Proposal Submission Details and General Guidelines

Menstrual Health: Research, Representation and Re-Education

22nd Biennial Conference of the

Society for Menstrual Cycle Research

June 23-24, 2017

Kennesaw State University, Atlanta GA, USA

2017 marks the 40th anniversary of the Society for Menstrual Cycle Research (SMCR). At that time, we were the only women’s health organization focusing on menstrual experience. Then, and now, we embrace an interdisciplinary, feminist approach to research on the topic and promote the application of research findings in efforts to improve menstrual health as it relates to over-all well-being.

To honor our past contributions, but more importantly, to highlight current research and identify future work to be done, our 2017 conference welcomes participation from

* researchers
* scholars and academics
* health care professionals and clinicians
* public policy advocates
* NGOs and international agencies
* public health, school and faith-based educators
* product manufacturers
* writers
* students and
* others interested in the menstrual cycle, reproductive and women’s health.

**Plenary panels** will include presenters of cutting-edge work that is being undertaken in the following major areas:

**1. Period Politics, Policy and Activism:**  In this session, panelists will comment on activist efforts intended to enhance menstrual health and well-being, including for instance, the campaign to eliminate sales taxes from menstrual products, legislative efforts to improve the testing and regulation of the manufacture of menstrual products, testimony opposing the evolution of premenstrual changes to inclusion in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association , and student and community activism aimed at reducing menstrual stigma. Emphasis will be on the ways that menstrual cycle research has helped to advance these efforts as well as what kinds of further research can be brought to bear upon it to help ensure the effectiveness of activist efforts.

**2. Cycling Across Borders**: **Translational Conversations:** The menstrual cycle is a part of life for roughly half of the world's population. However, the way in which menstruation is understood, experienced and managed and the challenges faced vary greatly across cultural contexts and borders - possibly even from town to town. In this session, panelists will address location-specific challenges - and respective solutions - that are happening across the globe, as well as how might we be able to exchange learnings to create a broader view of menstrual experience?

**3. The Menstrual Experiences of Underserved Individuals:** Access to health care and menstrual management is a struggle for many menstruators who occupy minority status, including, for example, individuals with disabilities, transgender individuals, individuals in the military, and in prison, or members of an ethnic minority in a particular location. In this session, panelists will address what we know about the menstrual experiences of some of these individuals and offer suggestions about how access to better menstrual health care be improved to better meet their needs?

**4. Menstrual Education – Fact and/or Fiction:** Menstrual education to people of all ages is delivered by a variety of educators, health care practitioners, family members, product manufacturers, and in a variety of settings, e.g. within families, in school or faith-based classes, community and NGO programs, on the internet and in fiction. In this session, speakers will comment on efforts within these various settings to encourage in depth thinking about how can menstrual education better serve all menstruators.

**Breakout Sessions**: Our Plenary Panels will start us off, but we hope your submissions for presentations in related breakout sessions will provide even more depth to our thinking about these topics. Please consider submitting proposals for presentations that relate to one or more of these topics.

However, if your work addresses another topic, don’t hesitate to submit a proposal to present that work. There are opportunities that will showcase the expansive nature of the SMCR scholarship, advocacy and reach.

**Below are some suggestions that you might consider as you frame your submission in relation to the conference topics.**

Submissions relating to Period Politics, Policy and Activism might address:

* policies related to menstruation that have changed, and how this occurred
* policies we would like to see changed or enacted, and related evidence-based rationale
* how to ensure that activist efforts advance menstrual health
* research to indicate how menstrual activism is, or isn’t, changing the world
* next steps for menstrual activists

Submissions related to Cycling Across Borders: Translational Conversations might touch on:

* how to bring the local to the global, and the global to the local, to ask questions that explore menstrual health across national and international borders
* menstrual issues that cut across all locations
* how to support one another given location-specific concerns
* what have we learned about menstrual health from different locations

Submissions related to the Menstrual Experiences of Underserved Populations might address:

* the menstrual health needs of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (an underserved group)
* successful outreach efforts to meet the menstrual health needs of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(an underserved group)
* evaluation research evaluation of successful outreach efforts to meet the menstrual health needs of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (an underserved group)
* how to publicize and replicate/scale up successful location-specific outreach efforts to impact similarly undeserved individuals in another location

Submissions related to Menstrual Education might address:

* research on menstrual education efforts, including evaluation of existing menstrual educational curricula that identify gaps, impact and outcomes
* elements of menstrual education we might want for all menstruators
* evidence-based menstrual education curricula that are sensitive to location specific issues
* ways that educators have managed constraints in any location or setting to minimize obstacles to menstrual education
* effective ways to critique misinformation on the cycle, especially given the reach of online sources of information
* quality menstrual education programs for boys and men

**General Guidelines for Submission**s:

1. **Paper proposals** are for individual oral presentations of approximately 15 minutes duration with 5 additional minutes for discussion that will be grouped thematically in sessions as space allows. Chairpersons will be appointed by the program committee. There will be no discussants. Handouts are encouraged.

2. **Panel/symposium proposals** are theme-based oral sessions lasting one hour and a half. Four papers, each 15 minutes in duration will be presented, followed by a final 30 minutes for discussion. A discussant introduces the presenters and encourages interchange between presenters and participants. The discussant summarizes and comments for 10 minutes of the 30 minutes designated for discussion. We encourage submissions of organized panels complete with theme/topic, discussants, paper presenters and order of the talks. Handouts are encouraged.

3. **Poster presentations** are formats that allow for extended discussion of the presentation with the author(s). Posters are prepared with information that can be read from a short distance (two to three feet). Handouts are encouraged.

**4. Workshops:** are intended as training and/or information sessions. Submissions should include the workshop title, the problem or expertise addressed, an outline of the proposed content, any specific “take-aways” participants should expect, and the time allotment desired.

**5. Menstruation Education Curricula/Activities:**  If you have implemented a successful menstrual education curriculum or activity, we hope you will share it with others. Please consider sending your curriculum/activity for posting on the SMCR website along with an informational cover sheet.

Personally identifying information will be removed from submission before review.