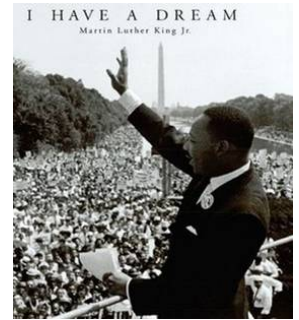


STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST: Fall 2019



# Spirituality, Religion, & Public Health



## Prizes\*

\$1000 first  
\$600 second  
\$300 third

4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

What is the relevance, good or bad,  
of spirituality and/or religion to the  
health of the public and to the  
field of Public Health?

<http://spirituality-public-health-essay.com/>

## National Essay Competition

for Fall 2019

Public Health Graduate Students

### Eligibility

Submissions are encouraged  
from any and all graduate  
students in Public Health  
enrolled in Fall 2019 in an  
accredited School or College  
of Public Health or an  
ASPPH-affiliated Public  
Health Program (aspph.org).

### Background

More than 3000 empirical studies of  
religion/spirituality (R/S) and health have now  
been published, including more than 100  
systematic reviews and meta-analyses – see  
13 empirical reviews in 2018 book

*Why Religion and Spirituality Matter for Public  
Health: Evidence, Implications, and Resources.*  
Cham, Switzerland: Springer International  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-73966-3>

Longevity differentials of nearly 14 years added  
life have been linked to R/S factors. Other health  
professions such as medicine and psychology  
have made major strides in addressing R/S  
factors in teaching and research. National  
surveys indicate that public health educational  
leaders are receptive to teaching about the topic,  
and that public health students want more  
information. This contest aims to foster broader  
awareness of the vast R/S-health evidence base,  
and its relevance to Public Health as a field.

### Details, Timeline, & Submission

Essays should be between 1000 and 2000 words in length. Entries  
must be uploaded no later than Sunday, January 5, 2020.\*

\*For more information, and to upload submitted essays, please visit  
<http://spirituality-public-health-essay.com/>

To learn more about goings-on in this emerging field see the  
**Bulletin** of the: Public Health, Religion and Spirituality (PHRS)  
Network: <http://publichealthrs.org/bulletin/>

### Topics

Essays must discuss relations between spirituality/religion  
and Public Health, situating their arguments in the context  
of the more than 3000 published empirical studies of R/S  
and health. Example topics:

- How can collaborations with religious communities  
empower populations to attain better health?
- How would community-based Public Health Education  
change if R/S factors were fully taken into account?
- In what ways are R/S factors relevant to improving well-  
established health behavior X or preventing the  
incidence of disease Y in population Z?
- What would be the nature of a new Public Health that  
better acknowledges R/S factors?
- How strong is the evidence that any dimension of  
spirituality or religion is a “fundamental cause” of health  
in the sense articulated by Link and Phelan (1995)?\*

### Criteria for Judging

Winning essays should be clearly written and should

- Include a clear thesis statement and its support
- Refer to empirical literature on R/S-health
- Explain health relevance
- Articulate Public Health relevance beyond  
perspectives of individually-focused health  
fields (e.g., medicine, psychology)\*