
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

NAME: **Sandra G. Suther**

POSITION TITLE: Professor, Economic, Social & Administrative Pharmacy

eRA COMMONS USER NAME (credential, e.g., agency login): sandrasuther

EDUCATION/TRAINING *(Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, include postdoctoral training and residency training if applicable. Add/delete rows as necessary.)*

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE <i>(if applicable)</i>	Completion Date MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY
University of Texas at San Antonio	B.A.	12\1996	Anthropology
University of Texas at San Antonio	M.A.	08/2000	Medical Anthropology
Texas A&M University	PhD	12/2003	Health Education

A. Personal Statement

I have over 20 years' experience conducting community-based participatory research with a focus on social determinants and inequities in health care. I have a broad background in medical anthropology, with specific training and expertise in cultural competency in the health care system. Previously, I was involved with a 3 year research project which investigated barriers to the access of genetic services by Mexican American women in South Texas. This project used a qualitative and ethnographic approach with clients, health care providers, lay midwives and folk healers from the South Texas sites as well as selected sites in Mexico. Other research includes racial and ethnic disparities in access to genetic technology, as well as concerns about the misuse of genetic testing, confidentiality, and distrust in the medical system. Additionally, I assisted in the training of over 70 community health workers through the Community Health Workers (CHW) Research and Training Institute (UF/FAMU) to provide nutrition and physical activity education for prevention of obesity. Recently, I trained "Gadsden County Health Ambassadors" to help identify factors in their community that are contributing to barriers in accessing culturally-sensitive compassionate and affordable healthcare in order to recommended solutions to address those factors. Previous research and evaluation include the development of an Environmental Health and Toxicology Educational Research Program (2010-2012) to train county health care providers and health profession students to increase community knowledge of environmental health risks linked to exposures to toxic environmental hazards in Duval County, Florida. I have been evaluating programs and health projects for over 15 years, serving as internal and external evaluator for 14 funded programs (Texas Department of Health, Florida Department of Health, HRSA, NIH, NSF, NCI, Howard Hughes Medical Institute). Presently, I am the evaluator for the Region IV Public Health Training Center Local Performance Site, a collaborative project of Emory University and Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) and also the FAMU/UF NCI P20 Florida Minority Cancer Research & Training Center. **I will serve as the community outreach core lead.**

B. Positions and Honors

- 2016 – pres. Professor, Economic, Social & Administrative Pharmacy,
College of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences, Florida A&M University
- 2010 - 2016 Associate Professor, Behavioral Science & Health Education, Institute of Public Health,
College of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences, Florida A&M University
- 2004 – 2010 Assistant Professor, Behavioral Science & Health Education, Institute of Public Health, College of
Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences, Florida A&M University

Honors:

- 2004 Outstanding Dissertation of the Year, 2003-2004, "*Genomic Medicine in Primary Care: Texas Physicians' Adoption of an Innovation.*" Department of Health & Kinesiology, College of Health Human Development, Texas A&M University
- 2008 Teacher of the Year Award 2007- 2008, Institute of Public Health, College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Florida A&M University
- 2012 Teacher of the Year Award 2011 - 2012, Institute of Public Health, College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Florida A&M University

C. Contribution to Science

1. Minority racial and ethnic groups are at higher risk for developing type 2 diabetes. These groups also experience more severe complications from diabetes and have higher mortality rates as a result of the disease, such as cardiovascular disease, amputation and kidney failure. Underserved rural ethnically disparate populations benefit from health education outreach efforts that are conveyed and translated by specially-trained community health ambassadors. Project H.I.G.H. (Helping Individuals Get Healthy), was developed to target the priority areas of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Utilizing trained community health ambassadors, CDC's *The Road to Health Toolkit* as well as *New Beginnings: A Discussion Guide for Living Well with Diabetes* was used as a model for a community-based educational program. The overall goal of Project H.I.G.H is to implement and evaluate 1) a coordinated, behavior-focused, family-centered, community-based educational program and; 2) a client service coordination effort resulting in improved health outcomes (BMI, Glucose Levels, BP) for individuals with type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease in Gadsden County, Florida. The first year's evaluation of this project resulted in a publication: Suther, S., Battle, A., Battle-Jones, F., Seaborn, C. (2016). Utilizing health ambassadors to improve type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease outcomes in Gadsden County, Florida. *Evaluation and Planning*, 55:17-26.

