

# News

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## \*\*\*\*UT Southwestern offers Guardianship courses

The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas will offer a new Guardianship Certificate program dealing with issues and skills in legal responsibility for an elderly person.

The medical center's Department of Gerontology and Geriatric Services designed the program both for professionals who deal with the elderly and their families in legal, financial or administrative matters and for family members who may be named guardians of an older person.

The 12-hour college credit certificate program is offered as a series of four courses. The courses may be taken for college credit for a guardianship certificate or audited on a non-credit basis. Credit received in the program can be applied to the medical center's bachelor's degree in gerontology if the student meets all other applicable criteria.

Two of the courses will cover legal and administrative issues of guardianship. In the first class, which will meet for 12 weeks, Dallas attorney Rosemary Redmond will present an overview of guardianship. She will also discuss control of personal and business affairs and avoidance of unnecessary court procedures.

The other course will focus on the duties and responsibilities of a guardian, such as planning for the care of a ward and arranging social services and administrative benefits of the ward. The role of mediation in guardianship

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disputes will also be covered.

Dr. Paul Chafetz, assistant professor of gerontology and geriatric services, will teach a third course, which will discuss the psychological and mental health aspects of the elderly.

The fourth course will be chosen by the student from a wide range of electives on topics such as health and aging, counseling, economics and caregiving. The course should enhance the student's knowledge of aging.

Students who successfully complete the courses will receive a certificate of guardianship from the university. While there currently are no laws requiring certification of a guardian, the course seeks to prepare potential guardians for the task they face.

The gerontology department developed the program in cooperation with the Dallas County Probate Court, the Lutheran Social Service of Texas Volunteer Guardian Program and attorney Redmond.

The first class meets from 5 to 8 p.m. on Wednesdays beginning May 22 at the university's Exchange Park classroom facilities. The summer semester ends Aug. 9. Call the Department of Gerontology and Geriatric Services at 214/688-7125 for registration information.

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Note: The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas comprises Southwestern Medical School, Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and Southwestern Allied Health Sciences School.