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Reproductive Health & Wellness Program



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UC Forward Community Collaborative Grant

Drs. Jennifer Mooney and Farrah Jacquez are partnering to collaboratively teach a class at UC for the Spring 2016 Semester. Read below for more information!

Course Overview

Community psychologists study the relationships of the individual to communities and society. Their aim is to enhance quality of life through collaborative research and action. In order to introduce the interdisciplinary, community action approach inherent in the discipline, PSYC7005: Community Psychology will be a partnership between the UC Psychology and Sociology departments and the Cincinnati Health Department (CHD). Graduate students will work with the staff of the CHD's Reproductive Health and Wellness program to conduct a research project that directly benefits the CHD and its clients. Specifically, students will evaluate the effectiveness of a Reproductive Health Toolkit in improving knowledge and attitudes about birth control, reproductive life planning, STIs, and healthy relationships.

Although the CHD currently uses the toolkit in their medical clinics and outreach projects, budget constraints have prevented them from scientifically evaluating the effectiveness of their toolkit in improving reproductive health outcomes. In addition, they have not investigated the optimal strategies to deliver the toolkit (e.g., group format, interactive discussion, etc.). The proposed research project directly benefits the CHD by providing the data needed to improve and expand their existing reproductive health and wellness program. The project benefits Community Psychology students by enhancing

learning outcomes through the translation of research skills in real world settings to address community-identified concerns.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

- Understand the role of the scientific method in solving real world community problems.
- Critique the scientific literature related to community-identified needs.
- Use statistical data analysis to answer research questions.
- Identify the interaction between real world communities and academic partners and how each contributes to research.
- Interact with community members in ways that show respect for social, environmental, and contextual factors affecting individuals.
- Create project outcomes that are scientifically accurate, well-organized, and engaging to community partners.

Alignment with UC Forward Mission

Community Psychology as a discipline shares UC Forward's values of transdisciplinary collaboration, experiential learning, and community-academic partnerships. The course we have planned embodies UC Forward's mission because our Psychology-Sociology-Public Health partnership will facilitate a community-engaged research project, ensuring that students not only learn research skills but also conduct a project with direct and tangible benefit to a community organization. Through their work on the project, students will experience firsthand the benefits of transdisciplinary research, particularly the innovation that can occur when varied expertise and skills are applied toward a

community problem. In addition, they will have the opportunity to work through the challenges that are inevitable when working in real-world settings with varied stakeholders.

In PSYC7005, students will be spending their time recruiting reproductive age participants, collaborating with Health Department staff and collecting data from individuals in the community. Students will learn research skills as they apply those skills to a real-world problem. Students will not only learn how to collect and analyze data to meaningfully address community concerns, but they will learn how to translate statistical results into deliverable outcomes that are easily understandable to community audiences.

Although all the partners in the proposed course have worked together in various pairs, PSYC7005 represents the first effort between Psychology, Sociology, and the Cincinnati Health Department. The UC Forward grant will provide the opportunity to develop this collaborative relationship and provide a structure for future work together. For example, it is possible that other classes in the Organizational and Community Psychology master's program would be of interest to Sociology students. By cross-listing PSYC 7005, we begin building a bridge between the two disciplines. The Cincinnati Health Department has a long history of providing internships, but these students typically come from Public Health. The course could help pave the way for Psychology and Sociology students to meaningfully contribute to CHD projects.

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Planned Parenthood under fire

In recent weeks, Planned Parenthood (PP) has come under considerable criticism after a secretly recorded video was released. Deborah Nucatola, the medical director for the organization, was discussing the PP fetal tissue donation procedures with people who she believed worked for a tissue donation company. Their hours long conversation was secretly recorded over lunch, and was subsequently edited to just a few minutes of footage. This released footage is intended to implicate the organization in the sale and profit of fetal tissue.¹ However, if you watch the unedited video, it becomes quite clear that the physician is talking about reimbursement for storage and transportation costs, similar to those that would be associated with any other tissue donation from a consenting individual. The video is one of 10 or so videos that the group allegedly has prepared to release in coming weeks. A number of senators have already tried to defund the organization, but have lacked the required number of backers to bring the vote to the Senate floor. One senator, Mike Lee (R-Utah) even attempted to force the vote by attaching an amendment that would eliminate all federal funding of PP to Congressional highway legislation. This was rejected because it was not relevant to the highway funding bill.²

PP CEO Cecile Richards has reiterated that the organization does not profit from the sale of fetal tissue, but instead that tissue is donated by consenting women who have chosen to have an abortion. She also points out that this only takes place at a very low number of their clinics that are equipped to supply the tissue to research institutions. The physician speaking in the video has also been criticized for her tone, and Richards states that she has been reprimanded appropriately.³ In addition to the fact that these transactions are completely legal, the availability of fetal tissue allows for crucial, potentially lifesaving research, especially in cases of fetal abnormalities that could prompt a woman to end her pregnancy.

