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### Renaissance

A biyearly publication

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ULM Gerontology  
Program  
(Louisiana's only Graduate  
Program in Gerontology)

Editor:  
Dr. Anita Sharrma,  
LCSW  
Program Director



## ULM Gerontology Program Ranked Among the Top TEN Gerontology Programs in the Nation

The ULM Gerontology Program was recently recognized for its excellence in curriculum and quality of instruction by four different national ranking bodies. The program is now ranked among the top TEN across the nation for 2020. Following are the rankings:

No. 6 – “10 Best Master’s Degrees in Gerontology in 2020,” [gradschoolhub.com](http://gradschoolhub.com)

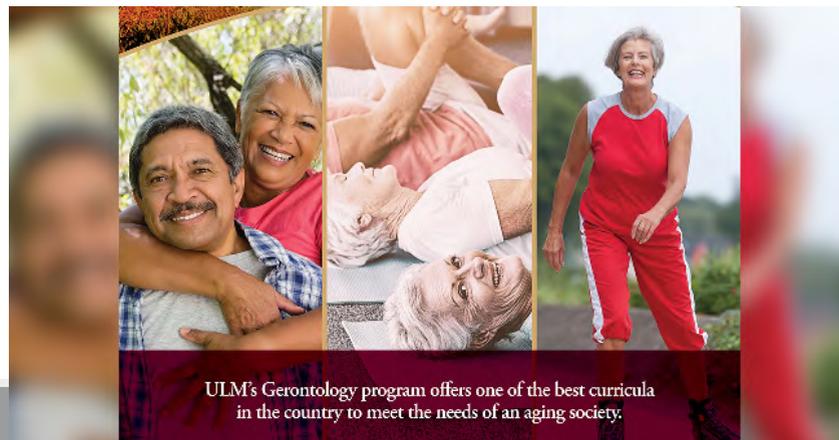
No. 7 – “10 Best Master’s in Gerontology Online 2020,” [collegerank.net](http://collegerank.net)

No. 9 – “The 10 Best Online Master’s in Gerontology Programs,” [thebestschools.org](http://thebestschools.org)

No. 9 – “Top 10 Online Masters in Gerontology,” [topmastersinhealthcare.com](http://topmastersinhealthcare.com)

ULM offers the only Master's program in Gerontology in Louisiana. Housed within the College of Business and Social Sciences, the program is fully online and offers a continuum of concentrations that cover a variety of workforce needs in Geriatrics and Gerontology. The program focuses on healthcare, business, and technology needs of the Gerontology industry. Following are the seven concentrations offered by the program:

Healthcare Management,  
Long-term Care  
Administration, Grief Care  
Management, Program  
Administration, Small  
Business Management, Mental  
Health, and Aging Studies.



ULM's Gerontology program offers one of the best curricula in the country to meet the needs of an aging society.



## Message From Dr. Ron Berry, Dean College of Business and Social Sciences



Welcome to the second edition of our ULM Gerontology Newsletter! Since our last edition, our Gerontology program was named one of the top 10 Gerontology programs in the country, enrollment continued to increase, and graduates found excellent employment opportunities in the field of Gerontology. Most recently, two of our graduates completed their degree with a concentration in long-term care administration and went to work as long-term care administrators immediately after graduation. In addition to our academic program and under Dr. Anita Sharma's

leadership, the ULM Gerontology program continues to grow and partner with our community organizations to deliver outstanding workshops and seminars. The seminars and workshops have brought governmental, non-profit, and individuals together to discuss issues related to geriatrics facing our communities. The changing demographics of our society will bring about great challenges and opportunities for all of us. To address these challenges and opportunities, our Gerontology program has developed a wide range of concentrations that will meet the workforce needs of the future related to our aging population.

In 1948 at the age of 42, Satchell Paige became the oldest man ever to debut in the major leagues. When asked about his age, he would reply "If someone asked you how old you were and you didn't know your age, how old would you think you were?" I think his answer was simply to say, we are as old as we think. While physical aging is unstoppable, our Gerontology program provides students and the community with a person-centered approach to supporting and maintaining physical, mental, and emotional health of the elderly. If you have a desire to help others and are looking for a rewarding career, check out our Gerontology program!

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## Upcoming Events

February 6, 2020 (Thursday)

### **Lasting Relationships: Stories of a Lifetime**

When: 12.00 to 2.00 pm  
Where: Student Union  
Building, Ballroom B

The event will consist of a panel of four speakers: Mrs. Linda Bruno, Ms. Lynda McGehee, Mr. Mark Henderson, and Mrs. Elizabeth Yielding who will share their inspiring life stories of long-lasting relationships.

Please bring your lunch.  
Dessert will be provided.  
Contact: Dr. Anita Sharma at  
asharma@ulm

March 5, 2020 (Thursday)

### **Celebrating Ageless SHEroes**

When: 12.00 to 2.00 pm  
Where: 7th Floor, ULM  
Library (The Terrace)

This is a luncheon event to commemorate Women's History Month. The purpose of this event is to honor women who did not allow their age to deter them from achieving their goals and creating a niche for themselves in the community. If you know of a SHEroe, please invite them to this event. RSVP is required. Please RSVP to Dr. Anita Sharma at asharma@ulm.edu. by 2/28/2020.

