By basing intergenerational learning within a school’s curriculum it is given academic value like any other course in the curriculum.
The best programs provide a substantial amount of time for personal connections to develop between students and adults—especially informal exchanges.
To achieve the greatest learning possible for both students and seniors, both must offer expertise and have the need to acquire knowledge—equal partners in the learning process.
Community Based

- By being community based, both generations of students can see the relevance of their study. Community-based experiences can expose students to careers and seniors to new useful resources. Community relevance encourages common connections between groups.
When programs incorporate work assignments that are authentic, participants are encouraged to remain engaged and invest mental and physical energy to their work.
The first step in making this intergenerational learning happen was to contact the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Furman.
The Partnership

DIRECTOR OF OLLI

COLLEGE INSTRUCTOR
**DIRECTOR OF OLLI**

Located sites in the Greenville area for combined set of students to visit

Spread the word among senior adults who readily agreed to attend classes and share in daily discussions.

Identified Olli members with special areas of expertise related to later adulthood that could enhance the classes

**INSTRUCTOR**

Chose the course content topics & assignments, selected the readings, arranged the community field experiences & guest speakers, & submitted the course for approval to curriculum committee on campus

Created and maintained the course notebook in the OLLI office, monitored participation by Olli students

Facilitated class discussions and opportunities for social interaction
Format for The Course

- **Seminar Style**: 14 undergrads and 8-10 senior adults sat around a large conference room table.

- **2 1/2 hour session**: 30-minute break for refreshments and informal discussions.

- **Short daily reviews**: With significant discussion of readings, questions identified for discussion, relate to self and own experiences.
Shared Trips and Outings

- Woodlands - Housing
- St Francis Millenium Hospital - Nutrition/ Exercise
- Olli Trailer - Learning
- Senior Action - Recreation
- First Baptist Church - Religion
- Humane Society - Pets
- Olli Luncheon - Social
Special Guest Presenter

- Jack Hansen, Olli
  Participant and
  Author
The quality of engagement for this course was second to none as I had the opportunity to immerse myself in daily conversations with local seniors as we ventured out into the community and discussed issues of human development. (Lawson, June 2011)

I not only learned about senior citizens through the daily readings, but I also learned about who they are as people through our class discussions and personal dialogues. (Meagan June 2011)

It has been my observation that my generation generally has a deep reluctance to engage with older people on a personal level. This course had so much more to it than meets the eye. I was challenged to think about aging to such a greater extent than I would if the content were only presented through lectures and readings. Seeing the first hand feelings and reactions by our seniors to the topics studied was life altering (Hannah S., June 2011)

In spite of the many stereotypes about older adulthood and aging, after having the opportunity every day for 3 weeks to learn about older adulthood with older adults, I am actually excited to grow old. The years following do not have to be a time of feeling bored and/or worthless, but a time in life to face the next great adventure (Jasmine June 2011)
Learning with senior citizens has been one of the greatest experiences of my freshman year at Furman. The readings, field excursions, and our daily conversations with the senior adults made for the most interesting and intellectual course that has positively shaped my views on aging and retirement. (Nathan, June 2011)

After we went to the St Francis Millenium campus to learn about how aging effects the mind and body and we saw the seniors being helped to exercise and perform physically, it has made me want to apply my HES degree to working with this age population. Already I have spoken to our speaker about an internship with the hospital next year (Nathan, June, 2011)

Getting older can be fun!!! (Julia, June 2011)

This class has forever changed my perceptions of older adults. I have met adults who are thriving despite life’s challenges and who are a vital part of the community they live in. I have met older adults that are sassy, funny, kind hearted, assertive, and everything in between. This class has made me more accepting of aging both for myself and for members of my family (Hannah T., June 2011)

Nothing effected my learning on aging and adulthood more than building the personal relationships and having true face to face time with the seniors. (Hannah T, June 2011)
College Student Beliefs con’t

- I never realized my business major could be used to better provide housing options for senior citizens. As a rising senior, this course definitely influenced my career path. (Patrick, June 2011)

- This intergenerational experience made me realize that despite our differences, we have a lot in common with senior adults. We all care about staying physically healthy, having friendships and not being lonely, having good housing options, our religion, learning, having interesting work and leisure activities, and people to love. Each day of the class made me drop at least one stereotype I had of aging and the years of older adulthood (Campbell, June 2011)

- I felt this class was academically enriching like no other course I’ve taken. It would be great if more of our courses could be intergenerational so that both groups of students can offer insights and perspectives to enhance the other’s learning experiences (Patrick, June 2011)

- If not for this course, I would not have met my now 91 year old friend Mac or the other remarkable seniors we interacted with daily. What they shared in 3 weeks taught me more about life than anything. (Korrie, June 2011).

- Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, “Life is a journey, not a destination.”. So far my journey has been a roller coaster of ups and downs. Yet somehow, sitting everyday in our classroom with our senior OLLI members, hearing their stories, I have learned that the ups and downs are what make the journey worth pursuing. (Andrew, June 2011)
Dr. We Song:

I enjoyed your class tremendously. The topics were relevant and well organized. The discussions were extremely satisfying. And the interviews made me feel so important. It actually helped me see myself in a different light — as an integrated and happy person! I learned so much from the readings; they were just excellent! I loved being with the undergrads!

I'm hoping to duplicate the class for all — not as an intergenerational experience but with the research approach you've taken. I'd love to learn from all of us — and lots to discuss.

Thank you for a great experience!

Sincerely,

Janet Reddy
Undergraduates and seniors have SO much in common despite age differences, life priorities, and life experiences

We are never too old or too young to learn

Regardless of age, we all seek to understand and be understood

Deep learning occurs with intergenerational learning

There is a definite impact intergenerational learning has on college student knowledge, career paths and attitudes

Nothing is more FUN than learning with students- both 91 and 19!!!!!

Friends come in all shapes and sizes, cultural groups, religions, SES backgrounds, ages and sexes

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KiQzUEc_Fml

Intergenerational learning can be a pathway to social entrepreneurship-ideas?