

2021-2022 Assistant Professor Excellence (APeX) Speaker Series

"Sick and tired of being sick and tired: A qualitative study examining COVID-19, racism, and mental health among middle-class Black women"

Wednesday, February 23, 2022

12:15 - 1:15 pm

via Microsoft Teams

Dr. Quenette Walton

Assistant Professor

Graduate College of Social Work



Black women have been significantly impacted by COVID-19 and racism. They've experienced financial and mental angst, yet many are not receiving mental health services. In this study, I sought to understand Black women's experiences with COVID-19, racism, and their mental health. Forty-three semi-structured interviews were conducted with Black women across several states. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using constructivist grounded theory. Women described "feeling sick and tired" and three major categories emerged: navigating COVID-19 and racism, mental health management, and my faith getting me through. The feelings of being sick and tired was central to these women's experiences with COVID-19 and racism. It is important for practitioners to create welcoming spaces for Black women to engage in services and explore what it means for them to feel sick and tired during unprecedented times.

Speaker Biography

Dr. Walton is an assistant professor in the GCSW. The aims of her research program are to develop knowledge and theory that informs policies, practices, and culturally relevant and evidenced-based interventions in order to reduce depression and increase wellness/well-being among middle-class Black women. She realizes that depression experiences and wellness/well-being do not occur in isolation; thus, she also focuses on social class as a social determinant of health and mental health disparities. She received her PhD from the University of Illinois at Chicago, an MSW from the University of Chicago, and a BA from the University of Michigan.

The Assistant Professor Excellence Lecture Series (APeX) is intended to showcase the breadth and depth of groundbreaking research, scholarship, and creative activity being undertaken by UH early career faculty across disciplines, as well as to offer opportunities for cross-disciplinary networking.



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