

Call for Papers on Systems Science Applications in Health Promotion and Public Health

Manuscripts due: May 1, 2012

Health Education & Behavior (HE&B), in collaboration with the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) at the National Institutes of Health, intends to publish a special issue of the journal devoted to the topic of *systems science*. This issue will showcase the application of various systems science methodologies to health promotion and public health research questions. Particular methodologies of interest include, but are not limited to: system dynamics modeling, agent-based modeling, network analysis, microsimulation, operations research, and various engineering approaches.

The goal of the special issue is to acquaint the readership of *HE&B* with the potential for systems science methodologies to address population health problems and to showcase current efforts in this area. We expect the special issue will appeal to researchers, public health practitioners, and policymakers.

For more information on what the term “systems science” encompasses, see the following NIH funding announcement, PAR-08-224: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-08-224.html>. Note that although this funding announcement has expired, its summary of systems science remains relevant.

Background and Details Regarding Manuscripts

Interest in this topic springs from the recognition that traditional research methods, which typically feature narrow problem definitions and linear analytic representations, are by themselves insufficient to adequately address the full complexity of our most pressing population health challenges. Systems science offers a complementary approach, capable of addressing more complex, interactive phenomena, while also attending to the practical constraints and opportunities that shape the social, physical, and organizational settings in which responses to those health challenges will occur.

All scholars with expertise in systems science are welcome to submit manuscripts. In addition, many institutions such as the NIH have formally acknowledged the value of systems science by investing in its use through research funding and training programs. Thus, we especially encourage those who have received institutional support for systems science research and/or training to report their findings, insights, accomplishments, and commentaries.

The editors are particularly interested in examples of work that will demonstrate how systems science methods have been used to engage practical challenges and opportunities within real-world organizational settings. The focus may be on any topics related to health policy or practice, including issues of implementation and dissemination. Specific areas of technical interest include, but are not limited to: temporal and spatial dynamics of population health problems; uses for sensor and/or big data (ubiquitous data) in models; models with real-time updating; uses of simulated scenarios for policy and program evaluation; and the participation of policymakers in using insights from models or simulations to inform their thinking and action.



Health topic areas of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Arthritis
- Asthma
- Cancer
- Cardiovascular disease
- Chronic disease
- Climate change and health
- Developmental issues over the life course
- Dietary behavior
- Diabetes
- Environment (including the behavioral and social and physical environment)
- Global health
- Health disparities
- Health equity
- Health services
- HIV/AIDS
- Hypertension
- Infectious disease
- Injury
- Maternal health
- Mental health
- Overweight and obesity
- Physical activity
- Population health
- Social determinants of health
- Substance use (including alcohol and other substances)
- Tobacco use
- Vaccination policy and/or behavior

Special consideration will be given to submissions that address multiple, interactive health priority areas.

Categories of Manuscripts

For this special issue, *HE&B* invites manuscripts in the following categories:

Editorials and Commentaries: The journal reviews both solicited and unsolicited editorials of up to 1,200 words (no abstract) and commentaries (including Perspectives on controversial topics, methodological issues, and theory) of up to 2,500 words of text (abstract of up to 150 words), plus references.

Full-Length Original Articles: Full-length original articles comprise reports of empirical research and other studies of up to 3,500 words of text (abstract of up to 250 words), plus tables and figures, and references.

Review Articles: Review articles present state-of-the science literature reviews of up to 4,000 words of text (abstract of up to 250 words), plus tables and figures, and references.

Brief Reports: Brief reports comprise manuscripts reporting empirical research or other studies that can be up to 2,000 words of text (abstract of up to 150 words) and no more than 2 tables and/or figures, plus up to 15 references.

Full length papers and brief reports are the two most sought after formats.

Submission Requirements

All manuscripts should be submitted online at the *HE&B* submission portal at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/heb>. The site contains detailed instructions on how to submit and track the progression of a manuscript through the review process. To be considered for inclusion in this series, manuscripts must be **submitted by May 1, 2012**. Earlier submissions are encouraged. We also request that the corresponding author **send a brief electronic message** as soon as possible to the guest editors describing the focus of the manuscript that is intended for submission. All papers will undergo standard peer review by the *HE&B* editors, guest editors, guest editorial board, and peer referees, as defined by *HE&B* policy. The *HE&B* Web site provides detailed instructions for authors; see: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsProdDesc.nav?ct_p=manuscriptSubmission&prodId=Journal200851 .

Guest Editors

Patricia L. Mabry, Ph.D.

Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research

National Institutes of Health

E-mail: mabryp@od.nih.gov

Bobby Milstein, Ph.D. M.P.H.

Hygeia Dynamics Policy Studio

E-mail: bobby@hygeiadynamics.net