2. Evaluations of sexuality education efforts to decrease teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections pose strategic and methodological difficulties, including programs resistance to evaluation due to fear of losing funding and/or political support; design of valid and reliable evaluations with noncontaminated control groups and inadequate funding allotted to evaluation. As part of the evaluation of the federally funded "abstinence-only" sex education programs (for the prevention of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases) conducted in Texas, the theoretical basis, or the logic underlying a sample of abstinence only-until-marriage programs was examined in the following publications:

Rasberry, C., Goodson, P., Buhi, E., Pruitt, B., Wilson, K., Suther, S. (2007). Texas abstinence educators' self-efficacy to motivate youth sexual abstinence. *American Journal of Sexuality Education*. 2(3):59-78.

Goodson, P, Pruitt, B.E., Suther, S, Wilson,K, Buhi, E. (2006). Is abstinence education theory-based? The underlying logic of abstinence education programs in Texas. *Health Education & Behavior*. 33(2):252-271.

Goodson, P, Suther, S., Pruitt, B.E., & Wilson, K. (2003). Defining abstinence: Views of directors, instructors, and participants in abstinence-only until marriage programs in Texas. *Journal of School Health*. 73(3), 91-96.

3. Identifying key barriers to health seeking behavior is one of the major challenges for epidemiologists and social scientists. As new predictive genetic tests and precision medicine become more available, there is a concern that the already evident racial and ethnic disparities in health may even get wider. In this study we investigated and compared the multiple dimensions of mistrust about genetic testing by race/ethnicity, gender, and education by using a recent national representative data.

Suther, S, Kiros, GE. (September, 2009). Barriers to the use of genetic testing: A study of racial and ethnic disparities. *Genetics in Medicine*. 11(9):655-652. Paper also presented at the annual American College of Medical Genetics, Nashville Tennessee.

GE Kiros, S Suther. Multiple dimensions of mistrust to genetic testing: The effects of race, gender, and education. American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, 2007.

Seaborn, C., Suther, S., Lee, T., Kiros, G., Becker, A., Campbell, E., Robinson, J. (2016). Utilizing genomics through family health history with the theory of planned behavior: Prediction of type 2 diabetes risk factors and preventive behavior in an African American population in Florida. *Public Health Genomics*. 19(2):69-80.

4. Infant mortality is a key public health concern in the United States. Although infant mortality rates (IMRs) have declined, the rates among blacks are more than twice that of other racial/ ethnic groups. Some Florida counties have black IMR more than four times the white IMR. The purpose of this study was to explore community awareness and perceptions of the rising black IMR in Gadsden County, Florida.

Close, F., Suther, S., Foster, A., El-Amin, S., Battle, A. (2013). Community perceptions of Black infant mortality: A qualitative inquiry. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*. 24(3):109-1101

5. Until the late 1960's, Jacksonville, Florida incinerated its solid waste with the resultant ash deposited in landfills or used to fill flood-prone areas. These filled areas were later developed into parks, school sites and residential areas. With the establishment of the Federal Superfund Program in 1980, lead in soil at these sites was the major toxicant of concern and driver of clean-up actions. During the period of assessment of lead-levels in soil, there were no established lines of communication between the City and residents of affected neighborhoods resulting in mistrust in the community. The purpose of this study was to develop a community-based, culturally-sensitive Community Environmental Toxicology Curriculum (CETC) for community stakeholders to inform them of risks, health effects, remediation processes and preventive measures.