As a reminder, no federal funding of PP goes toward funding abortion procedures, which are paid for out of pocket by the patient. Any federal funding of the organization cover the costs of family planning services, cancer screenings, well woman care, and other gynecological services.

National Immunization Month

August is National Immunization Month! You should always make sure you're up to date on your immunizations, but we're here to talk about a couple in particular. First, Human Papillomavirus, or HPV vaccine. This is recommended for all children, no matter their gender, starting at the age of 9 per Vaccines for Children guidelines⁴ and can be given up to the age of 26 to those who did not receive the vaccine series as a child or who have not completed the full series.

HPV vaccine is given as a three-dose series:

1st Dose-Now

2nd Dose- 1 to 2 months after Dose 1

3rd Dose- 6 months after Dose 1⁵

HPV is an infection that can infect the genital or anal area, mouth, throat of women and men, is the cause of genital warts, and can cause cervical, penile, anal, mouth/throat cancers. Most sexually active people will have HPV at some point in their lives and will not know it, because the body generally clears the infection on its own and because the virus is often asymptomatic.⁵

Unfortunately, there are many strains of HPV, but the vaccine protects women and men against those strains that have been proven to most frequently cause cervical cancer (they protect men because they won't transmit it to a partner). HPV can also cause anal and throat cancers, as well as genital and anal warts. The three vaccines that protect against HPV are Gardasil, Gardasil 9 (protecting against a few additional strains of the virus) and Cervarix. This vaccine should be given to all genders, not just to girls, and is a very safe vaccine. As with any other vaccine, some people may be allergic to it, it may cause pain and swelling at the injection site, fever, nausea, headache or muscle pain, and some may faint, but all of these are minor and will pass.⁵

The second important vaccine is the Hepatitis B vaccine. Hep B is a virus that attacks the liver, and can lead to liver cancer, failure, and death. Children are often vaccinated before the age of 18 months old, with a series of three injections. However, as this is often a sexually transmitted virus, it is important to ensure that vaccination by the time a person reaches adulthood.⁶

New CDC Data on Teens

Recent data released by the CDC states that younger teens are not having sex as early or as frequently as in previous years, and when they do start having sex, more of them are using contraception the first time. This is great news! More teens are also reporting that because emergency contraception is easier to access now, they use it more frequently. According to the report, the number of young teens who initiate sex earlier in life has been declining for 25 years, and that most teens have had sex by the time they reach age 19.⁷

The use of contraception the first time teens have sex is often a good indication that they will continue to use it in the future, and the report showed that women who did not use a method at first intercourse were two times more likely to become teen mothers as their peers that did use a method.⁷ RH Reality check analyzed the data and reports that most teens (99% of boys and 97% of girls)⁷ used condoms as their chosen method at first intercourse, as these are relatively inexpensive and easily accessible, and are also the only method protecting teens against STIs.

After condoms, the most popular methods that teens had used at some point by sexually active teen girls were the following: withdrawal (60%), the pill (54%), depo-provera (15%), the ring (5%), intrauterine devices (3%), the patch (2%), and implants (2%).⁷ The-bodyshop team works to provide teens in Cincinnati with the most effective methods of contraception, while keeping the needs of each teen at the forefront of the conversation about birth control. The more accessible we make the information about safe sex, the more we'll be able to help teens protect themselves from unwanted pregnancies and STIs. Supporting access to reproductive health care with comprehensive sex education in schools is another step that would drastically improve the health, relationship negotiation, basic knowledge of sexuality, and overall well-being of teens in our city.

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Sustainability

PSYC7005 will be offered each Spring as part of the Organizational and Community Psychology Master's degree program. Spring 2016 will be the first time that the course has been taught. UC Forward funding in Spring 2016 will help create the infrastructure for Psychology, Sociology, and the Cincinnati Health Department to work together on community research projects. Specifically, the graduate student (to whom 80% of the requested funding goes) will help develop training materials and databases that can be used for future iterations of the course. If the course is successful, we will solicit support from Psychology and Sociology departments for graduate assistants. After the first year collaboration framework is established, it is also possible that an undergraduate research assistant can be recruited to coordinate databases and facilitate scheduling.

