



UNC Partnerships in Aging Program

Collaborating Across Generations

Report of the Inaugural UNC Partnerships in Aging Consortium Think Tank (PACTT) 2019

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UNC Partnerships in Aging PACTT Report

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express gratitude to the community leaders, faculty, staff and students who met together on March 28, 2019, to discuss views of Aging, current involvement in or awareness of Aging initiatives, and visions for the future.

The UNC Partnerships in Aging Program (PiAP) sponsored this inaugural Think Tank to create a consortium in order to deepen conversations and spur action about existing and potential aging-related initiatives that interweave community with campus life and academic coursework.

Dr. Carol Tresolini, Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives, welcomed the group with an overview of PiAP history, and the PiAP leadership team then facilitated discussions over dinner that resulted in several priority action items as well as a collection of ideas that have been placed in a “waiting room” for future consideration.

The priority action items that emerged from PACTT are foregrounded in the report, situated as initiatives that PiAP is poised to champion, support, and form partnerships to address. Each of these priorities is also tied to a specific item in the 2018-2020 PiAP Strategic Plan (Appendix A). The remaining sections outline concepts that capture the background conversation as well as the ideas that have been placed in “waiting room” status.

Thank you for your time, energy, and dedication to this inaugural PACTT,

The UNC Partnerships in Aging Leadership Team

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APPENDIX A: UNC Partnerships in Aging 2018-2020 Strategic Plan

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I. PRIORITY ACTION ITEMS

a. Overarching Initiatives (PiAP Strategic Priority 1A)

- **IDEA:** Film series based in the community that intentionally recruits an intergenerational audience of students and elders
ACTION: PiAP intern is working in collaboration with local elder who is donating books & media related to Conscious Aging and will explore possibility for this avenue to begin film series
- **IDEA:** Increase awareness of cultural diversity in Aging
ACTION: Begin planning for a Diversity & Aging Symposium

b. Arts & Humanities Initiatives (PiAP Strategic Priorities 1A & 3B)

- **IDEA:** Connect students & elders through Arts & Humanities events/outreach
ACTION: Meet with Arts & Humanities faculty & leaders to discuss ways to incorporate their interests with PiAP mission. Combine interests to host an Arts & Aging event, building momentum for ongoing connections
- **IDEA:** Increase use of storytelling/oral histories to advance interest in Aging and capture diverse narratives
ACTION: Engage in discussing possibility for co-funded position with Southern Oral History Project
ACTION: Continuing / re-energizing Galloway Ridge oral history project
ACTION: Initiate oral histories with future residents of Orange County Habitat for Humanity's Crescent Magnolia neighborhood

c. Campus-Community Connections Initiatives (PiAP Strategic Priorities 1A&B)

- **IDEA:** Develop expanded outreach to/ accessibility for diverse communities of elders in terms of accessing age-related services
ACTION: Explore culturally relevant aging through meetings with groups and Centers representing diverse perspectives (e.g. SAGE, Latinx Collaborative, Stone Center, American Indian Center)
ACTION: Follow up with Carolina Center for Public Service regarding the availability of Buckley Scholars for interpreter services
ACTION: Support Nutrition graduate student to connect with Meals on Wheels to expand services to Mandarin-speaking elders

d. Academic Coursework & Related Initiatives (PiAP Strategic Priority 2)

- **IDEA:** Develop some type of Aging certificate/passport/concentration that bridges undergraduate and graduate study
ACTION: Engage in conversations with Graduate School & Undergraduate Faculty Leadership about possibilities for Aging Studies concentration
- **IDEA:** Explore how Professors Emeriti stay engaged in campus life
ACTION: Meet with HR and/or Retired Faculty Association to understand how outreach/continued connections are currently established



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II. FACILITATED DISCUSSION 1: Conversations about Aging

The following items represent participants' perspectives as discussed during the PACTT event regarding influences on their views of aging as well as how they believe society views aging

a. Influences on views of Aging

Participants in PACTT were asked... *"Please tell us about a person or experience that has influenced your views on aging"*

