MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR:

Dear Members of the Epidemiology Department:

It is with great pleasure to welcome all new and returning members in the department of epidemiology to a new academic year. We begin this year with high hopes as the campus returns to in-person teaching, working and other activities, but we must continue to remain aware of the Covid-19 Pandemic’s ongoing effects and evolving nature. These might be still unusual times as we navigate a new norm on campus.

The department of epidemiology will continue to fulfill our missions including research, education and service, to promote our faculty, students and staffs, and to be engaged in EDI activities. Thank you for your sustained efforts and supports that have allowed the Department of Epidemiology to kick off the 2021-2022 academic year and continue serving our department, Fielding School of Public Health, and Bruin community to the fullest.

Best Regards,

Zuo-Feng Zhang, MD, PhD
Distinguished Professor and Chair

Welcome to Fall 2021! This is an exciting time as we welcome many back to on-campus activities. Thank you to every member of the FSPH Epidemiology community for all of the ways in which you have adapted to changes and remained fully committed to public health during this critical time. Visit our department website to see the latest highlights.

For the latest news on COVID-19, visit FSPH’s COVID_19 Information Page.
Congratulations!

Taylor Mobley, MPH (senior research analyst, Epi MPH alum) received a Staff Appreciation and Recognition (STAR) Award for FY 2020-2021. The award program recognizes those staff members who have made exceptional contributions, going above and beyond regular work expectations to support the campus and their respective organizations.

Under the mentorship of Dr. Liwei Chen, PhD student, Xinyue Liu, has received the “South California NIOSH Education and Research Center-SCERC Pilot Project Research Training Grant” with a proposal entitled “Pre-conceptional and maternal occupational physical activity and cardiovascular disease risk factors and biomarkers among pregnant women: a longitudinal study”.

Dr. Beate Ritz was awarded 3 grants by: The Michael J. Fox for Parkinson's research titled, "Pesticide Exposure, Systems Biology, and Parkinson’s disease," the National Cancer Institute for research titled, "Arsenic and Other Co-metals in the San Carlos Apache Drinking Water" and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences for research titled, "A Multi-Omics Approach to Environment and Depression in Parkinson's (MOOD-PD)."

Dr. Anne Rimoin and her team (Dr. Nicole Hoff and Kirstin Chickering) were awarded 2 new grants by the FDA for research on "Strengthening pharmacovigilance systems and adverse events reporting for maternal immunization safety in the democratic republic of Congo," and by the DTRA for research on "MPX Threat Reduction Network - Using the Sentinel Sites in the DRC as a regional training center to create sustainable biosurveillance systems."

Dr. Alexandra Binder recently received an NCI Method to Extend Research in Time (MERIT) Award (R37). The project title is: "Characterizing the Risk of Chemotherapy Side Effects Based on Epigenetic Age and Modification by Resistance Training Intervention." The study will inform novel appraisal of whether epigenetic age can be used to identify colon cancer patients at high risk for chemotherapy toxicity, dose reductions, and delays.
Congratulations!

Dr. Elizabeth Rose Mayeda was recently awarded two new NIH R01 research grants. The first project aims to evaluate joint effects of redlining, racialized residential segregation, and air pollution exposure in early-life (assessed in 1940) on late-life cognitive decline and dementia incidence (assessed 1992-2018) in a U.S. nationally-representative study. The second project supports the Kaiser Healthy Aging and Diverse Life Experiences (KHANDLE) cohort study, which aims to evaluate lifecourse determinants of late-life cognitive decline and brain health among Asian, Black, Latino, and white older adults in northern California.

Dr. Eleanor Hayes-Larson (postdoctoral fellow) presented her research at the Society for Epidemiologic Research annual meeting in June 2021. Additionally, Dr. Eleanor Hayes-Larson and Taylor Mobley (senior research analyst, Epi MPH alum) gave a lecture on generalizability methods in Alzheimer’s and dementia research at the Advanced Psychometric Methods in Cognitive Aging Research Conference in August 2021.

Dr. Roch Nianogo has been selected as a Toffler Scholar by the Karen Toffler Charitable Trust. Professor Nianogo has also been awarded a special Breast Cancer Intramural Award and a Seed Grant.

Dr. Akihiro Nishi has been awarded the PRESTO grant by the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) under the research area “Evolution of Overconfidence and the Role of Early-Warning Signals amid Pandemics” for the next 3.5 years.

Dr. Onyebuchi Arah has been selected as the 2021 recipient of the American College of Epidemiology’s Outstanding Contributions to Epidemiology Award for substantial and impactful contributions to the field of epidemiology, by developing, extending, and applying rigorous epidemiologic methods for quantitative bias analyses, causal modeling, simulation methods for analyzing hypothetical interventions and policies, conceptualizing health and health systems, and software and programming codes for the methods.

Dr. Matthew Mimiaga has been awarded 4 new grants over the past 6 months: 8.8 million NIAID U01, 4 million NINR R01, $700,000 NIMH R34, and $700,000 NIMH R34. These are in addition to 3 existing R01s that have been transferred to UCLA.
Dr. Noel Weiss will have his sabbatical in the FSPH Department of Epidemiology in Winter Quarter 2022. He will teach EPI 219, Strategies for Increasing Sensitivity and Validity of Epidemiologic Studies; advise graduate students; give a Departmental seminar; and lead a bi-weekly journal club.

