



## SWSA Research Seminar Series

### *Addressing Suicide Risk through Culture-Based Depression Assessment and Education in Chinese American Immigrants*

**ALL ARE WELCOME**

#### **Rose Wong**

Assistant Professor, Dept. of Social Work, California State University, East Bay

#### **Nancy Lim-Yee**

Program Director, Chinatown Child Development Center, San Francisco

#### **Rufina Wing Yee Wu**

Clinical Social Worker, Private Practice, Berkeley

#### **Carmen Guo**

Field Instructor, 中大社工服务中心, Guangzhou



Dr. Rose Wong



Ms. Nancy Lim-Yee



Ms. Rufina Wu



Ms. Carmen Guo

**April 8, 2014 (Tuesday), 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.**

**Room 532, 5/F, The Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus, HKU**

#### **Abstract:**

Asian Americans have a lower suicide rate than the general U.S. population. However, higher rates of suicide and suicidal behaviors among Asian American young adults and older adults compared with the general population and culture-specific causes and risk factors for suicidal behaviors reported in the literature highlight the need for developing culturally sensitive means of prevention and intervention. While depressive disorders are a good indicator of suicidal risk in the general population, the correlation of depression and suicide for Asian Americans is reported to be weak, implying that targeting depression intervention as a means of preventing suicide would be less efficacious. In the current study, we hypothesized that depression and suicide are closely linked in Asian Americans and that depression assessment and prevention if conducted in a culturally sensitive manner rather than applying instruments developed in European American samples could be an important means of preventing depression and suicide in Asian Americans. We applied an emic, community-based participatory research approach with social workers, health and mental health professionals, community members and researchers working together to develop culture-based, Chinese language depression assessment and educational materials for Chinese immigrant adolescents, adults and older adults. The materials (brochures with symptom checklists, posters, and videos with skits performed by actors) include culture-specific expressions of depressive and suicidal distress. The expressions contain social and interpersonal aspects of distress such as family conflict, stigma of mental illness, loss of social status, poor integration into U.S. society, loss of face and shame, acculturation gap among family members, and burdening one's family. A next step of research will be to evaluate the effectiveness of the materials.

#### **About the Presenters:**

Rose Wong, MPA, MSW, PhD, specializes in ethnic minority mental health and community-based research, especially developing culturally grounded prevention and intervention approaches for immigrants.

Nancy Lim-Yee, MSW, LCSW, has provided mental health services to children, youth, and families for over 35 years. She is an active advocate for culturally competent and linguistically appropriate services to under-served communities.

Rufina Wing Yee Wu, MSW, LCSW, works in San Francisco hospitals serving Asian American immigrants and provides consultation on evidence-based intervention for integrated care programs.

Carmen Guo, MSW, provides supervision and training to social workers at 中大社工服务中心, a non-profit community-based organization, and interns from the Dept. of Social Work at Sun Yat-sen University. She was a t.v./radio news announcer and program host devoted to issues of mental health and social welfare policies.

**Online Registration:** [http://hkuems1.hku.hk/hkuems/ec\\_regform.aspx?quest=Y&ueid=](http://hkuems1.hku.hk/hkuems/ec_regform.aspx?quest=Y&ueid=)  
For enquiries, please contact Mr. Sam Lee at [samsamlee@hku.hk](mailto:samsamlee@hku.hk) or 39172097.