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TOOLS FOR

ADVANCING AGE INCLUSIVITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

November 2021

TOOLS FOR ADVANCING AGE INCLUSIVITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The Gerontological Society of America (GSA) and its Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) designed this toolkit, with support from AARP, to provide resources to advance age inclusivity in institutions of higher education. The suite of tools can be used by faculty, students, administrators, and other campus leaders.

The options for advancing age inclusivity are endless, especially given that each institution has its own strengths and talents. These tools and other resources may be adapted to meet your institution's approach to making the case, building relationships, addressing ageism, crafting new efforts, and conducting assessments.

Advancing age inclusivity can occur at different levels and junctures within an institution—for example, a course or academic program, within a specific college, or across an entire campus. This toolkit can be used as a foundation for institutions looking to be more age inclusive in these ways as well as for those interested in becoming members of the **Age-Friendly University (AFU) Global Network**.

Help keep the GSA-AGHE AFU informed of your institutional efforts toward advancing age inclusivity by sending your suggestions and tools to:
ageinclusive@geron.org

This toolkit features the following sections:

- **Higher Education, Age Inclusivity, and the Age-Friendly University Movement**
- **Making the Case**
- **Where to Start**
- **Gaining Momentum**
- **Assessing and Tracking Success**
- **Frequently Asked Questions**
- **Case Studies**

HIGHER EDUCATION, AGE INCLUSIVITY, AND THE AGE-FRIENDLY UNIVERSITY MOVEMENT

Why Advance Age Inclusivity

Shifting age demographics are reshaping our social structures with far implications for higher education and age-diverse students with new educational needs. This extended longevity has also produced a rapidly growing “longevity economy” calling for a trained workforce to provide services to support the health and functioning of individuals as they age, as well as a broader industry sector to provide goods and experiences in technology, fitness, travel, entertainment, home design, and other spheres (see GSA’s report on **Longevity Economics**). Thus, aging populations are creating career opportunities for which higher education must prepare students as future practitioners and professionals.

What Age Inclusivity Means for Institutions of Higher Education

Aging populations mean more older learners are looking to higher education to meet their professional needs as they experience longer work lives (see AARP’s report on **The Future of Work@50+**). Similarly, many older adults plan to stay engaged in some form of learning for personal development—with campuses being an appealing educational destination (see the American Council on Education’s report on **Framing New Terrain: Older Adults and Higher Education**).

Continued engagement is of consequence for the positive psychological, physical, and social well-being of individuals and for the well-being of institutions. Moreover, programs for age-diverse learners can benefit institutions by helping to offset the consequences of the shrinking enrollment of younger learners. Preparing for greater age diversity is also important on broader societal levels, especially given that traditional-aged students are seldom exposed to aging in their curriculum and rarely interact with older individuals. Thus, more must be done to educate students about aging issues as they prepare to enter their adult personal and professional age-diverse worlds.

Ageist beliefs permeate society, with the neglect of age in academia and its historic age-segregated structure sustaining negative attitudes and unconscious age biases that impact individuals of all ages. There are many ways higher education can shape teaching and learning environments that disrupt ageist beliefs and biases in constructive ways and promote intergenerational solidarity.

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HIGHER EDUCATION, AGE INCLUSIVITY, AND THE AGE-FRIENDLY UNIVERSITY MOVEMENT

The Age-Friendly University (AFU) Initiative

One way to advance age inclusivity is to join the AFU Global Network. In 2016, AGHE responded to this call by endorsing the AFU initiative launched by Ireland's Dublin City University (DCU). The AFU initiative offers a set of 10 guiding principles for creating more age-inclusive campuses. The AFU initiative has grown steadily in a few short years to a global network of partner institutions.

Read more:

- **GSA-AGHE AFU:** www.geron.org/afu
- **DCU AFU:** www.dcu.ie/agefriendly/

Working Definitions: Age Friendly, Age Inclusive, and Age Diverse

Language around age matters, as we have learned from the **Reframing Aging** initiative, and using the right words can be a challenge as constructs evolve with the advance of pioneering efforts such as the AFU movement. In response to questions about the best way to define and communicate what it means to be age friendly, age inclusive, and age diverse, we offer these working definitions. With respect to higher education, we see being *age friendly* as reflecting the types of campus practices recommended by the AFU Principles, along with other actions that aim to make educational opportunities more accessible for aging populations. Being *age inclusive* moves beyond the mere presence of these practices and reflects how age-friendly efforts are valued, recognized, and integrated into the campus environment and mission of an institution. We use *age diverse* to reflect the broad age range of stakeholders that institutions may now serve in light of contemporary age demographics—which includes age-diverse older students, faculty, administrators, and staff.

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HIGHER EDUCATION, AGE INCLUSIVITY, AND THE AGE-FRIENDLY UNIVERSITY MOVEMENT

How Can I Get Involved?

Advancing age inclusivity in higher education needs many voices and many hands. GSA-AGHE offers a number of ways for faculty, administrators, and students to get involved in this exciting work, including designating **AGHE as your primary or secondary GSA member group, joining the AFU interest group of GSA Connect,** and volunteering to serve on a workgroup such as the AGHE Academic Program and Development Workgroup. Additionally, be sure you are subscribed to the GSA newsletter *Advancing Age Inclusivity in Higher Education* by emailing ageinclusive@geron.org, read about AFU efforts in *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, and attend sessions on age inclusivity in higher education at GSA Annual Scientific Meetings.

Frequently Asked Questions

The GSA-AGHE AFU Workgroup hosted a series of 1-hour virtual “campus conversation” sessions in 2021 featuring Workgroup members and invited campus representatives to talk with GSA-AGHE members and AFU partners about how we can put age-friendly principles into practice and advance age inclusivity on our campuses. The chat was active—with a variety of questions raised. Some of these questions are presented here along with responses that we hope offer practical and creative advice to enhance your thinking and efforts for advancing age inclusivity on your campus. For your convenience, the relevant frequently asked questions are integrated in each of the accordant sections (i.e., Making the Case, Where to Start, Gaining Momentum, and Assessing and Tracking Success) as well as provided collectively toward the back of this toolkit.

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HIGHER EDUCATION, AGE INCLUSIVITY, AND THE AGE-FRIENDLY UNIVERSITY MOVEMENT

RESOURCES TO EXPLORE

- **AGHE Biblio Brief: The Global Age-Friendly University (AFU) Initiative.** (2021). The Gerontological Society of America. A comprehensive bibliography of works that describe how different institutions are approaching their age-friendly vision, along with overviews of special topics and projects.
- **Becoming an Age-Friendly University (AFU) Global Network Partner.** (2020). The Gerontological Society of America. A brief overview of the AFU initiative and information about how to join the network.
- **Longevity Economics: Leveraging the Advantages of an Aging Society.** (2018). The Gerontological Society of America.
- **Making the Case for Age-Diverse Universities.** (2020). Morrow-Howell, N., Lawlor, E. F., Macias, E. S., Swinford, E., & Brandt, J. *The Gerontologist*, 60(7), 1187–1193. doi: 10.1093/geront/gnz181
- **What's Hot: Higher Education and Aging: The Age-Friendly Movement—Building a Case for Age Inclusivity.** (2019). The Gerontological Society of America.

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MAKING THE CASE

Overview

How can you build the case to become a more age-inclusive campus? Institutions differ in their needs, focus, and mission—all of which impact their readiness to mount programs and practices that serve age-diverse students and influence how the institution might approach joining the AFU Global Network.

In launching any campus initiative, a case must be made to inform the faculty and administration about a project's goals and its value. To establish the direction of an age-friendly initiative that works best for your institution, there are some overarching guidelines to consider, arenas for focusing your argument, brief tips to facilitate your efforts, practical tools for implementation, and resources to explore.

Overarching Guidelines

- Make your argument local by basing it directly on your institution's values, mission, and strategic plan.
- Document the age-inclusive activities that you are already doing right now, and indicate how they align with the AFU Principles.
- Clearly articulate the value proposition for expanding current efforts or initiating new projects.
- Identify and recruit your institution's current age-friendly champions.

