The Center for Research on Population and Health Research Incubation Seminars, Spring 2016

We are pleased to announce that we are resuming our Research Incubation Seminars. The seminars are scheduled on selected Wednesdays 12:00-13:00 (Van Dyck Room 336), with a presentation of around 30 minutes and the rest of the hour for discussion.

February 17, David Wrisley and Shady Elbassuoni
Extracting and analyzing data from texts: literature, computer science, and public health
Textual analysis has recently received attention from public health researchers, but it has a long history in the humanities and social sciences. This seminar presents work on specific entities that can be automatically extracted from literary texts in English, how those can be correlated with other aspects of language, and how those correlations can be formally represented (maps, charts, networks). It will discuss the challenges that extraction and representation pose, and the potential innovation that such interdisciplinary efforts represent for public health research.

March 9, Ghada El Hajj-Fuleihan and Kamal Badr
Bringing together clinical excellence and public health impact
In this seminar, two members of AUB’s Faculty of Medicine talk about their efforts to disseminate clinical knowledge and improve practice beyond the walls of the hospital. The seminar is designed to stimulate a reflection on collaborations across medicine and public health and how to build on the strengths of both in order to maximize impact and improve well-being.

March 16, Imad Elhajj and Marco Bardus
Digital applications for behavior prediction and risk assessment
In this seminar, we bring together an engineer who has developed medical devices, algorithms, and apps, and a health communication specialist who has analyzed technology-based behavioral interventions using social media and mobile apps/wearables. They will describe the research they have conducted on monitoring devices, automated assessments, and mobile apps, and how these are applied to medicine and public health. The implications of such work for health interventions and programs will be discussed.

April 6, Pierre Mouganie and Francesca Battistin
Regression discontinuity design: Lessons from economic and humanitarian interventions
In many economic, humanitarian and public health interventions, it is unfeasible or unethical to assign a control group that does not receive the intervention in order to assess its effects. Regression discontinuity design (RDD) is a quasi-experimental design that elicits causal effects of interventions by assigning a cutoff or threshold above or below which an intervention is assigned. This presentation discusses examples of economic and humanitarian interventions that have been evaluated using RDD, and pulls lessons for the use of RDD in public health intervention and policy evaluation.

April 20, Abla Sibai and Samer Jabbour
Research value, research waste, and the example of aging research and policies in the Arab region
In this seminar, two faculty members from FHS step back from research and its results, to ask “meta-questions” about what we learn from considering the sum of research on a given subject. Starting from her work on aging research and a scoping review she conducted with the Non-Communicable Disease group, Abla Sibai reflects on what it means in terms of quantity, quality, and policy implications. Samer Jabbour highlights recent developments in scholarship on research waste and value, discusses how these areas intersect and diverge, and shares preliminary findings of a study to document waste in reporting of health research.