- The goal of the Journal Club is to expose students to a range of topic areas and methodologic issues beyond their own research. There will be one or two articles around which each discussion will take place; the article(s) should be read PRIOR to the date of the session, and the questions posed regarding the article(s) should be considered as well. The subject areas for the coming quarter include occupational epidemiology, cancer epidemiology, screening, and pharmacoepidemiology.
- The biweekly seminar will have five sessions, each meeting from 12-12:50 PM in Room CHS 61-269. The sessions will take place on January 7th and 21st, February 4th and 18th, and on March 4th. While Professor Noel Weiss will lead all discussions, participants are encouraged to provide input.

The HEALRISE (Health, Racism, Inequities, and Social Epidemiology) scholarship will be continued for its second year!

FSPH EDI Office Link:  

CCLE:  
https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/UCLA%20FSPH%20EDI

- Joanne Eunyoung Kwak - Research Coordinator within Dr. Matthew Mimiaga’s UCLA Center for LGBTQ + Advocacy, Research & Health (C-LARAH)
- Jocelyn Linares - BARC Public Administration Analyst within Dr. Pamina Gorbach's Biobehavioral Assessment Research Center (BARC).
- Rachel Shoshanna Bolanos - Executive Director within Dr. Pamina Gorbach's Biobehavioral Assessment Research Center (BARC).
- Madin Sadat - Project Manager within Dr. Pamina Gorbach's Biobehavioral Assessment Research Center (BARC)
- Consuelo Negrete - Certified Phlebotomist for Dr. Beate Ritz’s Parkinson’s, Environment, and Genes Study.
In the News

Dr. Jody Heymann and Timothy Brewer, together with colleagues in 7 other countries, recently published a study in Epidemiology & Infection that found millions of people across the African continent are at risk of contracting COVID-19 because of a lack of the most basic public health tools to protect themselves—including the essentials of soap and water. Fast Company interviewed Dr. Timothy Brewer about the research.

Newsweek interviewed Dr. Robert Kim-Farley about police union’s opposition to vaccine mandate for their members. "Had there been this voluntary acceptance and recognition of the value of vaccination, mandates would not have been required," he said. "Police are sworn to protect and to serve...the most important measure to protect themselves, their families and the population against COVID is to be vaccinated." Additional news outlets: The Washington Post, KCBS-TV, and The New York Times.

Drs. Beate Ritz and Yu Yu recently published their research titled, "Invited Perspective: Air Pollution and Dementia: Challenges and Opportunities" with an editorial available on BMJ. Also published together with Drs. Kimberly Paul, Beate Ritz and other collaborators was their research titled, "Ozone Exposure, Outdoor Physical Activity, and Incident Type 2 Diabetes in the SALSA Cohort of Older Mexican Americans."

Drs. Sung-Jae Lee and Hilary Aralis (Biostatistics) recently participated in the development of a series of 7 short videos (Moving the Needle Towards Acceptance: Discussing the COVID-19 Vaccine with Our Los Angeles Community," for the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH)-UCLA Wellbeing for LA Learning Center.

USA Today quoted Dr. Liwei Chen about her research that found Americans largely settled into sedentary routines during the height of the pandemic. "As bad as these changes have been for all Americans, they disproportionately impact racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S., who already bear a higher disease burden from COVID-19," Chen said. Additional news outlets: Fox News, MSN, Yahoo, and MyNewsLA.
The Epidemiology Student Association hosted an EPIc Picnic on Thursday, October 14th for faculty, students, and staff.

Happy Birthday, Professor Roger Detels!
Message to Students:
Welcome and welcome back everyone! The Epidemiology Student Association is so excited to welcome our largest incoming class of 94 new students, as well as both our new and returning ESA Board members.

We are thrilled to be able to offer in-person programming both on and around campus. Be on the lookout for emails from Joy and updates on ESA social media for additional information about these events and more.

Sincerely,
Julia Koerber
& Paulina Lin

Featured Events This Quarter:

**Doctoral Student Welcome Picnic: October 6th**
Come meet other doctoral students and enjoy lunch from Mendocino Farms.

**Student Welcome Picnic and ESA Mentorship Launch: October 14th**
Kick off the new year with a chance to meet fellow Epi students. Open to students of all degree paths. Students in the ESA Mentorship Program will also get a chance to meet their mentor/mentees.

**Doctoral Student Journal Club: October 20th and November 10th**
Open to doctoral students, staff, and faculty.

**Seminar Series: Dates TBA**
Stay tuned for exciting discussions from leaders in the field.

ESA Board Members, 2021-2022:
- **Co-Presidents:** Julia Koerber and Paulina Lin
- **Vice Presidents of Finance:** Sydney Merritt and Cory Lumsdaine
- **Outreach and Mentorship:** Nicola Churchill, Lamia Khan, Aditi Lahiri, Sassi Sarntiyakul, Pamela Hurtado, Isabella Chavez, Eden Zeboulon, and Leila Rishwain
- **First Year Representatives:** Alyssa Villa, Talia Begi, and Gavrielle Sonntag
- **International Student Representatives:** Xinyue Liu, Keren Zhang, and Fan Zhao
- **Seminar Series:** Nehaa Khadka, Sylvia Tangney, and Roxana Rezai
- **PHSA Liaison:** Jacquelyn Aramkul
- **Doctoral Chairs:** Pat Arena and Angie Barrall
- **Advisor to the Board:** Ryan Assaf

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