

INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE OF THE GRADUATE PROGRAM IN GERONTOLOGY AT THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF BRASÍLIA (2021–2024)

Karla Helena Coelho Vilaça e Silva¹; Eduarda Rezende Freitas²; Henrique Salmazo da Silva³; Vicente Paulo Alves⁴

KEYWORDS

Stricto Sensu Postgraduate Program. Gerontology. Institutional assessment. Advanced training. Social impact.

INTRODUCTION

Population aging in Brazil demands graduate programs capable of producing interdisciplinary knowledge, training highly qualified specialists, and promoting social impact. The Graduate Program in Gerontology at the Catholic University of Brasília (PPGG/UCB) occupies a central role in this context as the only stricto sensu program in Gerontology in the Center-West region. The program integrates scientific production, human resource training, and national and international institutional partnerships.

Given the conclusion of the 2021–2024 evaluation cycle, it becomes essential to systematize the program's institutional performance, highlighting progress in training, research, internationalization, and social impact. The objective of this expanded abstract is to present a synthesis of the main institutional indicators of PPGG/UCB during the 2021–2024 quadrennium, based on official academic reports.

METHODOLOGY

This study is characterized as a documentary analysis of the 2021–2024 evaluation Report of PPGG/UCB. Data were extracted and organized regarding: (1) student training; (2) research projects and thematic lines; (3) scientific production; (4) internationalization; (5) alumni employment and professional trajectories; (6) social impact and extension activities; and (7) institutional and strategic partnerships. Data were categorized thematically and chronologically, following a descriptive-analytical approach.

RESULTS

The program demonstrated robust performance throughout the period. In terms of training, 27 doctoral theses and 49 master's dissertations were defended, consolidating the maturity of the doctoral program, which began in 2017—not only in quantitative terms but also through the excellence of its dissertations and theses.

1 Universidade Católica de Brasília, kavalaca@yahoo.com.br

2 Universidade Católica de Brasília, eduarda.rezende@p.ucb.br

3 Universidade de São Paulo, henriquesalmazo@usp.br

4 Universidade Católica de Brasília, vicente@p.ucb.br

Continuity of training is evident, with 14.81% of master's graduates enrolling in the program's own doctoral track. Among the program's research lines, "Health and Functionality in Aging" stands out with more than 12 active projects, followed by "Society, Technology and Gerontological Innovation," with over 10 intersectoral projects.

Regarding scientific production, faculty members—together with graduate students—published 219 articles during the quadrennium, with improvements in productivity indicators (IndProdArt). Internationalization was strengthened through new collaborations with researchers from the United States, Canada, Portugal, Italy, Mexico, and Argentina; postdoctoral research abroad; research missions; technical visits; international keynote lectures; and CAPES-funded doctoral sandwich fellowships.

Professional placement is another strong indicator, with 95% of alumni employed across public, private, and academic sectors. In terms of social impact, exponential growth was observed, especially through specialized clinics in medicine, physiotherapy, nutrition, and dentistry, which together provide approximately 3,500 annual consultations to 700 older adults. Cultural initiatives such as "60+ Fazendo Arte" and scientific expeditions to the North Pole and Antarctica further expanded the program's societal reach.

Institutional partnerships also advanced substantially. The program maintains active participation in the Network of Graduate Programs and Research in Aging (REPRINTE), strengthening national collaborative actions. Cooperation with the Brazilian Society of Geriatrics and Gerontology (SBGG) enhances integration between science, training, and clinical practice. Collaboration with the Brazilian Association of Gerontechnology (SBGTec) expands initiatives in innovation and technology applied to aging. Additional partnerships include the Brazilian Association of Gerontology (ABG), the Judicial Center for the Rights of Older Adults, the District Council for Older Persons, and various federal bodies (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Defense), reinforcing the program's multisectoral presence.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK / DISCUSSION

The results indicate that PPGG/UCB consistently meets the expectations of national graduate education policies and effectively responds to the challenge of training professionals capable of addressing the complexity of human aging. The high rate of alumni employability demonstrates alignment with labor market demands and public-sector needs. Faculty research productivity and international partnerships strengthen the program's position within global gerontology research networks, contributing to scientific and technological advancement.

The observed social impact—particularly through specialized clinical services and intergenerational activities—confirms the program's alignment between knowledge production and societal transformation. The quadrennium also reflects institutional consolidation, strengthened internationalization, expansion of research lines, and reinforcement of interdisciplinarity—essential principles in the field of Gerontology.

These findings corroborate studies emphasizing the relevance of interdisciplinary programs to address the challenges posed by population aging, highlighting the integration of academia, services, public policies, and civil society as a driver of innovation and quality of life in later life.

CONCLUSIONS

PPGG/UCB demonstrated significant performance during the 2021–2024, with substantial advances in student training, scientific production, internationalization, and social impact. The results reflect the consolidation of the program as a national reference in Gerontology and underscore the relevance of its interdisciplinary contributions to an aging society.

Despite these advances, we recognize that there is still much to be done to expand the reach and effectiveness of the program's actions. The current context highlights the need to strengthen internal processes, broaden collaborative networks, refine performance indicators, and institutionalize innovative practices in teaching, research, and extension. Nevertheless, the evidence indicates that the program is on the right path, building a solid, committed trajectory aligned with contemporary demands of human aging.

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