

# Creating a Geriatric Presence at Your School

## Top 10 List

1. Keep talking up the Gero-Message.
  - People are living longer, older adults are fastest growing segment of the population
  - Older adults are health care's core business, utilizing majority of health care services
  - Older adults health issues of multiple syndromes and diseases, chronicity, complex health care plans are central to nursing's scope of practice
  - Every nurse cares for older adults
  - There is a body of best practice knowledge about the care of older adults
  - Schools must prepare students to care for the population they will meet
2. Use a "Geriatric Lens" for everything. Ask others to do the same.
  - Recruitment: web site pictures
  - Curriculum Content
  - Clinical Activities
  - Extra-curricular Activities
  - Research Projects
  - Committees
  - Awards
3. Create "Geriatric Teaching and Learning Moments"
  - All nursing topics can relate to geriatrics (when talking about IVs or catheters, talk about the consequences for children AND for older adults)
4. Encourage creative geriatric assignments for student self study.
  - Interviews of older adults
  - Web exploration
  - Journaling of experiences with older patients or older family members
  - Evaluate clinical settings from a geriatric perspective
  - Aging sensitivity exercises (foggy eyeglasses, gardening gloves, etc.)
5. Make resources readily available for faculty and students.
6. Encourage faculty and students to learn together about care of older adults.
  - Example: web sites, free learning opportunities, field trips
7. Make geriatrics a visible topic.
  - Example: brown bag lunches for faculty and students
8. Show colleagues and students that geriatric care is a personal and professional issue.
  - "I will be old when....." How can a nurse help.
9. Show that small changes in perspective can yield big results. You don't have to have a curriculum revolution to integrate geriatric content into curriculum.
10. Enlist some partners. Use your creativity.



**Be the Geriatric Banner Bearer. You are a GEM! (Geriatric Education Mentor)**