

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT ENDOWMENT FUNDS

Faculty Research Fund

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Proposal Title: Gynecologic Cancer Survivorship: The Experiences of Women in Arkansas
Delta

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ABSTRACT

Gynecologic cancers and treatments are life-changing experiences for women because these cancers affect core organs of femininity including the ovary, uterus, fallopian tubes, and cervix. Treatments for these cancers can affect women's ability to perform social tasks (e.g., physically caring for children) and roles integral to their sense of self (i.e., ability to biologically conceive). These issues can create uncertainty and identity problems for women as they try to reconcile their post- and pre-cancer bodies and perceptions about what a 'normal' female body should be, do and look like. Support from partners is crucial at this phase in women's lives as it can reinforce and/or ameliorate women's embodiments of effects of treatments. Given that few studies on the topic have focused on the experiences of women and their partners in medically underserved areas, this project will investigate the experience of gynecologic cancers in Arkansas Delta. This research is important in adding the voices of women and their partners in Arkansas Delta to the larger narrative about gynecologic cancer survivorship.