There is a fundamental issue facing our nation — the lack of a competent and caring workforce to deliver resources, services and support for persons with dementia and the aging population. In response to this critical need, Texas State University has added a M.S. program in dementia and aging studies. The curriculum emphasizes cutting-edge knowledge of dementia, aging and the person-centered model of care with skills and competency in long-term care, research or an advanced practitioner plan of study.

Our graduates will make an immediate impact in their profession or be able to pursue further graduate studies leading toward research-related careers. Most will pursue advanced management and leadership opportunities in professional settings related to long-term care, hospices and hospitals, as well as new approaches to dealing with persons with dementia and dementia-like disorders.

Texas State University offers a master of science in dementia and aging studies, the first university to do so in the United States. The mission of M.S. in dementia and aging studies is to educate from a global, interdisciplinary and human rights perspective in order to create compassion and understanding for persons with dementia and for elders.
Course Work

Tracks in the M.S. in Dementia and Aging Studies Program

Students accepted to the M.S. in dementia and aging studies program must choose one of three tracks. Each track offers different course work. Refer to the Texas State University Graduate Catalog. Examples of some course offerings in each track include: Dementia and Caregiving, Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Aging, Personnel Management in Long-Term Care, Communication and Aging, and Gender and Aging.

1. **The dementia and long-term care track** is designed for students whose professional goals correspond with the long-term care certificate, but who also want cutting-edge knowledge about dementia and a master's degree to supplement the certificate. A student in this track may be interested in certification as a nursing home administrator. Dementia and long-term care allies the long-term care certificate with core course work from the Department of Sociology to provide a social model of care approach to students who want to work in extended living environments when they graduate.

2. **The practitioner track** contains a curricular offering for students whose interests are in careers related to dementia and prefer a wider variety of elective courses related to dementia and aging issues, rather than long-term care. A student in this track may be interested in roles such as health educator or patient advocate. Students with undergraduate degrees in helping and health professions (social work and occupational therapy) may also pursue this track in order to expand skill sets and employment opportunities. The practitioner track offers an in-depth education involving course work from all participating departments and allowing students to work in any facility or organization whose concern is the health and well-being of the individuals affected by dementia.

3. **The research track** focuses on research skills and dementia-related courses and is the track that students who want to pursue an academic doctorate in gerontology or aging should elect. It will provide advanced research knowledge to accompany the cutting-edge information offered in the core dementia and aging courses. The research track offers course work that will prepare students for doctoral programs in gerontology, sociology, dementia studies or related fields.

Admission Policy

In addition to the general requirements for admission to the Texas State Graduate College, the Department of Sociology requires a minimum GPA of 3.0 on the last 60 semester hours of undergraduate course work leading up to the bachelor's degree. Course prerequisites for M.S. in dementia and aging studies include six hours of undergraduate sociology courses or other social science courses related to aging or gerontology; two years of documented experience in the field of gerontology may be substituted for three or six hours of social science prerequisites. These prerequisites may have been earned at other universities and may be taken prior to entering or in the first semester of the graduate program.

Each applicant must submit the following to The Graduate College:

- the online Graduate College application through ApplyTexas
- application fee
- one official transcript from each college or university attended
- three reference forms (available on the Department of Sociology graduate program Web page) from professionals competent to assess the applicant's interest in pursuing a career in this field of study
- a statement of purpose indicating ability and interest in completing the degree program
- current résumé

Visit [www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/apply](http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/apply) for access to an online application, where to submit application documents and additional details. Applicants who wish to be considered for scholarships and graduate assistantships should have all application materials in by March 1. However, application deadlines are July 15 for the fall semester, October 15 for the spring semester and April 15 for the summer semester.

Career Options

The M.S. in dementia and aging studies program offers several potential career areas for our graduates:

- administrator of nursing homes, assisted living facilities, home health agencies, adult protection agencies
- researcher or administrator in nonprofit organizations related to the elderly
- researcher for agencies, pharmaceutical companies and dementia-related companies

Financial Assistance

Outstanding graduate students may be issued contracts to work as graduate instructional assistants in the department. Most assistantships require 20 hours of service per week.

For more information about scholarships, financial aid and application deadlines, visit The Graduate College website at [www.gradcollege.txstate.edu](http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu) and click on **Financing Your Graduate Education**. Please note that program admission priority deadlines must be met in order to be considered for scholarships, fellowships and assistantships.

Contact

Dr. Patti Giuffre
Graduate Advisor
E-mail: pg07@txstate.edu

Department of Sociology
Undergraduate Academic Center (UAC) 449
Texas State University
601 University Drive
San Marcos, TX 78666-4684
Phone: 512.245.2113
Fax: 512.245.8362
E-mail: sociograd@txstate.edu