

2014 Provost Cross-School “Bring Your Own Idea” Gatherings Proposal

TOPIC

Public Health Opportunities and Challenges in Guatemala
WUSTL Opportunities for Research and Teaching Collaboration

PROPOSING FACULTY

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DESCRIPTION OF TOPIC (1 paragraph)

At Washington University there are several faculty members from different disciplines working in Guatemala. We propose to bring them together to discuss how public health topics can be approached in a more transdisciplinary manner to maximize opportunities and address public health challenges in Guatemala and elsewhere. Examples of past and current work in Guatemala include chronic kidney disease, cervical cancer stigma in underserved ethnic groups, ultrasound use, using mHealth to increase breast cancer treatment follow up, nasal t-cell lymphoma, health literacy and obesity, and chronic disease screening practices among internal medicine trainees. We will explore cross-school relationships between faculty to foster multidisciplinary research and training collaborations. Our approach will span the intersection of several distinct disciplines including, but not limited to, public health, health care, medicine, environmental and occupational health, physical therapy, behavioral health, policy, anthropology, sociology, social work, psychology, and economics. We propose “Bring Your Own Idea” gatherings that are primarily intended for those currently working in Guatemala. However, gatherings will be open to others that want to learn about or start work in Guatemala including Institute for Public Health Scholars and resident Global Health Scholars.

EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANCE/APPROPRIATENESS (1 paragraph)

About six hours south of St. Louis by plane and in the same time zone, Guatemala is a country with a rich political, civil, ethnic, cultural, and development history that is interweaved in several aspects of its public health landscape today. Guatemala, a low middle/income country, is currently undergoing an epidemiological transition; leading causes of mortality are shifting from nutritional and infectious diseases to non-communicable disease (e.g., cancer, diabetes). Therefore, the country’s already bankrupt healthcare system must deal with the “double burden of disease”. Even though the country has more than five universities, investment in research and development are low. Government and private sector investment in research has remained unchanged (0.03% and 0.05% of the GDP in 2003 and 2009; respectively). However, several efforts are currently underway to generate the evidence required to strengthen the healthcare system. The Centers for Disease Control Central America Regional Office was formally established in Guatemala City in 2005, followed by a Global Disease Detection Regional Center. Subsequently, the International Emerging Infections Program in Guatemala created an active surveillance system that collects data on infectious diseases and in conjunction with the University del Valle de Guatemala. In addition, in 2008 the Cardiovascular Unit of Guatemala (UNICAR) established the Chronic Disease Research Fellowship Program that aims to generate knowledge required to tackle the epidemiologic transition. Building on this infrastructure, several WUSTL faculty are currently engaged in research, teaching, and outreach activities in Guatemala. However, we are often unaware of each other’s activities, and therefore are missing opportunities to maximize potential and, where appropriate, leverage resources. Our “Bring Your Own Idea” proposal will help to ensure a more coordinated, transdisciplinary approach to current and future WUSTL research and training in Guatemala enabling us to connect

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with each other around ripe areas for collaboration to help build on the country’s public health infrastructure; a model that can be used to address public health concerns for other low and middle income countries where multiple university faculty are currently working.

STRUCTURE

We propose early gatherings in a cocktail hour format as faculty become acquainted. For latter gatherings of the series, we propose breakfast or lunch to enable adequate sharing and conversation.

CORE FACULTY LIST (to be initially invited)

Name	School	Department/Division	Area of Work
1. Barnoya, Joaquin	Medicine	Surgery, Division of Public Health Sciences	tobacco control, chronic disease prevention, policy, research training
2. Benson, Peter	A&S	Anthropology	ethnography, tobacco control, rural health, housing, migrant health, ethical and cultural issues in health, corporate/social responsibility
3. Blanchard, Melvin	Medicine	Internal Medicine, Division of Medical Education	medical education, clinical training
4. Caldwell, Cheryl	Medicine	Program in Physical Therapy	physical therapy (clinical, research)
5. Colditz, Graham	Medicine	Surgery, Division of Public Health Sciences	cancer & chronic disease prevention, tobacco, obesity disease risk, risk prediction modeling, research training
6. Friedel, David	A&S	Archeology	pre-classic Maya Period in Northern Guatemala, archeology training, capacity building
7. Gustafson, Bret	A&S	Anthropology	Latin American social movements, state transformation, politics of development
8. Iannotti, Lora	Social Work	Social Work	young child nutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, infectious diseases and poverty pathways, evaluation research
9. Patel, Rupa	Medicine	Internal Medicine, Infectious Disease	STD/STI risk reduction and prevention, HIV prevention, high-risk groups incl. MSM. Director of WU global health scholars in medicine program
10. Powderly, William	Medicine	Internal Medicine, Infectious Disease	STD/STI risk reduction and prevention, HIV prevention, global health
11. Thomas, Kedron	A&S	Anthropology	moral and legal regulations, productions regimes, has previously worked in Guatemala
12. Wichelman, Cynthia	Medicine	Emergency Medicine	training, business