Responses were primarily positive in nature, highlighting elders who debunked stereotypes and experiences that shaped positive views of later life:

- Family/grandparents/parents who were bold into later years
- Family/cultural traditions that honor elders
- Nortin Hadler (personally as well as book: Rethinking Aging)
- Experiencing elders who counter stereotypes (e.g. 103 and exercising, older landlady, grandmother who worked for pay into 90s, parents who were leaders)
- Powerful family stories: 'Words linger after people are gone'
- Models of older workers/lifelong entrepreneurs
- Internships in aging-related agencies & organizations
- Caregiving issues/interests/experience
- Communities/organizations incorporating elders into active roles
- Encountering encouragement to go into aging-related work at the right time and place

There were also acknowledgements that not all experiences of aging are positive:

- Experiencing sicker, more frail family members also led to feelings of not being able to "dress up" aging – some hard realities
- Entering homes of elders during work tasks/routines led to awareness of some difficult situations

b. Juxtaposition of personal and societal view on aging

Participants in PACTT were asked... *"How do your views of aging correspond with society's portrayal of aging"*

- Aging and dying are normal parts of life, not diseases as society portrays
- Need to "normalize" the aging process, not operate from place of fear; fear seems to emanate from generation "about to cross"
- Many elders aren't afraid of death but not empowered to talk about end of life
- Aging services often take an intervention approach as opposed to a broader focus on determinants of health and well-being
- When we normalize the aging process, we provide space to set aside fear/notions of aging as burdensome



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c. Current Involvement in/Knowledge of Aging Initiatives

Participants in PACTT were asked....*What are you involved in related to aging? What services/programs or initiatives do you know about related to aging?*

Participants mentioned the following community agencies & entities:

Orange County Department & Chatham Council on Aging

- Master Aging Plan (MAP) & Project EngAGE initiatives
- Engage student in multiple ways - internships, projects, Capstone teams
- Many ongoing needs/possibilities

Local CCRCs: Carolina Meadows & Carol Woods

- Students engaged in Music & Memory, story circles
- CCRCs are eager partners in conjunction with county entities

Community & Campus Organizations who are currently engaged or poised to be:

- Charles House – many student intersections
- Meals on Wheels – seeking to expand services
- Latinx Center (relatively new)
- UNC Women’s Center (already leading caregiving sessions)
- Mi Pueblo
- Southern Oral History Program
- UNC Hillsborough Hospital institution-wide dementia training
- Ackland Art Museum works with faculty & students to be inclusive of visitors with dementia and low vision

Current oral history initiatives:

- Senior team working with high school students film project
- Galloway Ridge Continuing Care Retirement Community

The following campus initiatives (coursework, IPE experiences) were mentioned:

- Course review of UNC course catalog found 15+ courses outside of health affairs that appeared from description to address some aspect of aging
- Long-standing IPE across health affairs/SW/PH with consistent faculty champions
- History & Political Science courses have actively engaged elders in the past
- Most health affairs/graduate-professional programs have dedicated courses
- Medical School offering longitudinal training in geriatrics beyond the specialization so that every graduating physician has a better knowledge of aging – more distributed throughout curriculum
- Student Groups in existence or forming:
 - Student Interest Group in Aging (Gillings School of Global Public Health)
 - Liberty/Parkview Nursing home training SON students
- APPLES courses/Buckley Scholars/ Carolina Center for Public Service listserv
- School wide inventory of courses was done in Gillings School of PH in 2015
- Student Health Action Coalition initiative on Caregiving



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III. FACILITATED DISCUSSION 2: New Ideas for Aging Initiatives

Participants in PACTT were asked...*“What can we be doing to expand aging initiatives/conversations?”*

This question was addressed in three different groups focused on distinct topical areas:

Arts & Humanities

Campus Community Connections

Academic Coursework & Related Initiatives

The initiatives listed here represent the “Waiting Room” items; initiatives targeted for priority action that emerged from these discussions are reflected on page 4 to highlight their primacy.

