About the Event

The 7th Annual International Conference on Ageing and Spirituality will be hosted by Concordia University Chicago (CUC) in River Forest, Illinois from June 4 - 7, 2017. The conference will bring together international leaders and experts on spirituality and aging, as well as leaders of community organizations and communities of faith. We hope you will attend and also share your expertise by participating in the conference.

The topic of spirituality and aging is of vital importance to our communities, especially as the population of older adults rapidly increases. As one of our previous plenary speakers, Keith Albans said, “consideration of spirituality and aging points us to powers and strengths that can flourish in the context of growing older.” It has been demonstrated that spirituality can strengthen resilience in older adults. The 7th International Conference theme is "Transition and Transcendence: Transforming Aging Through Spirituality," which we envision as an invitation to explore how aging presents us with opportunities to navigate transitions over the life course. Additionally, we will explore how we transcend the mundane and connect with something greater than ourselves while being transformed in the process.

The four days of the 2017 conference will feature a mix of plenary sessions with outstanding invited speakers, workshops, lectures, and posters. We encourage you to submit a proposal to present your work at the conference. Additionally, we will have a congregational track as well as a chaplaincy track. The congregational track for the 7th International Conference on Ageing and Spirituality is designed to create space and opportunity for individuals engaged in congregational work at various levels. The chaplaincy track will focus on the gifts that each chaplain brings to the work they do. Participants will have opportunities to share and act as a support group to each other. While these are established tracks, the conference will expand as additional proposals are received.

This International Conference attracts international researchers and scholars with expertise in aging, religion, and spirituality, as well as practitioners, policy-makers, clergy, laypeople, and care partners. All are welcome to come together for stimulating discussions, learning opportunities, and meaningful connections with others who care about the role of spirituality in aging persons’ lives.
**Venue**

All sessions will take place at Concordia University Chicago, 7400 Augusta St., River Forest, IL 60305.

**Sessions**

The 7th International Conference on Ageing and Spirituality offers four different settings for educational sessions. You’ll be prompted to choose the proposed session type when completing the submission form.

1. **Experiential Workshop** (90 minutes): Workshop sessions examine new program models, promising practices, or applied research on issues within the field of spirituality and aging. These 90-minute sessions must include at least two presenters and should feature interactive activities. AV included: projector, screen, and hook-up for your laptop.

2. **Symposium** (90 minutes): A symposium is a collection of three or four papers organized around a topic or issue of major importance in aging related to spirituality. The organizer or chairperson introduces the session, shows how the papers relate to one another and the topic, and moderates the discussion during this 90-minute session. To be considered, submit an abstract that summarizes the content of the overall symposium and brief descriptions of the papers, along with names of presenters. AV included: projector, screen, and hook-up for your laptop.

3. **Poster Session** (90 minutes): Poster sessions will be held concurrently during one timeslot. Presenters explain and answer questions about their posters, showcasing projects, programs, and research. Poster sessions can include one or more presenters. Details on poster session logistics, including sizes and display options, will be available in January 2017. In addition to the poster that is displayed, presenters are required to print their posters as handouts for participants.

4. **Paper** (90 minute session): Paper topics should relate directly to some aspect of aging and spirituality and address one or more of the themes of the conference. Papers are grouped together by topic and allowed a 20-minute presentation time per paper. There are between three and four papers in a 90-minute session. Time must be allotted for discussion. AV included: projector, screen, and hook-up for your laptop.
What we’re looking for

We are seeking proposals that will enhance understanding of the spiritual lives of people as they age.

In addition we are interested in sessions that will inspire the development of practices, programs, and policies related to spirituality that will promote the building of more cohesive and caring communities throughout the world.

2017 Focus Areas as They Relate to Spirituality and Aging

Recognizing the great diversity within the area of spirituality and aging-- in terms of scale, people served and/or engaged, strengths capitalized, needs addressed, and intervention strategies employed--we encourage you to be creative in your presentations.

- Spiritual transformations related to aging
- Transitions over the life course
- Spiritual pathways to resilience
- Creative expressions of spirituality
- Arts and creative programming in communities of faith
- Spiritual solutions for special populations
- Technology and implications for spirituality
- Lifelong spiritual learning and development
- Communities composed for all ages
- Spirituality as an integral part of health and wellness programs
- Spiritual aspects of caregiving
- Dementia and issues related to cognition in the context of spirituality
- Intergenerational relationships
- Older adults in congregations
- Special topics related to chaplaincy and congregations
- Personal planning for later life
Submission Information

Requirements: Complete the submission form online. Submissions MUST include the following information:

- Contact information for the primary presenter
- Contact information for additional presenters/panelists
- 2 - 3 sentence summary of credentials for each presenter
- Session title (no more than 12 words)
- Session objectives
- Session description (no more than 150 words)

The maximum number of proposal submissions for an individual is **two**. The maximum number of proposals from the same organization is **five**.

All submissions must be transmitted online using the form at 7thinternationalconference.org.

Deadline

The deadline for submission is **Sunday, January 15, 2017**. Eligible proposals must include ALL requested information. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Status Notification

All submitted proposals will be reviewed by at least two persons on the planning committee. A notification of the status of your proposal will be sent by March 1, 2017. **Conference presentations will occur June 4 - 7, 2017.** Please hold all dates until you are notified of your proposal status. We cannot guarantee requests for specific days or times for your presentation. Conference organizers occasionally combine workshops with complementary topics. You will be notified in advance if this occurs.
Special Considerations

The Conference Planning Committee is seeking proposals that are informative, relevant, and encourage opportunities to engage audience members. We are seeking a diverse cadre of presenters whose presentations:

- Demonstrate positive impact on older adults, families, the community and/or organizations
- Share innovative ideas and replicable information
- Are based on or supported by research, theory, and/or practice
- Address different levels of experience with work related to spirituality and aging
- Use interactive approaches for all types of learners
- Stimulate and encourage discussion

Registration Fees

Presenters are required to register for the Conference and to pay the registration fee by March 15th, 2017 to confirm their session. Early registration fees are valid until that date.

- **Early Bird Registration** (Nov 1 - Jan. 31, 2017): $350
- **Standard Registration** (Feb 1 - May 20, 2017): $450
- **Church Worker Registration** (Nov 1 - May 20, 2017): $250
- **Student Registration** (Nov 1 - May 20, 2017): $150
- **Day of Registration** (After June 3, 2017): $550

*Please note:* The Center for Gerontology at Concordia University Chicago and the 7th International Conference on Ageing and Spirituality do not pay transportation, lodging, or other costs for presenters.

*Any questions should be directed to our Event Team at 7thinternationalconference@gmail.com.*