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## Community Health & Epidemiology Seminar Series

### Dr. Zachary Zimmer

Tier 1 Canada Research Chair, Professor of Family Studies and Gerontology,  
Director of the Global Aging and Community Initiative  
at Mount Saint Vincent University

### ***Religiosity, spirituality, aging and health in global perspective***

Monday, September 18, 2017 at 12:00 PM

CH&E Classroom, r. 409, Centre for Clinical Research, 5790 University Ave

For more information contact: [kasia@dal.ca](mailto:kasia@dal.ca); 494-3860

**Abstract:** This talk will be a broad-based discussion about the project entitled, “Linking spirituality and religiosity to life and health expectancy: A global comparative study,” funded by the John Templeton Foundation. Global aging coupled with increased longevity commands that we explore elements that contribute to healthier in addition to longer lives. External factors such as diagnosis and treatment are important, but growing evidence points to the prominence of internal determinants. Research mostly concentrated in the U.S. suggests religiosity is one of those determinants. The association between religion and healthy aging is particularly important since around the world older persons are more likely than others to be involved in religious activity. It is possible then that religiosity may have ever increasing impacts on global population health. Recognizing this, the project uses a large set of well-regarded secondary data sources to estimate the contribution of religion and spirituality to total and healthy life expectancy. It also involves comparative analyses between religious indicators and health outcomes across a wide range of countries, regions and ways of expressing religious conviction. Preliminary findings from several specific analyses underway will be presented. The talk will end with a discussion about the direction that this project will take.

**Biography:** Dr. Zimmer received a PhD in Sociology with a concentration on Social Demography in 1998 from the University of Michigan. Since that time he has held positions at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, The Population Council in New York, The University of Utah and the University of California at San Francisco. Over the course of his career he has taught courses in demography, aging, health policy, research methods and statistics. Dr. Zimmer’s research focuses on global issues related to the health of older persons, studied from a demographic perspective. Much of his work has taken place in East and Southeast Asia where population aging and socioeconomic change has been swift and where older adults face many obstacles related to the changing nature of their social environment. He has also examined aging issues in sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Europe and the United States. His work has been published in top journals across a number of disciplines, such as gerontology, sociology, demography, medicine and epidemiology.

*\*\* For more information about upcoming seminars, please visit CH&E website at [che.medicine.dal.ca](http://che.medicine.dal.ca) \*\**