Becker, A., Suther, S., Harris, C., Pawlowicz, G., Tucker, G., Dutton, M., Close, F., Hilliard, A., Gragg, R. (2017). Community-based participatory research at Jacksonville Florida superfund ash site: Toxicology training to improve the knowledge of the lay community. *Florida Public Health Review*, 15:61-74.

D. Additional Information: Research Support and/or Scholastic Performance

NIMHD/NIH

03/01/2019 –

02/28/2024

FAMU Center for Health Disparities Research Center (CHDR) - U54 RCMI

Soliman (PI)

Role: Community Engagement Core (CEC) – Core Leader

The long-term goals of the Center are to reduce cancer health disparities in Blacks and increase cancer disparity research. The CEC focus is to develop, enhance, and strengthen relationships and partnerships with our community-based organizations in the Gadsden and Leon County African American communities to create a sustainable research and outreach environment for eliminating cancer disparities.

NCI – NIH U54

09/01/2018 – 08/31/2023

Florida-California Cancer Research, Education and Engagement (CaRE²) Health Equity Center

000004325 Reams (PI), Redda (PI) FAMU

Role: Community Outreach Core (COC) - Core Leader

The long term goals of the Center are: to reduce cancer disparities in Blacks and Latinos in Florida and California as well as increase cancer disparity research. The COC focus is to disseminate research findings, educate the community regarding prostate and pancreatic cancer and improve participation in biomedical research.

Completed Research Support

UB6HP27875-01, T278656 HRSA Harris (PI)

09/01/2014 – 08/31/2018

Region IV – Public Health Training Center Local Performance Site

Role: Faculty Investigator, Evaluator

The focus area of the R-IV PHTC is infectious diseases. The goal of the LPS is to respond to the priority training and resource needs of public health professionals within their own state.

1P20CA192990-01 NIH-NCI Reams (PI)

09/22/2014 – 08/31/2018

(1 of 2) Florida Minority Cancer Research & Training Center: Feasibility Studies

Role: Evaluator

Our project focuses on developing a Florida Minority Cancer Research & Training (MiCaRT) Center that will expand our cancer research and training opportunities for URM faculty and students at UF and FAMU and ultimately grow the number of URM scientists and clinical investigators in biomedical research.

1R25GM107777-01 NIH NIGMS Goodman, C.B. (PI)

09/26/2013 – 05/31/2018

Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program at FAMU

Role: Evaluator, Faculty Investigator

The goal of Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program in the Biomedical Sciences at Florida A&M University (FAMU) is to cultivate a program that increases the numbers of underrepresented minority (URM); African Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans; students from Tallahassee Community College to obtain a baccalaureate degree in the biomedical sciences.

State University System Board of Governors Tucker (PI), Odedina (PI), Harris (PI) Dec 2010-Dec 2012

The University of Florida - Florida A&M University Community Health Workers

(CHW) Research and Training Institute

Role: Evaluator, Faculty Investigator

This project focuses on training unemployed, part-time and low-skilled workers to be formally trained CHWs in order to provide a needed health service and related job opportunities to the State of Florida's minority, medically under-served, and rural populations.

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) Harris/Gragg (PI) 09/01/2009 - 8/31/2012

Environmental Health and Toxicology Educational Research Program (U01)

Jacksonville Racial and Ethnic Environmental Approaches to Community Health (REEACH)

Role: Evaluator, Faculty Investigator

The purpose of this partnership with Duval County Health Department, Florida Health Department, and FAMU is to train county health care providers and health profession students to increase community knowledge of environmental health risks linked to exposures to toxic environmental hazards.

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Peoples-Sheps/Harris (PI) 09/01/2011 - 08/31/2013

UF/FAMU - Rural South Public Health Training Center (RSPHTC)

Role: Faculty Investigator

The purpose of this center is to identify the needs of the public health workforce and residents of underserved areas and tailor training and services based on those needs, with a special emphasis on needs related to HIV/AIDS.

Role: Faculty Investigator