Arenas for Focusing Arguments

- Establish recognition of the opportunities for external grants (e.g., public and private research funding) for issues focused on aging, older adults, and our aging society.
- Explain higher education's role in supporting longer educational lives as people live and work longer, return to work at all ages, seek encore careers, and look for enrichment and engagement throughout the life course.
- Illustrate the growing demand to educate students of all ages about issues of longer life, older adults, and our aging society through the gerontology/geriatrics curriculum as well as the need to increase students' competencies in multigenerational settings.
- Discuss the value of proactively responding to demographic shifts in higher education with reductions in the number of traditional-aged students and the need to serve an increasingly age-diverse student body, which may represent new revenue streams.

Brief Tips

- Directly link age-inclusive initiatives to your institution's strategic plan and mission.
- Connect student age diversity (or lack thereof) to broader campus efforts on increasing diversity and inclusion.
- Start with units, departments, and programs that already promote age-friendly efforts.
- Be specific about revenue-generating opportunities or the revenue-neutral aspects of being more age inclusive.

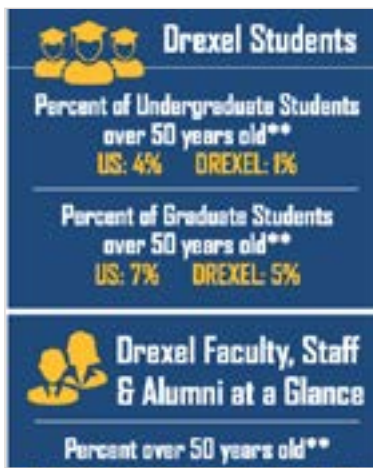
MAKING THE CASE

TOOLS TO CONSIDER

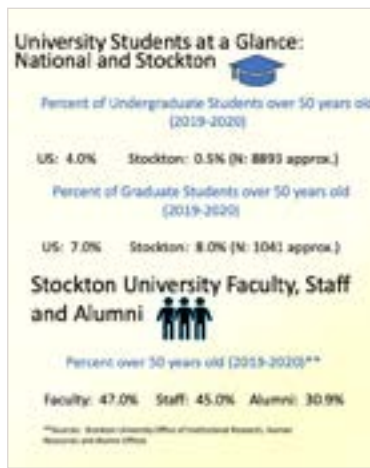
Infographics are effective formats for presenting information such as demographics and related institutional statistics, providing overviews of campus efforts, and illustrating opportunities to be more age inclusive. See some examples of dynamic infographics from these AFU partners:



Washington University in St. Louis



Drexel University



Stockton University

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MAKING THE CASE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the evidence that age inclusivity benefits higher education's faculty, students, administrators, and staff?

As a relatively new movement, the evidence base is emerging. For example, there are studies showing benefits from multigenerational workplaces and classrooms, intergenerational exchanges, and age-diverse organizations. This developing knowledge base is highly interdisciplinary, which is in line with the AFU initiative and efforts to advance age inclusivity. However, it may be most effective to recognize the evidence you have on your own campus such as the success of intergenerational interactions in classrooms or your students' volunteer program with older adults. You do not need to have a gerontology program to document local campus successes. Researchers are looking at the return on investment for age-friendly, age-inclusive efforts across many sectors. Read more about these benefits in [Why Age-Friendly Health Care Makes Good Business Sense](#) and [The Diversity Employers Need to Remember: Age Diversity](#). GSA also offers these resources: [What's Hot: Higher Education and Aging: The Age-Friendly Movement—Building a Case for Age Inclusivity](#) and [Longevity Economics: Leveraging the Advantages of an Aging Society](#).

How can we get administrators to see the need for age inclusivity and the value of the age-friendly principles?

One suggestion is to find colleagues at your institution who are supportive of advancing inclusivity on your campus. As a group, organize an approach to catalog what your institution is already doing across programs, departments, facilities, research, etc. You'll be surprised! Prepare talking points and one-page overviews or infographics (with information about national and local aging populations as well as campus age demographics) to introduce the issues and their relevance. Arrange to meet with your administrators with this information in hand and review your strengths as a foundation for new opportunities. Given the current priority of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts across most campuses, it may be helpful to position *age* as an important diversity feature. Be persistent and patient—recognizing that new approaches take time to develop and change is a gradual process.

MAKING THE CASE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How does being age inclusive connect with an institution's designations, accreditations, and rankings in higher education?

Becoming an AFU global partner differentiates your campus as a leader adapting to rapidly changing societal demographics. Your AFU affiliation and associated activities provide evidence needed to fulfill multiple criteria from higher education accreditation bodies (e.g., Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, New England Association of Schools and Colleges). As part of your age-inclusive efforts, consider seeking AGHE's **Program of Merit (POM)** designation that gives gerontology and health professions programs an AGHE "stamp of excellence" that you can use to verify program quality, lobby within your institution for additional resources to maintain program quality, market your program, and recruit prospective students. POM designation is a great stepping stone for being awarded accreditation by the **Accreditation for Gerontology Education Council**. Being an AFU partner also aligns with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals** and **military-friendly efforts**, which can play into campus rankings. All of your unique activities in this age-inclusive space will help you positively differentiate and promote the standing of your campus.

How does the AFU initiative connect to efforts such as the Age-Friendly Cities/Communities, Age-Friendly Health Systems, Age-Friendly Businesses, and Age-Friendly Employer initiatives?

The AFU initiative is part of the rapidly emerging Age-Friendly Ecosystem movement (see **Moving Toward a Global Age-Friendly Ecosystem**). While these efforts arose independently, there is a natural synergy among them that is ripe for development depending on your campus strengths and priorities. Read about how some AFUs are collaborating on education modules for local health care systems seeking designation as an Age-Friendly Health System in the **GSA newsletter *Advancing Age Inclusivity in Higher Education***.

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MAKING THE CASE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How can my campus age-inclusive efforts adapt to changes in administration or unexpected competing institutional demands such as the recent pandemic?

Campus change is constant and you likely have already developed successful approaches to this issue in your other roles. Use your proven strategies! For instance, one institution's AFU implementation plan involved seeking approval from its five shared-governance senates. Although time consuming, it provided crucial campus buy-in that extended beyond the sign-off by a single campus administrator. Plan to report back to each stakeholder group to keep everyone engaged. The more that age-inclusive efforts are built into existing campus programs, strategic plans, and mission statements, the better for sustainability and ongoing institutional support. For example, designing and introducing a module on ageism (or incorporating a program such as GSA-AGHE's **Ageism First Aid**) into your institution's educational activities through the diversity office may ensure its continued use and uptake by the campus community. Be ready to welcome new administrators with an informational note describing your work and ideas you have about collaborative efforts.

RESOURCES TO EXPLORE

- **GSA Webinar: Becoming an Age-Friendly University Partner.**
(2019). GSA-AGHE AFU. Learn how an age-friendly campus benefits multiple stakeholders, along with information about joining the AFU Global Network and carrying out the AFU Principles. Presenters: Joann M. Montepare and Kimberly S. Farah, Lasell College.
- **Introduction to the Special Issue—Age-Friendly Universities (AFU): Principles, practices, and opportunities.**
(2019). Montepare, J. M. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 40(2), 139–141.
doi: 10.1080/02701960.2019.1591848
- **Making the case for age-diverse universities.**
(2020). Morrow-Howell, N., Lawlor, E., Macias, E., Swinford, E., & Brandt, J. *The Gerontologist*, 60(7), 1187–1193. doi: 10.1093/geront/gnz181
- **New Normal for Higher Education: Understanding and Embracing an Aging Society.**
Hear leaders in higher education and the aging field at this Drexel University workshop offer examples of how to include age diversity in thinking about institutional inclusion efforts—and transform the “demographic cliff” into a “demographic lift.”