a. Overarching Comments/Ideas

- Dispel common stereotypes through exposure / senior mentor programs
- Champions needed across courses/departments on campus to connect to community, not just usual players
- Need a move from individual action/champions to a systemic culture that embraces aging as a topic worthy of attention/study/integration

b. Arts & Humanities Initiatives

- Performing arts students interacting with/performing for Continuing Care Retirement Communities/older adults and in return learn to counter ageism
- Artists in residence in Continuing Care Retirement Communities
- More inclusion of life histories in healthcare (example of VA having 600 word addition to medical records with life story of the patient)
- Possible work with Carolina Performing Arts on end-of-life issues (performance, reflection, PhotoVoice approach, writing, etc.)

c. Campus-Community Connections Initiatives

- Possibilities to develop new collaborations with entities that aren't just about aging: Latinx Center, Women's Center, Carolina Center for Public Service
- Consultation from the university to agencies serving elders – relative to program development, budgeting, management
- Develop system at the university that offers easily accessible information and contact information for programs and faculty willing to collaborate with community entities. Essentially foster easier accessibility and communication between community and university entities.



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d. Academic Coursework & Related Initiatives

- Expand opportunities for student to encounter elders aging in community as opposed to just institutional situations
- Situate elders as both co-learners and teachers – move away from students positioned as interventionists and elders only as mentors
- Possible terminology change from “geriatrics” or “gerontology” to Aging Studies
- Exposure for researchers in aging outside health sciences
- Presentations by scholars who are funded by the National Institutes on Aging
- A book club or non-credit program of some sort. Perhaps communities that already have a mass of students could host or serve as catalyst (Hillel was mentioned as one example)
- Use existing campus-wide programs such as APPLES service-learning courses
- Utilize campus wide media such as The Daily Tar Heel to market aging-related events and initiatives
- Foster Student Interest Groups in Aging in every department

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IV. Resources & Challenges

Across both sets of facilitated conversations, PACTT participants identified resources that they viewed as ripe for development, as well as challenges in moving forward the ideas they identified. The most commonly mentioned items in each of these areas are outlined below:

Resources to be tapped/developed

- Senior mentors through Project EngAGE and related programs
- A “match.com” model for pairing older adults and students: centralized hub
- Emeritus professors (even outside their areas of expertise)
- Use of sports/athletes to raise awareness – power of sports to connect
- Students are asking for support/mentorship and mentors are available among community elders – “this is low-hanging fruit: find a way to match them”

Challenges to be met

- Student schedules are challenging in terms of finding common times to pursue intersecting interests in aging – this has been a consistent problem in trying to organize interprofessional education and was viewed as a task of the Provost’s office
- More consistency of preceptors for students interested in aging
- Ways to ensure consistency and sustainability of programs in the context of change/graduation/transiency
- Silo-ing of courses across the university. Exist only within a single department/available only to majors
- Some courses are not being populated despite being offered
- What level of expectation is appropriate regarding faculty investment of time in aging initiatives that transcend classroom instruction or research? What level of ask is too big?
- How do faculty and staff balance involvement in community partnerships with research and teaching expectations?

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V. Contacts

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**APPENDIX A:
UNC Partnerships in Aging Strategic Plan 2018-2020
STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES**

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	STEPPING STONES	MAJOR ACTIVITIES
<p>1. LEARNING/SERVICE: Students, faculty, <u>community organizations</u>, and <u>elders</u> are engaged in innovative, aging-related projects that provide reciprocal learning and service opportunities</p>	<p>A. Facilitate students' experiential learning with community elders and organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Research and obtain additional funding to pay students for internships, etc. b. Explore options for, and where possible, pursue institutional support for experiential learning (credit hours, etc.). c. Develop a larger pool of high-quality mentors (UNC, broader community). d. Explore UNC entities' (e.g., Center for Public Service, Center for Faculty Excellence) role in supporting faculty in facilitating experiential learning in aging. e. Develop opportunities for students and elders to learn from each other about cross-generational topics such as adaptation, caregiving, or death and dying. f. Continue and grow interdisciplinary, team-based learning opportunities in the community (e.g., Beyond Clinic Walls).

