

# Beyond the (Standard) Male: Collaborating to Increase Faculty and Student Awareness of Sex and Gender Differences in Health Research

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## OBJECTIVE

Funded by the National Library of Medicine (NLM) and the National Institutes of Health's Office of Research in Women's Health (ORWH), this project partners with faculty in challenging traditional assumptions about the applicability of the "standard male" patient/subject by hosting networking events, presenting, and facilitating access to research in sex and gender differences in health.



## METHODS

Collaborating with faculty, librarians presented concepts and resources related to sex and gender differences in health to audiences varying in discipline and academic status. Three of four planned CoLABs—speed meeting sessions—have occurred and a day-long fall 2014 workshop has been planned to assemble researchers and students from across our campus and interested local community members to foster collaboration, encourage cross-fertilization of ideas on the issue of sex and gender differences in health and promote the exchange of useful contacts and resources.

## RESULTS

### SPRING 2014 COURSE PRESENTATIONS

Genetics : In January, 120 undergraduate students were assigned genetic disorders and instructed on searching literature sources on sex and gender differences. They integrated this new knowledge into term project posters presented during a poster session held in the library in April.

### SUMMERS (2013 & 2014)

- Introduction to Clinical and Translational Research course
- 11-day intensive course for 50-70 junior faculty, post-docs and graduate students, run by UF's CTSI and consisting of lectures and small group work
  - Small groups
    - o Each group has a faculty leader, a biostatistician and a librarian
    - o Each develops a research proposal on that year's theme
      - ☒ 2013: women's health/sex and gender differences in health
      - ☒ 2014: gender differences in pain

## RESULTS

### FALL 2014

Presentations in the following academic programs:

- Interdisciplinary Program
- Genetics & Genomics PhD
- Interdisciplinary Family Health (graduate and professional students work with families to identify major health concerns and potential solutions)
- Epidemiology Journal Club (graduate students)
- Courses in undergraduate Health Disparities minor:
  - o Introduction to Health Disparities
  - o Women's Health and Well Being

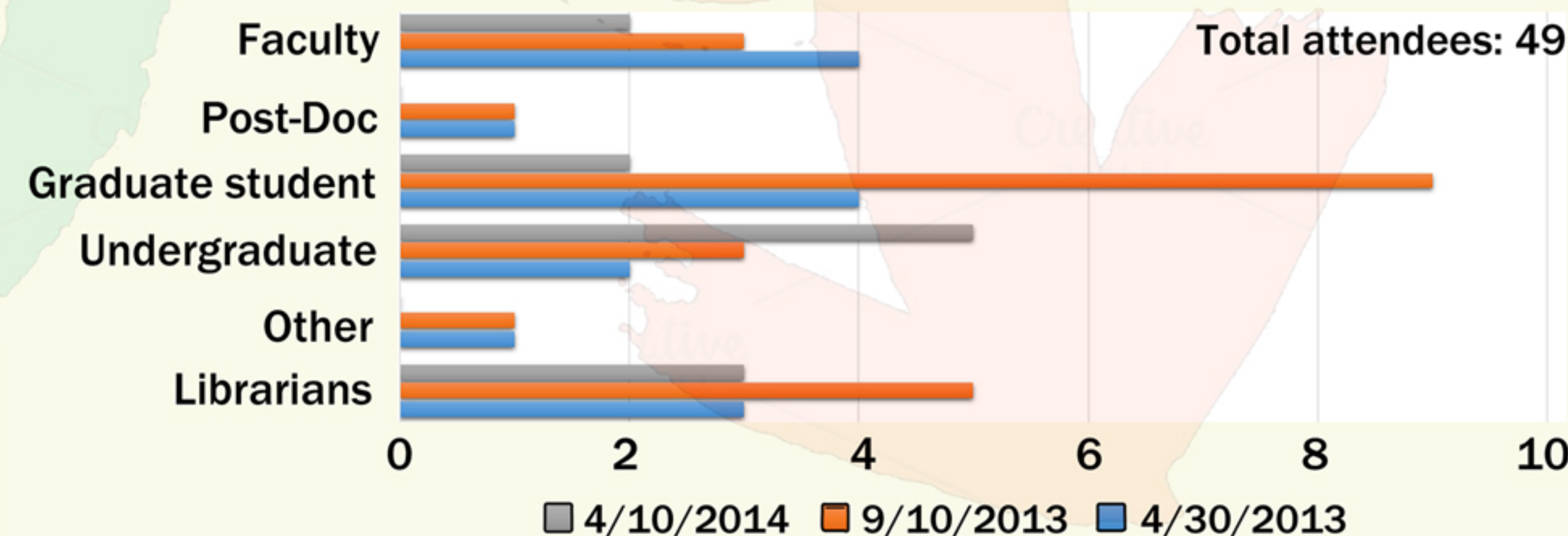
One day workshop in November on gender and health for UF faculty, students, staff and interested local community members, such as public health workers.

### CoLABs (2013 and 2014):

Part of CoLAB Planning Series®, invented by UF Libraries' grants manager Bess de Farber and attended by 1,690 individuals over 10 years

- Format: Presentation with video clips for inspiration and expectation-setting, then one-on-one "speed meetings", finishing with whole group summation
- Purpose: Encourage researchers from different disciplines to learn about others' work
- Focus: Mining hidden assets: passions, skills, resources

Co-LAB participation: Both 2013 Co-LABs combined with April, 2014 Co-LAB



## PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FROM CoLABs

### 1. What did you learn or gain from this CoLAB?

*'Met one person who could serve as a stats expert and could help with analysis of images'*

*'Dr. X is a potential collaborator for ways to engage her students with my research project'*

*'Talking to others to find new ways of thinking about things.'*

*'Found overlapping interests in unexpected places—humanities, social and health sciences'*



### 2. What will be your next steps?

*'Send follow-up info on my projects to a couple of people'*

*'Going to follow up with several people about resources'*



## CONCLUSION

With funding from the NIH Office of Research on Women's Health and the National Library of Medicine and careful creation of new and nurturing of existing relationships with faculty, our 4-5 member project team has provided presentations and hosted events that have helped raise awareness of the importance of researching and utilizing knowledge of sex or gender differences in health within our academic community. We have found the interest and existing knowledge base of faculty on this topic useful and the enthusiasm of the young researchers and students extremely encouraging.