WHERE TO START

Overview

Determining where to start with advancing age inclusivity will depend on your institution's unique characteristics, the existing student population, current programs and practices, and the surrounding community. Some elements to consider at this stage are coalition building, identifying strengths and gaps, and reframing aging.

Engaging colleagues across disciplines and involving units across the institution are elements to consider in mounting an age-inclusive initiative and moving toward an AFU vision around the **10 AFU Principles**. A good place to start is to explore how you can build connections and leverage existing initiatives on your campus by connecting your age-friendly organizing to institutional strategic planning, accessibility initiatives, research programs, and community connections along with ensuring that age is acknowledged in your institution's diversity statement and inclusion efforts.

Each institution will naturally take a different approach that will unfold over time. As such, focusing on select principles is a prudent place to start—and identifying your institution's existing strengths and gaps will inform this focus. Tools are provided to help you assess and track your success.

Because ageism can act as an explicit and implicit hindrance on many fronts, efforts devoted to addressing ageism should be included in your plans to advance age inclusivity. GSA's **Reframing Aging Initiative** and **Ageism First Aid** online multi-module course and AARP's **Disrupt Aging** campaign can assist.

TOOLS TO CONSIDER

- **Advancing Age Inclusivity on Your Campus: Where to Start**
- **Aligning With Your Institution's Strategic Planning: An Example From AFU Partner Ithaca College**
- **Crafting Your Press Release**

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WHERE TO START

TOOLS TO ADDRESS AGEISM

- GSA Reframing Aging Initiative
- GSA-AGHE Ageism First Aid
- AARP Disrupt Aging Classroom
- AGHE Biblio Brief: Ageism–Practice and Measurement

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who should be invited to the table when assembling a team to explore joining the AFU Global Network?

On many campuses, AFU efforts are being spearheaded by faculty in gerontology or related programs. In these cases, AFU partners suggested being sure to invite individuals in other programs who are working on aging-related issues from different perspectives. Great work is so often being done in silos across our campuses and the AFU initiative offers an opportunity to bring these efforts together. Connecting with individuals in programs that take a campus-wide and community-focused lens—such as colleagues from graduate and professional studies or service-learning programs—is also a useful strategy. And of course, connecting with individuals interested in strengthening your campus diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts should part of the plan.

If you don't have a Center on Aging or a Gerontology Program, how can AFU have a home on your campus?

Many different organizational structures could work to advance age-inclusive initiatives on a campus that culminate in endorsing the AFU Principles and joining the network. The key is to have champions such as faculty members with expertise in the aging field. Keep in mind that champions can come from academic as well as nonacademic units such as staff from professional studies, human resources, career services, and other offices. Bringing champions together to form an AFU workgroup will be your first step in developing an infrastructure to lead your efforts. As your efforts *and vision* develop, you can explore further options to house your initiative by working with your administration.

WHERE TO START

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Does an institution need to fulfill all of the AFU Principles to be an age-inclusive campus?

There are many avenues that could be pursued through academic efforts (e.g., research, teaching, lifelong learning) as well as nonacademic activities (e.g., wellness programming, arts and cultural activities) to enable age-diverse older individuals to be welcomed and engaged on a campus. An institution does not need to fulfill all of the AFU Principles to formally join the AFU Global Network. What is important is a commitment to exploring how your institution can best determine how it can realize specific AFU Principles given its strategic priorities and current academic offerings. In this way, AFU partners often describe the AFU Principles as aspirational. Any way you do it, seeking to be more age inclusive is a worthy endeavor.

How can we think beyond the lifelong learning programs as the sole or main benchmark for being an age-inclusive campus?

Being age friendly means that your institution is open to considering how advancing age inclusivity can reach across a campus and connect with the community. In this way, being age friendly is more than having a lifelong learning program. However, such programs can serve as a key resource in exploring ways to be more age inclusive through class and program partnerships. Furthermore, while lifelong learning programs are wonderful for directly reaching older community members, there are many other ways to enable interactions with community members outside these programs as well as with age-diverse students, faculty, administrators, and staff on your campus in non-age-segregated activities. It is also important to note that beyond engaging older students, being age inclusive means enabling younger students to learn about aging and what it means to value older people in society (**AFU Principle 7: To increase the understanding of students of the longevity dividend and the increasing complexity and richness that aging brings to our society**).

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WHERE TO START

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How can we raise awareness about ageism and take advantage of the tools offered by GSA-AGHE and other organizations?

Consider bringing speakers to campus for campus-wide events or co-organizing events with an intersectional focus (e.g., Women's History Month, Black History Month). Suggest GSA-AGHE's **Ageism First Aid** online course, AARP's **Disrupt Aging Classroom**, and the **Reframing Aging** initiative to colleagues in various areas of study (e.g., psychology, sociology, health sciences, education) and institutional units (e.g., information technology, career services, human resources). Offer to speak to classes and student organizations about shifting age demographics and ageism; and encourage administrators to include training for personnel committees on ageism and age bias in hiring, merit, tenure, and promotion reviews.

RESOURCES TO EXPLORE

- **Age-Friendly Universities (AFU): Possibilities and power in campus connections.** (2020). Montepare, J. M., Farah, K. S., Bloom, S. F., & Tauriac, S. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 41(3), 273–280. doi: 10.1080/02701960.2020.1726744
- **Becoming and being an Age-Friendly University (AFU): Strategic considerations and practical implications.** (2019). Clark, P. G., & Leedahl, S. N. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 40(2), 166–178. doi: 10.1080/02701960.2019.1579714
- **Charting a future for Canada's first Age-Friendly University (AFU).** (2019). Chesser, S., & Porter, M. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 40(2), 153–165. doi: 10.1080/02701960.2019.1579716
- **Coalition building to create an Age-Friendly University (AFU).** (2019). Andreoletti, C., & June, A. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 40(20), 142–152. doi: 10.1080/02701960.2019.1572008

GAINING MOMENTUM

Overview

Perhaps you have already experienced some success with age-inclusive initiatives on your campus. You may have a strong gerontology program, a center on aging, or a robust lifelong learning program. Since the goal of the age-friendly movement is to advance age inclusivity beyond these existing efforts, what additional steps can you take at your institution to gain momentum and ensure that your initiatives are interconnected more broadly on your campus?

Building connections across disciplines and units on your campus along with fostering connections with people and organizations in the greater community are essential. Engaging students and providing faculty with resources to integrate age inclusivity into their work—whether it is teaching, research, or community engagement—are also key to being more age inclusive.

To these ends, learning groups, collaborative community events, intergenerational exchange, and other efforts can go a long way in building momentum.

TOOLS TO CONSIDER

- **10 Ideas for Gaining Momentum**
- **Start an AFU Learning Community**
- **A Hands-On Approach to Teaching About Aging.**
(2018). Baker, H. E., Kruger, T. M., & Karasik, R. J. (Eds.)

GAINING MOMENTUM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How can we involve colleagues in age-inclusivity efforts and sustain their engagement?

Engaging colleagues calls for a variety of strategies. A key tactic should be informing and educating your campus community about the AFU movement and age-inclusive initiatives on your campus. Raise this awareness by creating a webpage, using social media (e.g., AFU partner **University of Southern California's video**), and contributing to campus newsletters to share information and resources, celebrate ventures, and get others thinking about how their teaching, research, and community activities can be more age inclusive. Hosting conversations or events, such as workshops, also offer great opportunities to inform your campus community about being age inclusive. Read the **Case Study** in this toolkit about how the AFU partner University of Nebraska at Omaha engaged its community in an AFU workshop: *Imagining an Age-Friendly University of Nebraska at Omaha: Content, Colleagues, and Conversation*. Other strategies include making personal appeals, providing incentives such as stipends or course releases, and recognizing individuals for their contributions. Whatever strategy you use, it is important to keep in mind that the AFU Principles are aspirational and many of our age-inclusive campus initiatives are works in progress, which naturally will begin with small steps, working person to person, program to program.

