

**Who Will Prepare the Next Generation?**  
**The Declining Number of Academic Gerontology Programs**  
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**Introduction:** Gerontologists, and increasingly the general public, are aware of the expected growth of the older population, particularly as the “baby boomers” reach their older adult years. We know that more resources, services, and gerontology professionals will be needed to serve this population. This study asks the question: Are our higher education institutions prepared to educate the next generation of gerontology professionals?

**Methods:** To address this question, the number and type of Gerontology/Geriatric programs listed in the seventh (2000) and eighth (2009) editions of AGHE’s *Directory of Educational Programs in Gerontology and Geriatrics* were compared.

**Results:** Results indicate that there was an overall decline in the number of Gerontology/Geriatric programs over the nine-year period nationwide and in virtually every program category. The number of Gerontology/Geriatric programs in California also declined, consistent with national trends.

**Conclusions:** The previous nine years should have witnessed an increase in Gerontology/Geriatric programs to meet anticipated demand for trained professionals. The actual decline in the number of programs is a warning that we need more effective advocacy for the field, reinvigorated leadership, and fresh approaches with new ideas and partnerships. The poster concludes with some suggestions for slowing or reversing these trends in the next decade.