Drs. Jacquez and Mooney also plan to use the data collected through this course as pilot data for future grant proposals. Ideally, in the year before PSYC7005 is taught again in Spring 2017, we will be able to secure additional funding to conduct a research project that directly builds on the work completed in 2016. For example, current reproductive health efforts primarily target women. Based on the results of PSYC7005's 2016 project, we would like to adapt and expand the reproductive health efforts to men of reproductive age.

MEN'S HEALTH

Interested in the Men's Health Initiative for your organization? Contact the program coordinator: eric.washington@cincinnati-oh.gov

TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: ELENI EREN

Hometown: Lorain

Favorite book/movie and why: My favorite book changes yearly. For now, I will have to say the Dark Tower Series by Stephen King. It took me a year to read all seven books in the series and I felt like I knew the characters by the end. The story was creative and pulled me in from the beginning. Stephen King created worlds within worlds, and the twists and turns were unique and unpredictable. I really enjoyed every minute I spent reading each book.



What do you love about working in reproductive health?: I love having the opportunity to help improve the health of my community, especially at risk populations. Throughout the summer, I have learned about the burden unplanned and teenage pregnancy can have on the health of the individual as well as the health care system as a whole. This experience has motivated me to continue to help with programs that are striving to reduce the unplanned pregnancy and teenage pregnancy rates in the community. There is a lot of opportunity to improve sexual education and empower women within the field of reproductive health, which is very fulfilling for me.

When you aren't at work, where might we find you?: Hopefully outside. I love playing soccer, going for hikes, running, swimming, or basically any activity that requires me to be outside and moving. I spend the majority of my time sitting and studying, so I will jump on any chance to get some vitamin D.

What do you do for the body shop?: I was assigned to work at the Health Department through an internship program called the Urban Health Project. Through the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, the Urban Health Project places medical students at various sites throughout Cincinnati that are committed to community service. My summer project for the body shop involves extracting data from the medical record charts of teens who have used the Reproductive Health and Wellness Program services. The goal of the project is to see what impact the Reproductive Health and Wellness Program is having on contraceptive use of sexually active teens.

I also spent the summer working with the UC OB/GYN Division of Community Women's Health. My final project involved exploring how the OB/GYN provider integrated Reproductive Life Planning into their appointments. A Reproductive Life Plan is a tool that women could use to plan out their lives during their reproductive years from 12-44. It encompasses career goals, reproduction planning, mental health, as well as physical health. Currently, there is not much research on the impact that Reproductive Life Planning has on unintended pregnancy rates, but it could be a tool to help women focus on the steps they need to take in order to avoid unintended pregnancy and reach their goals in life. In terms of my project, I documented what aspects of a Reproductive Life Plan were discussed during provider/patient encounters, and presented the findings to the providers of the Division of Community Women's Health. The goal of my presentation was to bring awareness to the existence of the Reproductive Life Plan and what aspects could be used by healthcare providers. In summary, I believe that OB/GYN providers can have a direct impact on unintended pregnancies by providing reproduction and contraception counseling, however patients coming in who are currently sexually active and seeking birth control are already at risk. I think earlier interventions are needed to help reduce unintended and teen pregnancies, and the Reproductive Life Plan could be such a tool, however more research is needed to determine how and when it could be used to determine its efficacy.

The Men's Health Initiative performs health education seminars at local community-based organizations. We currently have seminars on the following topics:

Reproductive Anatomy, Pregnancy, and Sexuality • STIs and Protecting Yourself • Relationships and Communication • Family Planning • Fatherhood • Puberty • Bullying

thebodyshop

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH & WELLNESS PROGRAM

Reproductive Health Suite
Clement Health Center
Cincinnati Health Department
3101 Burnet Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45229

RHWP Hotline:
513-357-7341

Appointment scheduling through the CHD Call Center:
513-357-7320



The Reproductive Health and Wellness Program (RWHP) or the body shop, is a five-year grant awarded by the Ohio Department of Health to the Cincinnati Health Department and is funded by the federal Title X program. The primary objective of this program is to provide access to contraceptives and reproductive health services to the men and women of Hamilton County, especially to the most underserved populations, so as to reduce the number of unplanned pregnancies, unwanted pregnancies, and ultimately, the number of poor pregnancy outcomes. Through these direct services, education and outreach, the program also hopes to cultivate a culture of responsibility, well-being, and empowerment in regards to sexuality and reproductive health. To date, we've enrolled thousands of individuals, and continue to grow, learn, and serve.

For additional information regarding the project, please contact Dr. Jennifer Mooney at:

jennifer.mooney@cincinnati-oh.gov

Happy last month of summer!

Don't forget to use a condom for your end-of-summer lovin'!

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