

SIG Members In Touch Spirituality and Health Newsletter

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts

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Greetings to the Spirituality and Health SIG!

We are gearing up for an exciting year with the Spirituality and Health SIG. As we discussed in our SIG breakfast meeting at SBM, many of you have expressed concerns about the lack of Spirituality and Health representation in the research presented at SBM over the past couple of years. You have noticed the same issue that Crystal and I have brought to SBM's attention. We are currently working with the SBM program committee to insure that spirituality and health topics are appropriately represented at SBM this year and in future years. The programming committee has assured us that there is no intentional bias, but simply that very few spirituality abstracts were submitted. Therefore we are looking to test that theory and we need your help!

We are encouraging all researchers interested in spirituality and health to submit abstracts, and to be reviewers. We want to ensure that the topic of spirituality and health is well represented both on the presentation side, as well as on the reviewing side. Spirituality has now been combined with CAM for the review process; and we want to make sure that individuals who are qualified to review spirituality research make up a good portion of the reviewers who will be reviewing spirituality and health research. We also want your research abstracts! Please submit your spirituality and health research abstracts, we know many of you are doing exciting work and we would like to see it at SBM. One of the critical components is that research does need to be completed by the abstract submission. SBM will discard any abstracts that do not have completed results.

So, to sum, we appreciate your concerns, and we are definitely working on the issue. Please do submit your spirituality and health work to SBM's annual conference this year. Please sit as a reviewer for spirituality and health. I think this year will be a great year for spirituality and health research at SBM, partly because of your efforts! On behalf of the Spirituality and Health SIG, I appreciate anything you can do to help us in this effort.

See you in San Francisco!

Sincerely,

Amy Wachholtz, PhD, MDiv
Spirituality SIG Chair

Spirituality SIG Elections are Coming!

Just to get everyone thinking ahead, we will be holding Spirituality SIG Chair elections this fall/winter. The person elected will start their tenure as “chair-elect” immediately after the 2013 SBM conference. They will serve one year as elect, once year as the active chair, and have one year as “past-chair”. So be thinking about who you would like to see in this critical role for the Spirituality and Health SIG. Self-nominations are welcome.

Noteworthy Announcements

Faith-Based Initiatives to Promote Health: Call for Papers

Social scientists and theologians have noted that churches and other faith-based organizations can have a considerable impact on society and its members. Over the past decade, government-sponsored faith-based initiatives have raised the profile of faith-based organizations as those that can provide services to disadvantaged individuals and communities. During this time, an increasing number of health scientists and public health practitioners have begun to work with faith-based institutions in health promotion and disease prevention efforts designed to improve the health of “hard to reach” or “at-risk” populations. The emergence of these efforts has sparked interests in examining the relationship between faith and health. “Faith” like “health” is a concept with multiple descriptions and applications, making it difficult to specify elements of successful collaboration between scientific and spiritual institutions.

This thematic issue will build on the foundation laid in Volume 32, Issue 4 which highlighted the diversity of faith-based programs and their potential impact for individuals and their communities. We invite investigators to contribute original research as well as review articles that will further broaden the understanding of the relationship between faith and health. Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- Papers that discuss or refine existing theoretical models undergirding current faith-based research
- Papers that highlight seemingly subtle distinctions (i.e., faith-based orientation vs. church-based orientation) that can lead to considerable differences in approaches and outcomes
- Descriptions of epidemiological studies examining associations between faith and health
- Descriptions of intervention studies in faith settings and/or that incorporate faith-based elements

We especially welcome manuscripts that have leaders of faith-based organizations (e. g., pastors) as contributing authors.

Submissions

Before submission authors should carefully read over the journal’s Author Guidelines, which are located at <http://journals.lww.com/familyandcommunityhealth/Pages/informationforauthors.aspx>. Prospective authors should submit an electronic copy of their complete manuscript through the journal’s system at <http://www.editorialmanager.com/fch/> no later than **October 1, 2012**.

Resources

CROSSROADS...exploring research on religion, spirituality and health is a publication of Duke University's Center for Spirituality, Theology, and Health. The purpose is to provide updates on new research, news, current events, and funding opportunities related to spirituality and health. To access the August edition of the newsletter, go to the following link:

<http://library.constantcontact.com/download/get/file/1101522678717-21/CSTH+Newsletter+Aug+2012.pdf>