable Discoveries, and other Intellectual Property Rights
www.webpages.uidaho.edu/fsh/5300.html

Responsible Conduct of Research Education
www.uidaho.edu/apm/45/21

IX. Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution

Students in the M.S. in Gerontology are expected to uphold the standards of academic integrity, professionalism, respect, civility, and ethical conduct required by the University of Idaho and by the gerontology profession. These expectations apply in online courses, email and videoconference communication, group work, capstone activities, and all interactions with faculty, staff, peers, and community partners.

Professional expectations

- Honest completion of academic work and accurate representation of sources, data, and project activities.
- Respectful and professional communication in asynchronous and synchronous learning environments.
- Protection of confidentiality and privacy when discussing older adults, organizations, cases, or community settings.
- Timely engagement with faculty, advisors, and project partners.
- Culturally responsive and age-respectful conduct that avoids stereotyping, ageism, harassment, or discriminatory behavior.

Examples of conduct that may trigger program concern

- Academic dishonesty, plagiarism, fabrication, or falsification of data or project materials.
- Persistent unprofessional communication or disruptive behavior in class or project settings.
- Serious breach of confidentiality or mishandling of sensitive information.
- Failure to comply with required ethical, regulatory, or site-based approvals.
- Harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or behavior inconsistent with university policy.

Conflict resolution pathway

1. Direct resolution when appropriate: students are encouraged to address routine concerns first with the relevant instructor, advisor, or project supervisor when it is safe and reasonable to do so.
2. Program-level consultation: if the matter is not resolved, the student should consult the Interim Director or designated program administrator.
3. Escalation when the concern involves program leadership: if the issue involves the Interim Director/major professor, the student may go directly to the Department of Nursing chair or another designated SHAMP administrator.
4. University support and formal processes: students may also use the Office of the Ombuds, Dean of Students processes, COGS petition/appeal processes, and other formal university channels as appropriate.

Helpful university resources include:

- Student conduct and academic integrity
- Office of the Ombuds
- Title IX

- Personal safety on campus

Students may benefit from access to the following information:

Student Code of Conduct:

www.webpages.uidaho.edu/fsh/2300.html

Personal Safety on Campus

<https://www.uidaho.edu/infrastructure/i-safety/personal-safety>

Public Safety and Campus Security

www.uidaho.edu/infrastructure/pss

Copyrights, Protectable Discoveries, and other Intellectual Property Rights

www.webpages.uidaho.edu/fsh/5300.html

Responsible Conduct of Research Education

www.uidaho.edu/apm/45/21

Policy against Sexual Harassment

www.webpages.uidaho.edu/fsh/3220.html#A

Non-Discrimination Policy

www.uidaho.edu/ocri/policy-procedure/nondiscrimination-policy

COGS FORMS

www.uidaho.edu/COGS/forms

X. Graduate Assistant Employment Policies

Graduate assistantships may be available only on a limited basis and are not guaranteed as part of admission to the M.S. in Gerontology. When assistantships are available, appointments are governed by university policy, COGS guidance, departmental needs, funding availability, and the terms stated in the student's appointment letter.

- Assistantship responsibilities, supervisor, FTE, dates of appointment, and evaluation expectations are defined by the appointment.
- Students holding assistantships must meet all applicable university enrollment and employment requirements.
- Graduate assistants should complete any required TA/RA training and comply with all job-related policies, confidentiality expectations, and supervisor directions.
- Requests for leave, schedule adjustments, or travel to professional meetings should be discussed in advance with the assistantship supervisor.
- Use of university resources such as office space, technology, printing, shared files, and equipment must follow unit and university policies.

Because this is an online program, some assistantship opportunities may be compatible with remote work while others may require a specific location, work schedule, or in-person presence. Students interested in assistantship support should inquire early and should not assume that all positions are available to all students in all locations.