How can we build support for advancing age inclusivity and AFU efforts with no designated infrastructure (or staff or funding) at one's institution?

Mounting age-inclusive efforts from scratch is a real challenge. However, some have found that thinking about how to build campus connections offers a starting place. Begin with identifying an AFU champion (or champions) and convening a team of interested colleagues (and even students) to explore issues and opportunities. Consider including representatives from offices and programs that have a campus-wide lens and may be open to being more age inclusive in their efforts (e.g., diversity and inclusion councils, community engagement offices, professional studies programs). Developing capacity to support AFU and related age-inclusivity efforts may be a particular challenge for smaller institutions or those with no gerontology programs, however creative strategies are possible. For an example, read the **Case Study** *Age-Friendly Faculty Affiliate Fellow Program* about how AFU partner Eastern Michigan University attempted to build capacity and competence of faculty and instructional staff in the area of aging. **Age-Friendly Universities (AFU): Possibilities and Power in Campus Connections** offers an insightful look at how building connections, coalitions, and partnerships are essential for achieving and sustaining an institution's age-friendly vision.

GAINING MOMENTUM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How can we make more age-inclusive connections with programs such as Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes (OLLI)?

If you have an OLLI or another lifelong learning program on your campus, invite representatives from the program to be part of your team to explore ways to advance age inclusivity through new approaches to age-friendly curricular programs and practices. These connections offer opportunities to create more educational options for older learners as well as opportunities for intergenerational exchange. Aim for practical strategies such as inviting students to attend particular classes or participate in select class activities, but don't miss the potential to be creative and explore new learning ventures. For example, consider hosting a Human Library event where OLLI members are the books and the stories are their lives. Younger student readers are invited to browse the catalog and check out a "human book" for a 30-minute one-on-one conversation, during which they can learn and ask questions. The program advances age inclusivity by providing an opportunity for readers to challenge biases and interact with individuals with age-diverse experiences and expertise.

What are some strategies and resources for designing intergenerational class activities that engage older adults from the local community?

Older adults from the community may participate in classes in a variety of ways; for example, they can be invited as experts talking about their professional experience or personal accomplishments, or as participants in activities around specific course content. See the [AGHE Biblio Brief: Intergenerational Teaching and Learning](#) for examples of how instructors have incorporated intergenerational activities in their classes and the [AGHE Teaching Brief: Using Intergenerational Exchange in the Classroom to Advance Age Inclusivity](#) for suggestions about teaching and learning formats that lend themselves to intergenerational exchange. Note that intergenerational interaction is also possible beyond the classroom. For example, book clubs with your college or local library, or service projects and intergenerational events (such as film screenings or speaker series) with student organizations, are great ways to bring older adults to campus. These activities can also be set up with your class to participate off campus at a local senior center or residential place. Further reading on creating effective and meaningful intergenerational settings appears in [Intergenerational Contact Zones: Place-Based Strategies for Promoting Social Inclusion and Belonging](#) (pp. 137-145).

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How can we expose students outside the typical aging-focused courses to aging issues?

There are many ways to introduce and integrate aging content across the curriculum. For example, marketing students could create a campaign for a local organization serving older adults, or engineering students could design a product to solve a challenge facing older adults in the community (such as the **Engineering for Humanity** course at Olin College of Engineering). Gerontology students could partner with business students for an elevator pitch competition focused on products and services for the silver economy. Students in art classes can engage in a variety of co-creating activities with older community members. You can also co-sponsor events with student organizations on campus that intersect with aging (e.g., Criminology Club and Gerontology Club host AARP Fraud Watch event; Exercise Science Club and Gerontology Club host a screening of the documentary **Age of Champions**). Encourage colleagues without expertise in aging to consider bringing AARP into the classroom to teach a unit on aging. AARP's **Disrupt Aging Classroom** was designed to challenge common misperceptions and beliefs about aging and get students from *all majors* to consider the personal and professional implications of the longevity dividend and our changing demographics. Always consider including health professions programs on your campus as all graduates will surely be working with older adults.

How can we engage retired and emeriti faculty in our age-inclusive efforts?

Some institutions host formal programs such as retired faculty associations that provide opportunities for faculty to keep abreast of campus initiatives and participate in campus activities. If your campus has an organization, offer to give a talk about advancing age inclusivity and the AFU movement. Even without a formal association, retired and emeriti faculty can be invited to be guest speakers in classes, attend campus events, join lifelong learning programs, and participate in other educational, wellness, cultural, and research activities as advocated by the AFU Principles. Some institutions have developed programs that engage emeriti faculty in teaching and learning activities such as the Emeriti Academy mentoring program at the University of California, Berkeley. Read more about their program in this **Case Study**. If your campus does not have specific practices in place to engage faculty, bring together a group of retired and emeriti faculty to discuss their interests and needs, or distribute a survey to gather their input and recommendations for engaging with the university.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How can we make classes more accessible to older learners, including through state programs that allow older adults to audit courses at local colleges and universities?

Most (if not all) state colleges and universities offer discounts or tuition remission to older adults in their states. For example, in Connecticut, residents aged 62 years and older can take classes and even earn degrees tuition free. Older residents can also audit classes as nonmatriculated students assuming there is room in the class. The age of eligibility and rules vary by state so be sure to see what your state offers. People are often unaware of these benefits—one way to increase age diversity in the classroom is for institutions to get the word out. Advertising under-enrolled classes to older learners can help classes run and create a richer experience for all. Some universities are exploring inviting older learners to join in study abroad programs to boost enrollment and add an intergenerational component to travel abroad; for more on this topic, see [Exploring Intergenerational Study Abroad to Promote Age-Friendly Universities](#).

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RESOURCES TO EXPLORE

- **AGHE Biblio Brief: Intergenerational Teaching and Learning.** (2021). Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education. Washington, DC: The Gerontological Society of America.
- **AGHE Teaching Brief: Using Intergenerational Exchange in the Classroom to Advance Age Inclusivity.** (2021). Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education. Washington, DC: The Gerontological Society of America.
- **An Age-Friendly University (AFU) assists with technology learning and social engagement among older adults and individuals with developmental disabilities.** (2019). Stanley, J. T., Morrison, L. B., Webster, B. A., Turner, J. R., & Richards, C. J. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 40(2), 261–275. doi: 10.1080/02701960.2019.1572009
- **Becoming an Age-Friendly University (AFU): Integrating a retirement community on campus.** (2019). Montepare, J. M., Farah, K. S., Doyle, A., & Dixon, J. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 40(2), 179–193. doi: 10.1080/02701960.2019.1586682
- **The benefits of intergenerational learning in higher education: Lessons learned from two Age Friendly University programs.** (2017). Pstross, M., Corrigan, T., Knopf, R. C., Sung, H., Talmage, C. A., Conroy, C., & Fowley, C. *Innovative Higher Education*, 42, 157–171. doi: 10.1007/s10755-016-9371-x
- **Creating an intergenerational university hub: Engaging older and younger users in the shaping of space and place.** (2019). Vrkljan, B., Whalen, A., Kajaks, T., Nadarajah, S., White, P. J., Harrington, L., & Raina, P. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 40(2), 244–260. doi: 10.1080/02701960.2019.1572010
- **Exploring intergenerational study abroad to promote Age-Friendly Universities (AFU).** (2019). Naar, J. J. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 40(3), 277–289. doi: 10.1080/02701960.2019.1572007
- **GSA Webinar: One Vision, Many Paths: Making an Age-Friendly University Work for You.** (2019). GSA-AGHE AFU. Learn how institutions can begin to develop their own vision for age inclusivity. Presenters: Carrie Andreoletti and Andrea June, Central Connecticut State University.
- **Students' dementia experience, knowledge, and concern: An opportunity for Age-Friendly University (AFU) programming.** (2020). Montepare, J. M., & Pandolfi, G. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1080/02701960.2020.1793139

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ASSESSING AND TRACKING SUCCESS

Overview

Assessment is an important component of advancing age inclusivity on your campus, and the **AFU Principles** are a useful guiding framework. This helps move the campus from making a commitment to endorse the principles to actually taking stock of current campus practices and movement toward achieving the vision of an age-friendly institution of higher education.

