Position Title:  
Grand Connections Program Graduate Assistant

Terms:
This graduate assistant (GA) position is **half-time** (10 hours per week), for a full-time graduate student. This assistantship is for one academic year from August 2022 to April 2023. The stipend for this position is $2,000 per semester and includes a tuition waiver for half tuition (4.5 credit hours per semester).

Responsibilities: The Grand Connections GA has the following responsibilities:

1) **Help develop the program website and social media sites** ---------------------------- 20%

The GA will work closely with the Grand Connections program’s advisory team on building the program website including setting up and revising the content, designing the graphics, and developing a process to enroll and collect data from potential participants of the program. Once the website is up and running, the GA is expected to help ensure the website functions properly and make any improvements when necessary.

The GA is also expected to work on other relevant social media presence to help recruit both young adults and older adults to engage in this intergenerational initiative.

2) **Research best practices on intergenerational programs** -------------------------- 15%

The Grand Connections GA must become well-versed in the research on intergenerational integration and programming, focusing on intergenerational programming at other universities across the country and in different types of organizations that offer such programs. The GA will prepare reports or summaries on the research for review by the program’s advisory team. The faculty supervisors will provide the appropriate guidance so the GA can learn empirical research, exercise critical thinking when problems need to be solved, and practice interpersonal skills.

3) **Help manage the intergenerational programs** ------------------------------- 25%

The GA will help create a tracking system of the “whereabouts” of the program participants and identify the right amount and types of opportunities to match to the participants’ interests and preferences. Specific responsibilities include: setup of an inquiry system, conducting interests survey, matching of older adults with young adults, follow-up with match at regular intervals, tracking the length of connection/interactions, and measuring the participants’ satisfaction of the program.

The GA will also be required to attend the Grand Connections Program’s advisory team meetings, to prepare materials regarding the state of the program to update the team, and be expected to contribute to the discussions of how to run the program more effectively. In addition to working with the advisory team, the GA should also serve as a liaison with other groups that work closely with Grand Connections Program such as the Students for Aging and Gerontology Enrichment club (SAGE).

4) **Assist with surveying GVSU Faculty** ---------------------------------------- 15 %

It is known that there are other faculty besides the ones on the advisory team who are eager to find ways to connect their students with older adults for a variety of activities. The GA will survey faculty regarding their needs and desires for involving their students with older adults for service-learning and/or other roles (research, classroom guest speakers, etc.) and make the Grand Connections program known and available to them. The GA is also expected to build the “needs” and “desires” obtained from the survey into the web-based recruitment and matching processes.
5) Recruit participants for the program  

The Grand Connections GA will work closely with the program’s advisory team to introduce the program to potential participants via the web, print materials, and social media. The GA will assist in disseminating the information to diverse audiences within the university (faculty, students) and the wider community of older adults (GVSU retirees, AARP members, residents in senior living communities, and participants in community programs for older adults). This may entail making presentations in classes to recruit students, or to community groups or organizations to recruit the older participants.

6) Develop Plan to Measure Program Impact  

The Grand Connections GA will work closely with the program’s advisory team to identify outcome measures for this program, develop a plan for data collection, assist in the collection and analysis of the data, and report the findings from these program assessments.

Qualifications:

- Full-time graduate student at GVSU – open to students from across the University
- Strong work ethics, highly organized, and self-directed
- Ability to work well independently and with a team
- Knowledge and experience with website development and social media strategies (at least capable of and willing to learn quickly)
- Strong research knowledge and experience with data collection, library research, and interview skills
- Presentation/Public speaking skills as well as writing skills
- Interest and willingness to work with multi-generational groups (students and older adults).

Work Station:

The Grand Connections GA will be stationed in the SPNHTM [name to change in the next few weeks] on the 2nd floor of DeVos and in one of the shared offices (offices reserved for graduate assistants to use) located in Au Sable Hall on Allendale campus. The GA may alternate working at these two locations depending which faculty supervisor the GA is working more closely on the tasks at hand.

Orientation:

Once the student is selected (see Selection Process below), the faculty supervisors will meet with the student to discuss: days and times of work, expected meetings, tracking of time, paydays, expectations for ‘days’ off, best ways to communicate with the faculty supervisors, and major responsibilities and expectations. The student also must participate in Graduate School GA orientation.

Supervision and Evaluation:

The GA must be able to work with two faculty supervisors (Drs. Kimboko and Chen) who intend to work closely as a team. The goals of the supervision are to ensure that the student has clear understanding of the responsibilities, priorities, and processes involved and the desired outcomes. The GA will meet with the faculty supervisors on a bi-weekly basis to receive performance guidance including instructions on conducting appropriate and relevant research and how to complete the tasks/responsibilities specified earlier. Feedback on the GA’s performance will be also given during these meetings and at the end of each semester.
Selection Process:

Posting:
The position will be posted with the Graduate School, and will be open to graduate students across the University. It will also be sent to graduate programs that involve aging (e.g., Social Work, Occupational Therapy, Public Health, Therapeutic Recreation, Health Administration). It may also be shared with students in Health Informatics and posted in popular job sites such as Handshake.

Applicant Materials Required:

- A resume
- A letter of application/cover letter: In this letter, they should provide statement describing their qualifications and competencies related to this position description as well as detailing why they are interested in this position.
- Two letters of recommendation from faculty or prior supervisors
- Writing samples: a previous research paper and/or a writing assignment that can illustrate their proficiency in writing and coherence in thinking
- Description of any web-development or social media development work or evidence that can show their competence in this area

Reviewing of applications:

Drs. Kimboko and Chen will jointly review and rate the applicants to identify the best candidates. The top three candidates (at least) will be interviewed, using a structured interview process focused on skills crucial for developing the Grand Connections Program. Such skills/qualities include: 1) library skills such as searching databases, 2) ability to understand and conduct basic research such as surveys and phone interviews, 3) web design skills or at least capable and willing to learn it quickly, 4) essential marketing and social media understanding, 5) solid oral communication and writing skills, 6) highly organized and self-directed, and 7) possesses strong work ethics.

Applications should be sent to:

Dr. Priscilla J. Kimboko
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Contact Information:

Primary Contact: Secondary Contact:
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