

“A Review of Factors That Influence Physical Activity in Individuals with Arthritis”

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Arthritis affects 43 million Americans, and this number is expected to rise to 60 million in the next decade. Since no cure exists for most of the over 100 different types of arthritis, the negative impact on one's physical, psychological, and social health is tremendous.

Due to the negative impacts, national health agendas, such as Healthy People 2010, have recommended the use of physical activity as a way for people to effectively self-manage the disease. However, individuals with arthritis are less active in vigorous, moderate, and light physical activity compared to individuals without arthritis. Further, 45-60% of people with arthritis who begin a physical activity program will drop out.

Taken together, this information suggests that research is needed to identify correlates of physical activity in individuals with arthritis. Correlates are defined as factors that are associated with and/or impact physical activity in people with arthritis. Once identified, then intervention programs can be designed to positively impact these correlates, and thus, physical activity in this population. The eventual goal would be to increase the number of individuals with arthritis who are regularly active and thus, who improve in health status.

The purpose of this project is to summarize the research on correlates of physical activity in individuals with arthritis. In line with this purpose, the student will work with me on the following activities:

- Conducting a literature search to identify research that has examined correlates of physical activity in individuals with arthritis.
- Obtaining these articles by copying them at the K-State libraries and/or ordering them through interlibrary loan.
- Summarizing each article.
- Creating a summary table that illustrates the state of research on correlates of physical activity in individuals with arthritis which will be presented at the end of the term.

The general goal of this project is to help the student learn to identify the current state of research in a particular field. This project will be especially relevant to any student interested in exercise/health psychology and/or interested in obtaining research-related experience to help her/him decide about pursuing graduate education later in their scholastic career.

“Women as Healers in Hispanic Culture and Literature”

Dr. Lucia Garavito, Department of Modern Languages

This interdisciplinary project focuses on the complex figure of the healer (curandera, yerbatera, visionaria, santa, bruja, hada madrina) in Hispanic culture from pre-Columbian times to the present. The emphasis will be on the various representations, manifestations, and roles of this figure in connection with changing social, historical, and political circumstances.

A key point in this research is to explore the relationship between gender issues, healing, and empowerment. The theoretical framework will incorporate material related to myth studies, Jungian psychology, anthropology, religion studies, art, and literature.

The student-scholar will become familiar with the steps involved in researching a topic and using the material thus collected critically to illuminate the reading of some primary literary texts. S/he will be expected to:

1. Develop a bibliography on healers on the field(s) of her/his choice.
2. Collect, read, and summarize relevant articles.
3. Find art work and film material related to the topic.
4. Read literary texts in Spanish and English.
5. If possible, relate this research to his/her own experience with women as healers in his/her family or community. Oral tradition and/or interviews with relatives or friends could be part of this process.
6. Develop a formal paper or oral presentation on a theme related to the researched topic. Sigma Delta Pi, the Spanish honor society, might be interested on having the student-scholar as a guest speaker. (The student-scholar must have adequate bilingual skills in English and Spanish.)