

JSPH Faculty Profile - Spotlight on Diane J. Abatemarco, PhD, MSW

Diane J. Abatemarco, PhD, MSW is an Associate Professor and Director of the Doctoral Programs at JSPH. Dr. Abatemarco joined JSPH in 2009 from the University of Pittsburgh, School of Public Health, where she was primary faculty and Associate Director for the Center for Evaluation Research and Community Health. Dr. Abatemarco has worked in doctoral education for many years and helped to create PhD and Dr.PH programs for major universities.

Dr. Abatemarco has extensive expertise in maternal and child health; perinatal HIV; and global health. She is particularly affected and influenced by the international programs she has worked on, including a program that helped medical students working with Haitian refugees in the Dominican Republic. She also had the privilege of working on a number of projects in Croatia, including an adolescent alcohol prevention initiative and a public health and prevention infrastructure project. She has formed deep professional and personal connections through these programs. When asked what impressed her the most about her global health experiences, she stated, "It is shocking to see economically disadvantaged countries have more sense of community and volunteerism than in the US; there is a sense of civic responsibility, a feeling of being able to do more."

Dr. Abatemarco lights up when she discusses the JSPH doctoral program in Population Health Sciences and shares her passion for the program's mission. She explains the importance of a program that "provides state-of-the-art education, and is designed to build upon the

master's program... it prepares academic leaders, researchers, and clinicians to work in the field of population health and serves to integrate public health, clinical and health services research." The evolving healthcare landscape and the challenges ahead provide great impetus for students who want to actively participate in analyzing the complex questions and strategize for the solutions. Abatemarco states, "This program is the wave of the future. With its emphasis on transdisciplinary research, it is truly cutting-edge."

The demand for the program has been overwhelming. Students who are currently enrolled in the program represent a diverse range of professionals including: public health professionals; industry executives; and senior to mid-level leaders from non-profit organizations. The program offers a hybrid online and live classroom format to accommodate working students. It is one of the first Population Health Science doctoral programs in the country and the only such program in the region. Abatemarco takes great pride in providing a personal touch and an individualized approach for students who inquire about the program.

Dr. Abatemarco sees the value in creating multi-disciplinary professional relationships both within and outside of the Jefferson community. She is affiliated with the Department of Pediatrics where she mentors junior faculty and collaborates on research with Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children. She is on the Population Science research committee in the Department of Medicine; the research committee at Wills



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Eye Institute; and the research committee of the Maternity Care Coalition.

Abatemarco sees the future of Jefferson as having more emphasis on health services research and the population health sciences program fits in perfectly with this. "I hope that the program is pivotal in developing relationships with other faculty across the university." She also sees many avenues of potential program expansion including the possibility of a MD/PhD program.

Dr. Abatemarco is the mother of 5 and has 10 grandchildren. She loves her family life and is an avid runner. ■

For more information on doctoral programs at JSPH, contact Dr. Abatemarco at diane.abatemarco@jefferson.edu