**Assessing Student Readiness in Working with Older Adults**

**Abstract**

Students from a variety of backgrounds often display an explicit lack of interest in working with the aging population. This lack of interest has been evidenced in students studying social work (Goncalves, et al., 2011). According to a report released in May 2010, it is predicted that by 2050, 88.5 million Americans will live to be 65 years of age or older and 21 million will live to be 85 years old or older (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2018). One in six Americans is projected to be 65 and older, with the most dramatic growth among those over age 85, elders of color, and women. These demographic changes will profoundly shape every aspect of our society. Given that older adults are the fastest growing segment of the population, both in the United States and around the world, students, regardless of their discipline or field, will come into contact with the aging population and their families. The purpose of the research were to (1) assess knowledge of and attitudes towards aging in a sample of undergraduate and graduate students undertaking , BSW and MSW degrees in social work, (2) analyze the extent to which knowledge, attitudes, perceptions of gerontological social work, and other factors are associated with interest of aging-related issues in working with aging populations, and, (3) provide the social work students with new educational materials to enhance their knowledge base regarding relevant gerontological issues.