May, 2020 (TBA)

The month of May is commemorated as the Older Americans Month. The ULM Gerontology Program will be organizing a symposium on elder law in the first week of May. Please contact Dr. Anita Sharma at asharma@ulm.edu for more details.



***"I think the most remarkable thing about this program is how willing you are to work with us as students. You really worked with me to make my experience the best I could have and the most beneficial to me."***

***Victoria Hargrave, Fall 2019 Graduate***

## Career Focus: Hospice Care

Kim Rauen-Heidmann is a Registered Nurse working in a hospice unit at a SNF in northern Wisconsin. She also teaches in the nursing assistant program at Northcentral Technical College. Kim is currently enrolled in the Gerontology Graduate Program at ULM with Grief Care Management as her concentration. She hopes to initiate a grief support program for residents and staff in her nursing unit. The following article describes her work in the field of hospice.

*"My love of working with the elderly in the LTC setting naturally, for me, led to a move into the geriatric hospice field. Working with the aged population has taught me to appreciate life and become more mindful of myself as a person and nurse. Dr. Sharma is responsible for opening my eyes to the need for this with*

*caregivers, and the Gerontology program at ULM is providing me the knowledge to provide better care for my patients on so many levels.*

*As an RN, I create an individualized plan of care for my residents and treat and manage their care according to their goals. Each person is unique and has a particular outlook regarding their dying process. Knowing the biological and psychosocial elements of aging is necessary along with a solid foundation of pharmacology and mental health training for our nurses. The members of our team are comprised of a Hospice Medical Director, M.D., a Hospice Director, RN, hospice RN's and LPN's, Massage and Music Therapists, an Activity Director, and Hospice Volunteers. Each is an integral part of the team and makes providing a holistic plan of care possible.*

*In the hospice field, caregivers need to be aware that they will emotionally give considerably of themselves to their patients. The dying elderly need our compassion and friendship. It is okay to provide therapeutic touch, hold a hand, give a hug. Remember, we are with them to ease their journey and we must take our comfort cues from them. Don't be afraid to show tenderness when it is needed; you will know when the time is right. Hospice is a special field of practice, and, no, it isn't "hard" but it is fulfilling and beautiful!*



## Letter From the Editor Dr. Anita Sharma, LCSW

Dear Friends,

It is a pleasure to bring the second issue of Renaissance to you with news about the program as it continues to grow and become more successful. There has been a steady increase in enrollment since the last semester. In the last two years, the enrollment has increased by 450%. The program continues to carve its unique niche in North Louisiana by providing much needed practical education, research, and service.

In 2019, the ULM Gerontology Graduate program was ranked as one of the top 15 programs across the nation.

In 2020, the program has been ranked among the top TEN in the nation. The high national ranking of the program may be attributed to several factors: a more comprehensive and contemporary curriculum that focuses on the workforce needs of the Gerontology industry; enhanced partnerships between the program and the Gerontology industry; ability to recruit high quality students and faculty; provide continuing education and training to professionals and para-professionals currently working in the field; and provide relevant education and information to senior citizens through community

outreach programs, seminars, and workshops.

I want to invite you to become a part of this growth process by supporting the Gerontology program through your participation, contributions, and suggestions. If you have an expertise in a particular field of Gerontology/Geriatrics, please consider partnering with the program to offer a workshop or training. You can also participate by attending various events organized by the program or by providing work experience to our students. Your support of the program will allow it to become the best in the nation!

# Mission and Vision

The mission statement of the ULM Gerontology Program is "The ULM Gerontology Program prepares traditional and non-traditional students for successful careers in geriatric and gerontology industry, and addresses the needs of a rapidly aging population through a transformative education, applied research, and service."

The Vision Statement of the program is "The ULM Gerontology Program will be recognized as the hub for geriatric and gerontology education, research, industry development, and community outreach services in Louisiana and beyond."

**Program focus is: Healthcare, Business, and Technology**

ULM Gerontology Program

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Web:  
[www.ulm.edu/gerontology](http://www.ulm.edu/gerontology)

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Conference on Aging



Conf on Disability Advocacy



Conf on Disability Advocacy



Conference on Aging



Dental Hygiene Workshop



Dental Hygiene Workshop



Dental Hygiene Workshop

*The following students graduated in Fall 2019:*

Victoria Hargrave  
Maggie Holman  
Emma Weems

They are our success stories! If you are an alumnus, please help us update your contact information. We would also like to hear about your personal and professional updates and share it with others in this newsletter.

***By 2034, the U.S. Census Bureau projects that older adults will edge out children in population size. People age 65 and over are expected to number 77.0 million, while children under age 18 will number 76.5 million.***