



CASE

MANDEL SCHOOL OF APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES

KATHRYN BETTS ADAMS, Ph.D.

Faculty Biographical Sketch

Kathryn Betts Adams' background is in clinical social work with adults and older adults. A graduate of Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, she received her MSW from the University of Michigan in 1984 and her Ph.D. in social work from the University of Maryland in 2000. Her dissertation research employed a theoretical perspective including socio-emotional selectivity and gerotranscendence to explore differentiation of depression from effects of normal aging in older adults. Subsequent work has examined the relationships of depression to loneliness and reductions in activity participation. She has published on these topics in venues such as *The Gerontologist*, *Aging and Mental Health*, and *International Journal of Aging and Human Development*. Dr. Adams has also been active in dementia research, where her work has focused on caregivers' grief, on the experience of early-stage caregiving, and on the psychosocial needs of persons with early-stage memory loss. Caregivers and diagnosed persons both have to adapt to stresses and losses that make them particularly vulnerable to depression and other mental health symptoms. This work has been published or will appear soon in *Dementia*, *Health and Social Work*, *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, *The Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, and *Families in Society*. Beginning while a doctoral student, Dr. Adams has also been a frequent presenter at GSA, SSWR and the Gero-Ed Forum.

After teaching as an adjunct in Maryland and Northern Virginia, Dr. Adams joined the faculty of Case Western Reserve University's Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences as an instructor in 2003. She was given a joint appointment at the University Hospitals of Cleveland/Case Western Reserve University Memory and Aging Center, an NIA-funded Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (ADRC), and was awarded one of the ADRC pilot grants in 2003 to study "the transition to caregiving" through qualitative interviews of new family caregivers in early-stage dementia.

Academic year 2005-2006 marked Dr. Adams' first year as an Assistant Professor on the tenure-track. She currently teaches the direct practice course in the Aging Concentration for Masters' students at the Mandel School, and a doctoral course in Social Work Practice Applications, which focuses on evaluating intervention research and examining the evidence base in social work practice. She has been a participant in curriculum redesign at the School and will be one of the faculty to teach a newly developed skills-based course in foundation direct practice methods. Reflecting the spectrum of biopsychosocial issues affecting late life, her chapter, "Late Adulthood," recently appeared in the 3rd edition of a popular social work textbook, *Human Behavior and the Social Environment, A Multi-Dimensional Approach* (Ashford, LeCroy & Lortie, 2005, Brooks/Cole). She values the synergy of teaching clinical practice, making agency and practitioner connections for research purposes, conducting research, writing articles and presenting at conferences.

Dr. Adams' will conduct a survey in senior independent living facilities to collect data for her Hartford Faculty Scholars Program research project. The analysis will include modeling predictors of subthreshold depression. The study will also explore the utility of the Geriatric Depression Scale as a screen for subthreshold depression.