To establish a baseline of campus practices, assessment can be done before or after an institution joins the AFU Global Network. Evaluation also follows periodically to assess how well a campus is adhering to the AFU Principles once measurable goals are established and priorities are integrated within an institution's strategic plan. Moreover, assessment is an opportunity to engage intergenerational and cross-campus collaborations in addition to providing research projects for students. Each tool presented in this section provides an overview and materials to inform your assessment.

Mapping the Guiding Principles

In 2017, the University of New England (UNE) joined the AFU Global Network. Faculty across five UNE colleges expressed an interest in the field of aging and convened a workgroup. They were instrumental in establishing education and research on aging as a priority in eight of the UNE health professions programs—a priority now emerging in other health professions programs. To begin this work, the UNE workgroup used the strategy of **“mapping the guiding AFU Principles”** as the foundation to evaluate age-friendliness on its U.S. campuses. This broad-brushstroke approach aids in identifying where AFU Principles are in motion on campus in various programs—and where gaps and opportunities exist.

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Conducting a Campus Audit

The University of Massachusetts Boston joined the AFU Global Network in 2017. To demonstrate what it means to be an AFU, a research workgroup of 12 volunteers from departments and constituencies across campus was convened in 2018 to operationalize the AFU Principles with the goal of designing and piloting an **audit tool**. Nineteen campus leaders were interviewed representing a wide range of campus life, including administration, career counseling, advising, communications, student life, campus services, distance education, and health and wellness services. Major themes relating to educational programming, accessibility, and inclusivity emerged. The importance of conducting the audit was evident in the opportunities it presented to increase awareness among diverse stakeholders who comprise a campus community about making the vision of age friendliness a reality. This audit served as the basis for the AFU Inventory and Campus Climate Survey (described on page 24).

- **Developing an Age-Friendly University audit: A pilot study.** (2019). Silverstein, N. M., Hendricksen, M., Bowen, L. M., Fonte Weaver, A.J., & Whitbourne, S. K. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 40(2), 203–220. doi: 10.1080/02701960.2019.1572006

Doing a Photovoice Evaluation

The AFU Steering Committee at the University of Manitoba used a photovoice project to assess aspects of age friendliness on its campus after joining the AFU Global Network in 2016. Starting not long after its initial meetings, the committee designed the project to become informed about aspects of campus age friendliness and make initial recommendations for change. The photovoice assessment method can be used with many groups—students in a class, older adult learners, or other age-friendly stakeholders. **Sample instructions** for taking photos as well as the resources to share with participants to guide their picture taking of age-friendly barriers and supports are provided. There is also a two-page document for use as a **group-based classroom activity** with instructions and a place for students to record their photovoice observations.

- **Exploring university age-friendliness using collaborative citizen science.** (2020). Chesser, S. A., Porter, M. M., Barclay, R., Menec, V. H., Ripat, J., Sibley, K. M., Sylvestre, G. M., & Webber, S. C. *The Gerontologist*, 60(8), 1527–1537. doi: 10.1093/geront/gnaa026

ASSESSING AND TRACKING SUCCESS

Holding Listening Tours

Faculty at Central Connecticut State University, which became an AFU partner in 2017, gathered information about their institution's strengths, gaps, and opportunities by conducting a listening tour inspired by the strategy communities have used to evaluate their age-friendly needs. See their [Listening Tour Tip Sheet](#) for planning your protocol, along with a sample [overview](#) and [survey](#) given to individuals on their tour, and a [message](#) to department chairs. In addition to being a great way to raise awareness about age inclusivity, listening tours offer opportunities to explore issues in more detail through interpersonal exchange.

The [Community Listening Session Tool Kit](#), which is Book 2 in the *AARP Roadmap to Livability Collection*, offers a step-by-step guide on establishing a timeline, supply list, flip charts, agenda, schedule, script, and evaluation form for listening tours that can be easily adapted to explore what age inclusivity means on your campus.

The AFU Inventory and Campus Climate Survey

Building on the campus audit approach described on the previous page (Silverstein et al., 2019), the AFU Inventory and Campus Climate Survey (ICCS) is an assessment instrument currently in development; the ICCS is based on the premise that it is necessary to document both actual and perceived age friendliness at an institution along with its age-friendly campus climate. The ICCS will include an inventory of actual practices across campus units, a reporting tool designed to provide factual data on age-friendly campus practice. The climate survey will measure how faculty, students, and staff perceive these practices, along with assessing their beliefs about aging and older people. The ICCS was recently tested in a study of age friendliness at more than 30 campuses across the United States, many of which are AFU partners, in a research project supported by the RRF Foundation for Aging. Questions about the ICCS may be directed to: Umass.afustudy@umb.edu

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the best strategy to use to begin to explore age inclusivity on your campus?

We believe there are *no wrong doors*—any way you can get the conversation going is a good strategy for initiating efforts toward age inclusivity. Whether through a focus group, a survey, a guided walk across campus, a forum, or an informal lunch-and-learn session, you can gain important insights to begin your exploration. You want to reach people where they are—physically and psychologically—to be able to make the case for why everyone should be interested in advancing age inclusivity. Be sure to keep records of these events, noting who the organizers were, what programs and departments were involved, what the activity entailed, who and how many attended, and what was learned—and annotate with comments on what to keep or change for future activities. Have a repository (such as SharePoint or Google Docs) of these records to share with administrators and colleagues

How can you gather a clear understanding and tracking of all age-inclusive initiatives going on across a large university campus or system of multiple campuses?

You first need to define what you consider an age-inclusive initiative, and then understand who comprises your constituent groups. We encourage starting with learning how many older students, faculty, administrators, and staff there are on your campus. These data should be available through the offices of the registrar and human resources. Then, if possible, add lifelong learners, alumni, and retirees to your review of campus demographics. With these data in hand, you can begin to examine age-friendly practices, programs, and partnerships at your institution using one or a combination of methods (e.g., mapping the AFU Principles, conducting a listening tour, mounting a photovoice project) described in this toolkit. We also advise building in subsequent plans for assessment (e.g., every 5 years) to track your progress. For a more comprehensive assessment of campus practices and perceptions, see [Assessing Age Inclusivity in Higher Education: Introducing the Age-Friendly Inventory and Campus Climate Survey](#).

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ASSESSING AND TRACKING SUCCESS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What information about being an AFU institution or being age inclusive is good to feature on an institution's website?

If you are a member of the AFU Global Network, display the **AFU logo (which may be obtained from Dublin City University)**, a description of the AFU initiative, and an overview of the **10 AFU Principles**. There are a variety of other types of information you can feature depending on what you wish to highlight about your institution and its vision for being age inclusive. For example, you might display an infographic describing the age demographics of your institution or national population demographics to make the case. Links to educational, research, wellness, and cultural programs with an age-related focus are also useful to showcase your age-friendly assets. Additionally, information and resources for new and returning older students would surely be welcomed. Making these features more personal with images and quotations is also advised. And of course, be sure to include a contact name and email link for anyone who wants to learn more about age-inclusive practices on your campus. For examples of webpages of AFU partners, see:

- [Colorado State University](#)
- [Drexel University](#)
- [McMaster University](#)
- [Purdue University](#)
- [Stockton University](#)
- [University of Manitoba](#)
- [University of Maryland Baltimore](#)
- [University of Minnesota](#)
- [University of Southern California](#)
- [Washington University in St. Louis](#)

RESOURCE TO EXPLORE

- **Webinar: A Starting Point for Looking at Age-Friendliness on My Campus: AGHE Can Help.** (2019). GSA-AGHE AFU. Learn about data-gathering approaches to explore your institution's age-friendly assets, gaps, and opportunities, along with how AGHE can be an AFU resource for you and your institution. Presenters: Nina M. Silverstein, University of Massachusetts Boston; and Marilyn Gugliucci, University of New England.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The GSA-AGHE AFU Workgroup hosted a series of 1-hour virtual “campus conversation” sessions in 2021 featuring Workgroup members and invited campus representatives to talk with GSA-AGHE members and AFU partners about how we can put age-friendly principles into practice and advance age inclusivity on our campuses. The chat was active—with a variety of questions raised. Some of these questions are presented here along with responses that we hope offer practical and creative advice to enhance your thinking and efforts for advancing age inclusivity on your campus.