XI. University / Department Resources and Opportunities

Students in the M.S. in Gerontology have access to a broad range of academic, professional, financial, wellness, and technology resources through the University of Idaho. The resources below are especially relevant to graduate students in an online, non-thesis professional master's program.

Resource	How it helps	Link / contact
College of Graduate Studies (COGS)	Graduate forms, deadlines, policies, student-success resources, awards, and professional development	https://www.uidaho.edu/graduate-studies
COGS Student Success	Central hub for support resources, forms, and guidance	https://www.uidaho.edu/graduate-studies/student-success
University of Idaho Library	Databases, journals, research assistance, interlibrary loan, and online access	https://www.lib.uidaho.edu/
Graduate Writing Center / writing support	Writing consultation and support for graduate-level work	https://catalog.uidaho.edu/student-services/academics-advising/writing-center/
Student Financial Aid Services	Cost planning, aid resources, and funding questions	https://www.uidaho.edu/financial-aid
Center for Disability Access and Resources	Accommodations and disability-related support services	https://www.uidaho.edu/student-resources/disability-accessibility-resources
Counseling and Mental Health Center	Mental health support and wellness resources	https://www.uidaho.edu/student-resources/health-wellness/counseling-mental-health-center
Student technology / Canvas support	Technology and learning-management support for online learners	https://www.uidaho.edu/student-resources/technical-support
Military and Veteran Services	Support related to GI Bill and veteran student needs	https://www.uidaho.edu/military-veteran
Professional associations	Gerontological Society of America / AGHE and related professional development opportunities	https://www.geron.org/ https://www.geron.org/Membership/Member-Center/Member-Groups/Academy-for-Gerontology-in-Higher-Education-AGHE

Program- and school-level opportunities

- Faculty advising and remote office hours. Faculty will hold virtual office hours and students may request phone or video calls with faculty.
- Capstone mentorship linked to student interests and, where feasible, community or systems-level aging initiatives.
- Interdisciplinary connections through SHAMP and related health-professions programming.
- Potential engagement with age-focused initiatives and community partnerships relevant to Idaho and rural health contexts.
- Professional development activities and awards coordinated through COGS.

XII. Frequently Asked Questions

Is the program fully online?

Yes. The program is designed to be completed remotely and is primarily asynchronous. Students should still expect structured deadlines and occasional required meetings or presentations in virtual formats when specified by instructors. However, students may complete the program at a part-time schedule with the director's permission. This is required so the program can still ensure students are making progress toward degree completion.

How quickly can I finish the degree?

A full-time student can complete the degree in as little as one year (three semesters). Part-time completion is also supported.

Is this a thesis program?

No. The M.S. in Gerontology is a non-thesis degree. Students complete an applied capstone sequence that serves as the non-thesis requirement.

Do I need to come to campus?

The program is designed for remote participation. Students should confirm any optional or special events with program leadership, but regular campus attendance is not the standard model.

When do I need to appoint a major professor and submit my Study Plan?

Students are strongly encouraged to have a major professor in place by the end of the first semester, and university policy requires appointment within the first year. The Study Plan must also be filed by the end of the first year.

What can my capstone look like?

Capstones may involve an applied project, program development or evaluation effort, internship-aligned deliverable, community initiative, or another approved gerontology-focused activity. Scope and format are developed with a faculty sponsor.

Are there elective options?

Yes. Students select 9 elective credits from approved gerontology offerings such as rural health, pharmacological management, aging in the arts, program development, community engagement, and care management.

Can the M.S. align with a certificate?

Yes. The curriculum is intentionally aligned with a gerontology certificate pathway. Students should verify current certificate availability, effective date, and requirements at the time they enroll.

Can students who require F-1 or J-1 visa status enroll?

As of Fall 2026, the program is not eligible for students who require F-1 or J-1 visa status. Our program website will be updated as the eligibility status changes.

Where should I look first if I have a question?

Start with this handbook, the course syllabus, and your advisor/major professor. For university-wide forms and policies, consult the College of Graduate Studies website.

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