	<p>B. Offer technical assistance¹ that complements the assets of community organizations² working in one or more domain of WHO's Age-Friendly Communities³</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Co-develop internship placements for students at community organizations. b. Serve as a resource to students doing aging-related capstones, theses/dissertations, projects, etc. c. Explore and pursue opportunities to connect faculty with community collaborations. d. Cultivate one collaboration that is part of a state-wide or regional (e.g., western NC) effort. e. Use the decision tool to make strategic choices about which collaborative efforts to engage with. f. Explore additional opportunities for more intra-University (e.g., Women's Center, Ackland Museum, Stone Center, American Indian Center) partnerships where PIAP supports connections with community organizations. g. Continue and grow collaborations with Orange County Department on Aging. h. Collaborate with community partners to develop intergenerational housing and caregiving opportunities for students and elders (e.g., Northside neighborhood).
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¹ TA includes activities such as facilitating learning partnerships, crafting structure to support the function of work, broadening the context of work by bringing research and relevant literature to the table, evaluation, and disseminating results.

² Community organizations include government agencies, community non-profits, neighborhood groups, and others working in communities.

³World Health Organization's Age-Friendly Community domains relevant to this plan are: respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, housing, outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, and community support and health services.

	<p>C. Facilitate community organizations' and the broader field's access to PIAP knowledge around collaboration and community innovation</p>	<p>a. Disseminate PIAP results, learnings, and approaches with diverse audiences (e.g., academia, community organizations, government) through toolkits, conference presentations, publications, and web-based communications.</p>
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STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	STEPPING STONES	MAJOR ACTIVITIES
<p>2. ACADEMIC STUDY: <u>UNC</u> further integrates aging content into academic study</p>	<p>A. Establish a certificate program, concentration, symposium, and/or classes in aging</p>	<p>a. Review approaches used at other universities, in other UNC programs, etc. b. Serve on a team to revitalize a certificate program, concentration, freshman seminar, or inter-disciplinary class on aging. c. Explore hosting or co-hosting an annual symposium on aging. d. Explore additional opportunities with UNC schools, departments, and other units. e. Explore Association of Retired Faculty's potential roles (including being champions and content providers within their former departments or schools). f. Identify, and where appropriate, support discipline-specific and interdisciplinary aging interest groups (students/faculty) on campus.</p>

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	STEPPING STONES	MAJOR ACTIVITIES
<p>3. ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH: PiAP's organizational strength grows</p>	<p>A. Increase funding and financial planning</p> <p>B. Deepen strategic relationships, particularly on campus</p> <p>C. Build a staff team</p>	<p>a. Research and develop plans for fundraising (e.g., grants, individual donors, contracts/fee for service, products, Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships).</p> <p>b. Seek funding.</p> <p>c. Develop additional partnerships (e.g., with other centers on campus) where creative funding prospects exist.</p> <p>d. Continue providing consulting services for the existing Department on Aging contract and anticipate future Department needs.</p> <p>e. Explore additional formal contract relationships with community organizations.</p> <p>f. Develop plans for the most strategic use of existing and new funds.</p> <p>a. Meet with key UNC prospective champions and influencers on and off campus (e.g., deans, Institute of Arts and Humanities, Arts and Sciences Foundation, Center for Public Service, community foundations, conglomerate foundations such as Triangle Community Foundation) to explore areas of mutual interest and complementarity.</p> <p>a. Hire and train 1+ new team member/s.</p> <p>b. Support staff success, contributions, and satisfaction.</p>

	<p>D. Develop succession plans</p>	<p>c. Invest in leadership/management coaching/support for team.</p> <p>a. Review other succession plans.</p> <p>b. Develop a plan that has flexibility on timeline.</p> <p>c. Develop resulting protocols, institutional memory documentation, etc.</p>
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