Working Definitions: Age Friendly, Age Inclusive, and Age Diverse

Language around age matters, as we have learned from the **Reframing Aging** initiative, and using the right words can be a challenge as constructs evolve with the advance of pioneering efforts such as the AFU movement. In response to questions about the best way to define and communicate what it means to be age friendly, age inclusive, and age diverse, we offer these working definitions. With respect to higher education, we see being *age friendly* as reflecting the types of campus practices recommended by the AFU Principles, along with other actions that aim to make educational opportunities more accessible for aging populations. Being *age inclusive* moves beyond the mere presence of these practices and reflects how age-friendly efforts are valued, recognized, and integrated into the campus environment and mission of an institution. We use *age diverse* to reflect the broad age range of stakeholders that institutions may now serve in light of contemporary age demographics—which includes age-diverse older students, faculty, administrators, and staff.

How Can I Get Involved?

Advancing age inclusivity in higher education needs many voices and many hands. GSA-AGHE offers a number of ways for faculty, administrators, and students to get involved in this exciting work, including designating **AGHE as your primary or secondary GSA member group, joining the AFU interest group of GSA Connect**, and volunteering to serve on a workgroup such as the AGHE Academic Program and Development Workgroup. Additionally, be sure you are subscribed to the GSA newsletter **Advancing Age Inclusivity in Higher Education** by emailing ageinclusive@geron.org, read about AFU efforts in **Gerontology & Geriatrics Education**, and attend sessions on age inclusivity in higher education at GSA Annual Scientific Meetings.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

MAKING THE CASE

What is the evidence that age inclusivity benefits higher education's faculty, students, administrators, and staff?

As a relatively new movement, the evidence base is emerging. For example, there are studies showing benefits from multigenerational workplaces and classrooms, intergenerational exchanges, and age-diverse organizations. This developing knowledge base is highly interdisciplinary, which is in line with the AFU initiative and efforts to advance age inclusivity. However, it may be most effective to recognize the evidence you have on your own campus such as the success of intergenerational interactions in classrooms or your students' volunteer program with older adults. You do not need to have a gerontology program to document local campus successes. Researchers are looking at the return on investment for age-friendly, age-inclusive efforts across many sectors. Read more about these benefits in [Why Age-Friendly Health Care Makes Good Business Sense](#) and [The Diversity Employers Need to Remember: Age Diversity](#). GSA also offers these resources: [What's Hot: Higher Education and Aging: The Age-Friendly Movement—Building a Case for Age Inclusivity](#) and [Longevity Economics: Leveraging the Advantages of an Aging Society](#).

How can we get administrators to see the need for age inclusivity and the value of the age-friendly principles?

One suggestion is to find colleagues at your institution who are supportive of advancing inclusivity on your campus. As a group, organize an approach to catalog what your institution is already doing across programs, departments, facilities, research, etc. You'll be surprised! Prepare talking points and one-page overviews or infographics (with information about national and local aging populations as well as campus age demographics) to introduce the issues and their relevance. Arrange to meet with your administrators with this information in hand and review your strengths as a foundation for new opportunities. Given the current priority of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts across most campuses, it may be helpful to position *age* as an important diversity feature. Be persistent and patient—recognizing that new approaches take time to develop and change is a gradual process.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

MAKING THE CASE

How does being age inclusive connect with an institution's designations, accreditations, and rankings in higher education?

Becoming an AFU global partner differentiates your campus as a leader adapting to rapidly changing societal demographics. Your AFU affiliation and associated activities provide evidence needed to fulfill multiple criteria from higher education accreditation bodies (e.g., Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, New England Association of Schools and Colleges). As part of your age-inclusive efforts, consider seeking AGHE's **Program of Merit (POM)** designation that gives gerontology and health professions programs an AGHE "stamp of excellence" that you can use to verify program quality, lobby within your institution for additional resources to maintain program quality, market your program, and recruit prospective students. POM designation is a great stepping stone for being awarded accreditation by the **Accreditation for Gerontology Education Council**. Being an AFU partner also aligns with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals** and **military-friendly efforts**, which can play into campus rankings. All of your unique activities in this age-inclusive space will help you positively differentiate and promote the standing of your campus.

How does the AFU initiative connect to efforts such as the Age-Friendly Cities/Communities, Age-Friendly Health Systems, Age-Friendly Businesses, and Age-Friendly Employer initiatives?

The AFU initiative is part of the rapidly emerging Age-Friendly Ecosystem movement (see **Moving Toward a Global Age-Friendly Ecosystem**). While these efforts arose independently, there is a natural synergy among them that is ripe for development depending on your campus strengths and priorities. Read about how some AFUs are collaborating on education modules for local health care systems seeking designation as an Age-Friendly Health System in the **GSA newsletter *Advancing Age Inclusivity in Higher Education***.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

MAKING THE CASE

How can my campus age-inclusive efforts adapt to changes in administration or unexpected competing institutional demands such as the recent pandemic?

Campus change is constant and you likely have already developed successful approaches to this issue in your other roles. Use your proven strategies! For instance, one institution's AFU implementation plan involved seeking approval from its five shared-governance senates. Although time consuming, it provided crucial campus buy-in that extended beyond the sign-off by a single campus administrator. Plan to report back to each stakeholder group to keep everyone engaged. The more that age-inclusive efforts are built into existing campus programs, strategic plans, and mission statements, the better for sustainability and ongoing institutional support. For example, designing and introducing a module on ageism (or incorporating a program such as GSA-AGHE's [Ageism First Aid](#)) into your institution's educational activities through the diversity office may ensure its continued use and uptake by the campus community. Be ready to welcome new administrators with an informational note describing your work and ideas you have about collaborative efforts.

WHERE TO START

Who should be invited to the table when assembling a team to explore joining the AFU Global Network?

On many campuses, AFU efforts are being spearheaded by faculty in gerontology or related programs. In these cases, AFU partners suggested being sure to invite individuals in other programs who are working on aging-related issues from different perspectives. Great work is so often being done in silos across our campuses and the AFU initiative offers an opportunity to bring these efforts together. Connecting with individuals in programs that take a campus-wide and community-focused lens—such as colleagues from graduate and professional studies or service-learning programs—is also a useful strategy. And of course, connecting with individuals interested in strengthening your campus diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts should part of the plan.

If you don't have a Center on Aging or a Gerontology Program, how can AFU have a home on your campus?

Many different organizational structures could work to advance age-inclusive initiatives on a campus that culminate in endorsing the AFU Principles and joining the network. The key is to have champions such as faculty members with expertise in the aging field. Keep in mind that champions can come from academic as well as nonacademic units such as staff from professional studies, human resources, career services, and other offices. Bringing champions together to form an AFU workgroup will be your first step in developing an infrastructure to lead your efforts. As your efforts *and vision* develop, you can explore further options to house your initiative by working with your administration.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHERE TO START

Does an institution need to fulfill all of the AFU Principles to be an age-inclusive campus?

There are many avenues that could be pursued through academic efforts (e.g., research, teaching, lifelong learning) as well as nonacademic activities (e.g., wellness programming, arts and cultural activities) to enable age-diverse older individuals to be welcomed and engaged on a campus. An institution does not need to fulfill all of the AFU Principles to formally join the AFU Global Network. What is important is a commitment to exploring how your institution can best determine how it can realize specific AFU Principles given its strategic priorities and current academic offerings. In this way, AFU partners often describe the AFU Principles as aspirational. Any way you do it, seeking to be more age inclusive is a worthy endeavor.

