

I. Early History by Dr. Sue Saxon, March 1998

IN THE BEGINNING... USF had a College of Basic Studies (from 1961 to 1972), an academic unit composed of many departments responsible for the first two years of general education at USF. I was hired in 1963 as an assistant professor in the Behavioral Sciences department chaired by Les Malpass. Tom Rich took over as chair of the Behavioral Sciences department from 1966 to 1970. Our department taught a human behavior course extending through three quarters for general education requirements. The faculty was truly multidisciplinary and the first two quarters of the human behavior course included concepts from biology, psychology, sociology, and anthropology. The third quarter was a special topics course depending on the individual instructor's interests and expertise. As far as I know, the first formal course in aging at USF was one of the third quarter courses in human behavior which dealt with aging and was taught by Tom Rich and myself as our respective special topics courses since we both had an inte

death and dying and Dr. Larry Dupree teaches as well as serving as Chair of the Aging and Mental Health department at the Florida Mental Health Institute.

As to funding, Title V of the Older Americans Act enacted in 1965 provided for support in training people to work with older adults. The Older Americans Act was administered through the Administration on Aging (AOA) headed by Clark Tibbits. Between 1967 and 1980 Tom Rich obtained over one million dollars (\$1,301,869 to be exact) in grants from AOA for the M.A. degree program. Our early graduate students were fully supported by grant money and were also able

the Board of Regents called a halt to the development of additional institutes at USF unless they went through the formal procedures for establishing new academic units at the university.

The curriculum for the M.A. in Gerontology degree consisted of four quarters of multidisciplinary courses in the Institute on Aging and one quarter of full time field placement in an appropriate agency serving older adults. Specific courses offered in the first few years were: biology of aging, psychology of aging, social research methods, aging and personality, institutional administration, sociological aspects of aging, human relations in organizations, leisure for the aging, administrative aspects of demography, seminar in social gerontology, and field placement. Each of these courses was developed by the individual faculty member who taught the course as we had essentially no guidelines from other programs to assist in curriculum development. Also, it was extremely difficult to find appropriate textbooks and journal articles because very few resources were available in aging at that time.

In 1971-1972 the Institute on Aging was located in a new unit, the Center for Research and Development established in 1966. The USF Center for Research and Development housed multidisciplinary sponsored programs such as aging, marine science, exceptional children and adults, speech pathology and audiology, and rehabilitation. This center was structured within

Studies and Social Work and from 1980 to 1983 he was acting director of the International Exchange Center as well as teaching courses in the aging studies program. Wayne had a most distinguished career in social work and aging and brought a fund of information about the development of aging activities, especially at the national level. Dr. Harold Sheppard came to USF as director of the International Exchange Center in 1983 and continued in that position and also taught in the aging studies program until 1991. He, too, was a nationally recognized scholar and administrator in aging having served as Associate Director of the National Council on Aging and as advisor to the President of the United States regarding aging issues and policy.

By 1981-1982 there was a minor in human services listed in the university catalog and the aging program was identified officially as the Department of Gerontology. The mission statement for the M.A. program now indicated: "The primary objective of the graduate program in aging is to train personnel for leadership positions in the planning, development, delivery, and evaluation of community services for older persons. Preference is given to applicants who demonstrate commitment to or experience in programs for older persons."

Also in 1981-1982 the university converted from the quarter system to the semester system and we began the process to obtain approval for a Bachelor of Arts degree in Gerontology. We were approved to begin the B.A. program in the fall of 1983 with three tracks: nursing home administration, senior center administration, and retirement housing management. Dr. Larry Mullins, who served as chair of the department from 1990-1994, joined the faculty in 1980. He left USF for another administrative position in 1994. Dr. Jordan Kosberg joined the faculty in 1982 with an extremely strong research background in social work and remained a key faculty member until 1992 when he left USF for an administrative/teaching position at another university.

By 1984 we were offering both B.A. and B.S. degrees, a minor in Human Services at the undergraduate level, and the M.A. degree. The B.S. degree was a specialist degree to prepare students for entry-level positions in specialized career areas, especially nursing home administration. The mission statement of the program now stated: "Gerontology is the study of the process of aging in all its many aspects--physical, psychological, and social. In the Department of Gerontology, particular emphasis is placed upon applied gerontology, with the goal of educating students who in their professional careers in the field of aging will work to sustain or improve the quality of life of older persons. To this end the Department offers the degrees of Bachelor of Arts in Gerontology, Bachelor of Science in Gerontology, and Master of Arts in Gerontology." We also offered a thesis option for graduate students who wanted to pursue a doctoral degree or who were interested in a research career in aging.

In 1989 the graduate curriculum expanded to include three concentrations: research, program planning and administration, and direct service and mental health. A dual degree program with social work became available to qualified students.

In 1991-1992 the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences became the College of Arts and Sciences. At this time we developed an undergraduate minor in Gerontology which included sixteen hours of upper level courses and also developed a certificate in mental health and aging at the graduate level. Completion of the graduate mental health and aging concentration met the educational requirements for licensure as a Mental Health Counselor. Dr. Larry Mullins became chair of the Gerontology program in 1990 and chaired the department until 1994. Dr. Wiley Mangum served as acting chair until 1996 when Dr.

William Haley joined the faculty and took over as chair. Dr. Mangum is the associate chair of the department and remains in this position.

In 1995-1996 the university catalog mentioned the interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Aging Studies program for the first time and stated: "The interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Aging Studies

wide committee that works to enhance the capacity and reputation of USF as a center for excellence in aging research and education.

In summer of 2004 the faculty and staff from the former Department of Gerontology and former Institute on Aging, as well as the faculty and staff from the Florida Policy Exchange Center on Aging, moved into newly renovated space in the Florida Mental Health Institute. Our new location is in an area of the campus that has been designated as the home of interdisciplinary progra