

Proposed Cohort Collaborative project

As a result of past meetings involving, and recent discussions between the three Health Cohort hires, we propose the following general research project that utilizes our respective research interests. There is a need to empirically investigate and critically examine environmental issues (writ large) affecting the health and well-being of members of communities with concentrated poverty in Fresno and the surrounding area.

Jaymin Kwon is proposing the development of a pilot project that will characterize the past and current assessment of exposures to environmental emission sources, compile the past and current environmental and health outcome data on the GIS database, then prioritize the physical and mental health issues in community of populations of interest. The expected results from the proposed study will provide environmental factors that are adversely affecting physical/mental health in the area by impact the welfare of individuals, families and the community at large, the ability of individuals to effectively utilize resources that might improve their health and their life course.

Marinn Pierce is proposing the development of a complementary project that integrates a holistic approach to wellness, seeking out available resources, be they of a personal, social or spiritual nature, which can be effectively used to improve the well-being of community members. This project will broaden the gaze of health concerns beyond prevention and treatment to include those factors that enable flourishing. She will utilize the findings of Dr. Kwon's initial assessment to inform specific intervention development.

Andrew Fenton will work to both facilitate knowledge translation between the teams created by Drs. Kwon and Pierce and interested parties both in and outside of academia. To accomplish the latter, we envision not only publishing papers in respectable academic journals, but organizing public events where cohort members can discuss their research projects with various stake-holders in ways that permit critical self-reflection and responsiveness within the projects themselves.

Dr. Kwon envisions a time-line that permits the development of a team over the summer of 2012 to begin a pilot study during the 2012—13 academic year. Dr. Pierce will begin following upon receiving the data for Dr. Kwon's pilot study and anticipates spending several months cultivating relationships before implementing her project. We will avail ourselves of the expertise and knowledge of Dr. Cassandra Joubert in moving these projects forward. We envision meetings every month between Drs. Fenton, Kwon, Pierce and Joubert, to take stock of progress, discuss challenges and permit the emergence of new directions as our knowledge of the health issues facing communities with concentrated poverty in Fresno and surrounding area deepens.

Cohort hires hope to participate in a collaborative coalition with Fresno County Department of Public Health as part of the Fresno County Community Transformation Grant.