How can we think beyond the lifelong learning programs as the sole or main benchmark for being an age-inclusive campus?

Being age friendly means that your institution is open to considering how advancing age inclusivity can reach across a campus and connect with the community. In this way, being age friendly is more than having a lifelong learning program. However, such programs can serve as a key resource in exploring ways to be more age inclusive through class and program partnerships. Furthermore, while lifelong learning programs are wonderful for directly reaching older community members, there are many other ways to enable interactions with community members outside these programs as well as with age-diverse students, faculty, administrators, and staff on your campus in non-age-segregated activities. It is also important to note that beyond engaging older students, being age inclusive means enabling younger students to learn about aging and what it means to value older people in society (**AFU Principle 7: To increase the understanding of students of the longevity dividend and the increasing complexity and richness that aging brings to our society**).

How can we raise awareness about ageism and take advantage of the tools offered by GSA-AGHE and other organizations?

Consider bringing speakers to campus for campus-wide events or co-organizing events with an intersectional focus (e.g., Women's History Month, Black History Month). Suggest GSA-AGHE's **Ageism First Aid** online course, AARP's **Disrupt Aging Classroom**, and the **Reframing Aging** initiative to colleagues in various areas of study (e.g., psychology, sociology, health sciences, education) and institutional units (e.g., information technology, career services, human resources). Offer to speak to classes and student organizations about shifting age demographics and ageism; and encourage administrators to include training for personnel committees on ageism and age bias in hiring, merit, tenure, and promotion reviews.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GAINING MOMENTUM

How can we involve colleagues in age-inclusivity efforts and sustain their engagement?

Engaging colleagues calls for a variety of strategies. A key tactic should be informing and educating your campus community about the AFU movement and age-inclusive initiatives on your campus. Raise this awareness by creating a webpage, using social media (e.g., AFU partner [University of Southern California's video](#)), and contributing to campus newsletters to share information and resources, celebrate ventures, and get others thinking about how their teaching, research, and community activities can be more age inclusive. Hosting conversations or events, such as workshops, also offer great opportunities to inform your campus community about being age inclusive. Read the [Case Study](#) in this toolkit about how the AFU partner University of Nebraska at Omaha engaged its community in an AFU workshop: *Imagining an Age-Friendly University of Nebraska at Omaha: Content, Colleagues, and Conversation*. Other strategies include making personal appeals, providing incentives such as stipends or course releases, and recognizing individuals for their contributions. Whatever strategy you use, it is important to keep in mind that the AFU Principles are aspirational and many of our age-inclusive campus initiatives are works in progress, which naturally will begin with small steps, working person to person, program to program.

How can we build support for advancing age inclusivity and AFU efforts with no designated infrastructure (or staff or funding) at one's institution?

Mounting age-inclusive efforts from scratch is a real challenge. However, some have found that thinking about how to build campus connections offers a starting place. Begin with identifying an AFU champion (or champions) and convening a team of interested colleagues (and even students) to explore issues and opportunities. Consider including representatives from offices and programs that have a campus-wide lens and may be open to being more age inclusive in their efforts (e.g., diversity and inclusion councils, community engagement offices, professional studies programs). Developing capacity to support AFU and related age-inclusivity efforts may be a particular challenge for smaller institutions or those with no gerontology programs, however creative strategies are possible. For an example, read the [Case Study Age-Friendly Faculty Affiliate Fellow Program](#) about how AFU partner Eastern Michigan University attempted to build capacity and competence of faculty and instructional staff in the area of aging. [Age-Friendly Universities \(AFU\): Possibilities and Power in Campus Connections](#) offers an insightful look at how building connections, coalitions, and partnerships are essential for achieving and sustaining an institution's age-friendly vision.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GAINING MOMENTUM

How can we make more age-inclusive connections with programs such as Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes (OLLI)?

If you have an OLLI or another lifelong learning program on your campus, invite representatives from the program to be part of your team to explore ways to advance age inclusivity through new approaches to age-friendly curricular programs and practices. These connections offer opportunities to create more educational options for older learners as well as opportunities for intergenerational exchange. Aim for practical strategies such as inviting students to attend particular classes or participate in select class activities, but don't miss the potential to be creative and explore new learning ventures. For example, consider hosting a Human Library event where OLLI members are the books and the stories are their lives. Younger student readers are invited to browse the catalog and check out a "human book" for a 30-minute one-on-one conversation, during which they can learn and ask questions. The program advances age inclusivity by providing an opportunity for readers to challenge biases and interact with individuals with age-diverse experiences and expertise.

What are some strategies and resources for designing intergenerational class activities that engage older adults from the local community?

Older adults from the community may participate in classes in a variety of ways; for example, they can be invited as experts talking about their professional experience or personal accomplishments, or as participants in activities around specific course content. See the [AGHE Biblio Brief: Intergenerational Teaching and Learning](#) for examples of how instructors have incorporated intergenerational activities in their classes and the [AGHE Teaching Brief: Using Intergenerational Exchange in the Classroom to Advance Age Inclusivity](#) for suggestions about teaching and learning formats that lend themselves to intergenerational exchange. Note that intergenerational interaction is also possible beyond the classroom. For example, book clubs with your college or local library, or service projects and intergenerational events (such as film screenings or speaker series) with student organizations, are great ways to bring older adults to campus. These activities can also be set up with your class to participate off campus at a local senior center or residential place. Further reading on creating effective and meaningful intergeneration settings appears in [Intergenerational Contact Zones: Place-Based Strategies for Promoting Social Inclusion and Belonging](#) (pp. 137-145).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GAINING MOMENTUM

How can we expose students outside the typical aging-focused courses to aging issues?

There are many ways to introduce and integrate aging content across the curriculum. For example, marketing students could create a campaign for a local organization serving older adults, or engineering students could design a product to solve a challenge facing older adults in the community (such as the **Engineering for Humanity** course at Olin College of Engineering). Gerontology students could partner with business students for an elevator pitch competition focused on products and services for the silver economy. Students in art classes can engage in a variety of co-creating activities with older community members. You can also co-sponsor events with student organizations on campus that intersect with aging (e.g., Criminology Club and Gerontology Club host AARP Fraud Watch event; Exercise Science Club and Gerontology Club host a screening of the documentary *Age of Champions*). Encourage colleagues without expertise in aging to consider bringing AARP into the classroom to teach a unit on aging. AARP's **Disrupt Aging Classroom** was designed to challenge common misperceptions and beliefs about aging and get students from *all majors* to consider the personal and professional implications of the longevity dividend and our changing demographics. Always consider including health professions programs on your campus as all graduates will surely be working with older adults.

How can we engage retired and emeriti faculty in our age-inclusive efforts?

Some institutions host formal programs such as retired faculty associations that provide opportunities for faculty to keep abreast of campus initiatives and participate in campus activities. If your campus has an organization, offer to give a talk about advancing age inclusivity and the AFU movement. Even without a formal association, retired and emeriti faculty can be invited to be guest speakers in classes, attend campus events, join lifelong learning programs, and participate in other educational, wellness, cultural, and research activities as advocated by the AFU Principles. Some institutions have developed programs that engage emeriti faculty in teaching and learning activities such as the Emeriti Academy mentoring program at the University of California, Berkeley. Read more about their program in this **Case Study**. If your campus does not have specific practices in place to engage faculty, bring together a group of retired and emeriti faculty to discuss their interests and needs, or distribute a survey to gather their input and recommendations for engaging with the university.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GAINING MOMENTUM

How can we make classes more accessible to older learners, including through state programs that allow older adults to audit courses at local colleges and universities?

