



CCSU Joins Age-Friendly University (AFU) Global Network

In May of 2017, Central Connecticut State University became the first university in Connecticut to join the Age-Friendly University (AFU) global network. As a member of the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE), CCSU is proud to join a growing number of institutions in Ireland, the U.K., the U.S., and Canada who have adopted the 10 AFU principles. The principles reflect the work of an international, interdisciplinary team convened by Professor Brían MacCraith, President, Dublin City University (DCU) to identify the distinctive contributions institutions of higher education can make in responding to the interests and needs of an aging population.

Connecticut is home to the seventh oldest population in the U.S. and, in another decade, 25 percent of the state's population will be over the age of 60. With significantly more individuals experiencing increased longevity, CCSU is poised to respond to the educational needs and interests of this growing group through the development of new opportunities and innovative practices in teaching, research, and community engagement. The AFU principles serve as a valuable guiding framework for distinguishing and evaluating how CCSU can shape age-friendly programs and practices, as well as identify gaps and opportunities for growth in the years to come.

What are the 10 AFU principles?

1. To encourage the participation of older adults in all the **core activities** of the university, including educational and research programs.
2. To promote personal and career development in the second half of life and to support those who wish to pursue **second careers**.
3. To recognize the **range of educational needs** of older adults (from those who were early school-leavers through to those who wish to pursue Master's or PhD qualifications).
4. To promote **intergenerational learning** to facilitate the reciprocal sharing of expertise between learners of all ages.
5. To widen access to **online educational opportunities** for older adults to ensure a diversity of routes to participation.
6. To ensure that the university's **research agenda** is informed by the needs of an ageing society and to promote public discourse on how higher education can better respond to the varied interests and needs of older adults.
7. To increase the understanding of students of the **longevity dividend** and the increasing complexity and richness that aging brings to our society.
8. To enhance access for older adults to the university's range of **health and wellness** programs and its **arts and cultural activities**.
9. To engage actively with the university's own **retired community**.
10. To ensure regular **dialogue** with organizations representing the interests of the aging population.