Integrated Training: Making Interdisciplinarity no Accident

Karen Bandeen-Roche, PhD
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How I became a statistician-gerontologist
How I became a statistician
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The “gerontologist” part began by accident…
How I became a statistician-gerontologist

Determinants

Frailty

e_l

Y_l

... theory

Y_p

Determinants

D

Adverse outcomes
Aging: A marvelous collaborative field

• There are tremendous suffering to be ameliorated and latent potential to be tapped among older adults
  – As key to public health and medicine as ‘saving lives’

• Opportunity for all our fields
  – Aging is inherently interdisciplinary
  – Intellectual, impact, funding synergies

• Opportunities for junior faculty, students
  – Ad hoc and formal—*with a little luck*.....
Why leave it to luck?

• The Epidemiology and Biostatistics of Aging (EBA) Training Program
  – Disciplinary excellence
  – Cross-disciplinary training

• Integration across fields
  – Biostatistics, Epidemiology, Medicine
  – Biweekly RIPs
    • Communication
    • Joint 360-degree seminars, research projects
Integrated Training

It works!

• Ten years and counting
  – Just (fully) funded for another five-year cycle
  – Proliferation

• Accomplished students
  – Awards: Internal and External
  – Research productivity

• Post-training careers: excellence; in EBA
Conclusion

• Interdisciplinarity matters
  – to the field of aging
  – to all our fields

• It can be trained

• We hope you’ll keep us in mind
  – Opportunities for your students
  – Synergies by which we all might be better