Most (if not all) state colleges and universities offer discounts or tuition remission to older adults in their states. For example, in Connecticut, residents aged 62 years and older can take classes and even earn degrees tuition free. Older residents can also audit classes as nonmatriculated students assuming there is room in the class. The age of eligibility and rules vary by state so be sure to see what your state offers. People are often unaware of these benefits—one way to increase age diversity in the classroom is for institutions to get the word out. Advertising under-enrolled classes to older learners can help classes run and create a richer experience for all. Some universities are exploring inviting older learners to join in study abroad programs to boost enrollment and add an intergenerational component to travel abroad; for more on this topic, see [Exploring Intergenerational Study Abroad to Promote Age-Friendly Universities](#).

ASSESSING AND TRACKING SUCCESS

What is the best strategy to use to begin to explore age inclusivity on your campus?

We believe there are *no wrong doors*—any way you can get the conversation going is a good strategy for initiating efforts toward age inclusivity. Whether through a focus group, a survey, a guided walk across campus, a forum, or an informal lunch-and-learn session, you can gain important insights to begin your exploration. You want to reach people where they are—physically and psychologically—to be able to make the case for why everyone should be interested in advancing age inclusivity. Be sure to keep records of these events, noting who the organizers were, what programs and departments were involved, what the activity entailed, who and how many attended, and what was learned—and annotate with comments on what to keep or change for future activities. Have a repository (such as SharePoint or Google Docs) of these records to share with administrators and colleagues.

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- [University of Manitoba](#)
- [University of Maryland Baltimore](#)
- [University of Minnesota](#)
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CASE STUDY:

AGE-FRIENDLY FACULTY AFFILIATE FELLOW PROGRAM

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

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The aims of this project were to address two needs identified on campus: (1) build capacity of faculty and instructional staff to meet the needs of older adult students (older learners); and (2) increase competence of educators in infusing aging content into course curricula. **The Age-Friendly Faculty Affiliate Fellow Program** was developed by faculty with expertise in the field of aging and adult learning theory. Eastern Michigan University (EMU) adapted the in-person faculty development workshop to three asynchronous training modules with three units in each module. Each unit entails interactive pieces to enable participants to respond to questions in writing and/or through Flipgrid or other external applications. The topics included in each module are outlined below.

Module 1: Understanding the Experiences of Older Learners

- Unit 1: What is an older learner?
- Unit 2: Older learner panel discussion and interviews
- Unit 3: Challenges and strengths of older learners

Module 2: Effective Engagement Strategies With Older Learners

- Unit 4: Age-inclusive online learning
- Unit 5: Age inclusivity in the classroom
- Unit 6: Language matters

Module 3: Infusing Age-Friendly Content and Material in an Existing Course

- Unit 7: Promoting intergenerational dialogue in the classroom
- Unit 8: Designing and implementing community-based learning with older adults
- Unit 9: Revising your syllabus

Faculty affiliates participated in the creation and recording of modules, and the provost recorded an introduction for the program. The modules will be made available to the EMU campus during late Fall 2021 and to the public in Winter 2022 through an independent website. Promotion will take place across the campus to increase participation among faculty and instructional staff from different disciplines and to raise age-inclusivity visibility on campus. Participants will earn a badge for their participation in the different modules, which they can showcase in online communications and record on their resumes. Completion of all three modules will earn the participants the badge of “Age-Friendly Faculty Affiliate Fellow” Level I.

This structured design will contribute to the sustainability of the program as it will allow additional modules to be added in the future. The creation of videos used for asynchronous training will be offered on an ongoing basis and be made available for faculty professional development and new faculty training modules. By focusing on building capacity, this program will lay the foundation for building a campus-wide culture of age inclusiveness and will offer a strategy other institutions can use to share knowledge about being age-friendly and increase their age-inclusive potential.

CASE STUDY:

EMERITI AS MENTORS: INTERGENERATIONAL POSTER SESSION

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

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Two goals of the **Emeriti Academy (EA)** were to: (1) create a unique event that emphasizes community building and (2) promote the EA's potential for facilitating reciprocal sharing of expertise between learners of all ages and engage actively with the University of California (UC) Berkeley emeriti faculty.

When UC Berkeley began exploring EA mentoring opportunities, there was concern about engaging emeriti to serve as mentors. The campus undergraduate mentoring program was established by paying graduate students to serve as mentors; these mentors were previously mentees and much closer in age to the undergraduate students. Suggesting that emeriti volunteer as mentors was a challenge to an already successful model; and it was a risk as there was concern that retired faculty may not relate to students. The EA had to show program administrators the value of intergenerational collaboration.

The EA produced a virtual gathering and poster session with students and members of the EA in Spring 2021. The May event showcased projects that were completed by students as part of a course or research project conducted by EA members in the 2020-21 academic year. Through offering an interactive, celebratory virtual gathering, where the students had an opportunity to give a capstone presentation along with ample time for discussion and idea exchange with emeriti and the larger retiree community, the EA was able to generate tangible evidence of the value of emeriti contributions and increase the number of campus departments interested in partnering on future EA projects.

During the event, students shared how much they enjoyed working with emeriti and how they benefited from emeriti being more available than active faculty. Emeriti emphasized how they enjoyed getting to know the students as well as how impressed they were by students' dedication and what they had learned. Following the event, EA staff connected with two key campus administrators who attended the event. During the session one administrator shared, "This event strengthened my belief that emeriti have a lot to offer as mentors to undergraduates." In the participant evaluation, EA staff received several comments about the strength of these relationships. When asked what participants found most interesting/informative, responses included:

- "I loved seeing the great connection that the students and emeriti made and how appreciative they were of each other, and the great work the students produced."
- "The interaction between the professors and their students, and the dedication of both parties."
- "The mentor and mentee dynamics, different insights and skills from different generations."

The EA is now planning two sessions for Fall 2021 with students from two different programs on campus to partner with emeriti and practice mock "office hours" to help minimize barriers that may prevent students from going to office hours.

CASE STUDY: IMAGINING AN AGE-FRIENDLY UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA: A WORKSHOP

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

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The Age-Friendly University (AFU) Workshop “**Imagining an Age-Friendly University of Nebraska at Omaha: Content, Colleagues, and Conversation**” was held via Zoom on March 16, 2021. The workshop brought together students, educators, researchers, and community members interested in enhancing the age friendliness of their curricula, pedagogy, and research efforts. The goals of the workshop were to: (1) enhance the Nebraska network and the University of Nebraska (NU) system’s knowledge of age-friendly information, (2) identify relevant interdisciplinary educational and research partnerships, and (3) achieve results from collaborations that support the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) joining the AFU network of global partners.

Organization of the Workshop

The format of the workshop was planned to separate the three topic areas of interest (i.e., curricula, pedagogy, and research) while priming participants for knowledge acquisition and discussion. Prior to the workshop, participants completed a pre-workshop survey via Qualtrics. This survey explored participants’ knowledge of age-friendliness as well as their motives for attending the workshop and their background.

- “Content” segments of curricula, pedagogy, and research featured three keynote speakers from the university. Contributions from these speakers encouraged dissemination of universally applicable information.
- “Colleagues” segments of the topic areas were composed of lightning talks from a variety of speakers throughout the NU system and/or relevant Omaha community organizations.
- “Conversation,” which was the final segment of each topic session, consisted of 2-4 breakout groups. Attendees were divided into groups of 5-10 participants and allotted 10-15 minutes for discussion with each speaker. These segments allowed further exploration of core topics and provided an opportunity to identify possibilities for future collaboration and interdisciplinary work.

After the workshop, participants completed a post-workshop survey via Qualtrics. This survey reassessed their knowledge of age-friendliness. It also requested feedback on the efficacy of the workshop and recommendations for future work.

Future Directions

In summary, the workshop was successful in disseminating age-friendly knowledge across the NU system network. Additionally, based on survey results, this workshop promoted new collaborations and may foster future development of age-focused curricula, pedagogy, and aging research. Finally, the workshop achieved the larger goal of facilitating the final necessary steps for UNO to achieve membership in the AFU Global Network. Ultimately, this is just one of many steps in making UNO a better place to live, work, and study as an older adult or for the benefit of all aging persons.

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