



Health Happens Here

A newsletter for the Department of Allied Health Sciences



Fall 2012 / Winter 2013

Faculty Highlight : Tania B. Huedo-Medina



Dr. Huedo-Medina, with a Ph.D. in biostatistics for social and health sciences from the National University of Madrid, Spain joined the Department of Allied Health Sciences in August 2012 with a joint appointment in the Statistics Department. Her main scholarly interests involve developing and applying statistics to health promotion and related prevention research data at both the individual and community levels. The main goal of her research is to obtain more precise estimates of the biological-behavioral-contextual relationships. This data will allow for an understanding of and perhaps afford researchers the ability to predict behavior and biological changes, and ultimately permit the development of evidence-based knowledge for reducing inequalities and improving health care. She works on refining both the qualitative assessments and statistical techniques involved in evidence-based methodology. Using Monte Carlo simulations and other computational methods, Dr. Huedo-Medina is developing new,

statistically-valid methods and working to elaborate a multilevel latent variable approach for individual-level meta-analytical data.

Dr. Huedo-Medina also collaborates on primary studies involving multi-level analyses of clinical data and coordinates and conducts meta-analyses on multiple health domains (e.g., cancer, mental health, physical activity, HIV/AIDS and sexual health, blood pressure). Her research, a collaboration with the Center for Health Intervention and Prevention at the University of Connecticut, has been funded by the NIH and the Agency for Health Research Quality since 2006. She has also been working with faculty in Allied Health Sciences to initiate a Clinical Research group in the Department. Dr. Huedo-Medina is a very productive researcher, both nationally and internationally, with an impressive 12 publications in 2012.

Dr. Huedo-Medina will be teaching a new undergraduate course this spring 2013 entitled Biostatistics for the Health Professions. The course will emphasize the use of basic statistical methods and the interpretation of results using biomedical and health sciences applications. Students will learn how to differentiate statistical methods based on the type of biomedical and health variables, the number of variables involved, and the relationship defined among the variables. Students will interpret data distributions, inference tests, analysis of variance, covariance, and regression, modeling categorical variables, and survival data analysis. The successful student will also be able to implement the techniques using statistical software such as R, interpret results related to particular health fields from their own analysis and from research papers, and communicate in writing the methods, results, and conclusions. The skills learned in Dr. Huedo-Medina's course are valuable and important to health care. Allied health practitioners and professionals are required to understand statistics to make sense of research-based studies including efficacy of new treatments, sensitivity of new diagnostic tests, and to design research studies of their own. Statistics in health care also gives us valuable information about the health of a society.



Allied Health Huskies - GET FIT with JANET!

The Hawley Fitness & Wellness Programs has a new Director - welcome to Janet Rochester. The Hawley Armory has a long history and tradition at UConn, primarily as a health and fitness training facility. The Hawley Armory, established in 1914, has been used for social, theatrical and athletic activities, including the Men's and Women's basketball games before the Fieldhouse was built. The Fitness Center is located adjacent to Koons Hall in the basement of Hawley, with treadmills, ellipticals, stair climbing machines, resistance equipment, group fitness and more. The Fitness Center offers personalized body makeovers including nutritional counseling with registered dietitians and personal training with certified personal trainers.

Janet accepted the position of Lecturer and Director of Hawley Armory Health and Fitness Programs in Allied Health Sciences in August 2012. She is dedicated to educating and developing fitness and health promotion activities for the faculty, staff and local community. Janet has a Master's degree from Syracuse University in Exercise Physiology and many years experience as a co-manager of a women's health clinic and as a Wellness Director in Corporate Health, Fitness & Wellness. Janet's duties at UConn include developing fitness and health promotion programs, supervising students, instructors and staff who implement various programs, teaching courses in health fitness/health promotion/management at the undergraduate level,



and integrating these programs into the teaching, research and outreach missions of the Department and College. Janet teaches two courses; Program Planning for Health Promotion and Fitness for Health. She loves her new role as teacher, and as Fitness & Wellness Director of Hawley Fitness. *"As a newcomer to UConn, I see Hawley as one of UConn's best kept secrets! ...It's convenient, affordable health!"*

Janet lives in Niantic, a mile down the road from her twin sister. She and her dog Papillon love exercise and yoga. Welcome Janet (the twin on the right!) Hawley Armory Fitness Center Open House Event - April 3, 2013.

Medical Laboratory Sciences Program - News & Updates

The Medical Laboratory Sciences (MLS) Program is moving forward... and to a new location. Effective fall 2012, clinical courses and labs are being held at the Greater Hartford campus in West Hartford, CT and at the UConn Health Center in Farmington. Rosanne Lipcius, Program Director, will submit the self-study documents in February for continued NAACLS accreditation. Rosanne is also offering a new laboratory class this spring 2013 entitled: MLSc 3301 - Fundamentals of Medical Laboratory Sciences. Rosanne and Dr. Silbart, with support from the Dean, have worked tirelessly to continue this quality training program after the closure of the Hartford Hospital Program - a good thing because Medical Laboratory Sciences continues to be a fast-growing field with a great demand. The Program has hired former Hartford Hospital Program instructors to teach as adjunct faculty on the new campus. In addition, Denise Anamani has become an integral part of the Storrs campus instruction, now teaching two required courses in the MLS curriculum - AH 3121: Immunology and MLSc 3361: Molecular Techniques. A Department search committee is now reviewing applications for an Assistant Professor to join the MLS Program for fall 2013 - one who is dedicated to advancing knowledge of health and disease through research, teaching and community engagement. Medical Laboratory Professionals Week is celebrated April 22-26 this year, an opportunity to increase public understanding of and appreciation for clinical laboratory personnel.



Allied Health Alum Named Schweitzer Fellow



Caitlin Partyka, a 2010 graduate of the Allied Health Sciences Program, now a student in the Boston College Graduate School of Social Work, has been selected as a 2012-2013 Albert Schweitzer Fellow. The Fellowship is a national non-profit organization with a mission to develop leaders in service; those who are both skilled and dedicated to identifying and meeting health needs of under served communities and whose example influences and inspires others to be leaders. Schweitzer Fellows work with community-based organizations to identify health needs and design and implement health promotion programs. Caitlin is addressing childhood obesity and is working with Sociedad Latina in Roxbury, MA, a community organization that promotes solutions to educational, social, economic, health-related and other issues facing Latino youth. Caitlin has established a program that offers area youth with the opportunity to participate in physical activities such as hiking, kayaking and other forms of exercise. The young people will also learn about diabetes, nutrition, health and wellness.

Caitlin has a long history of giving and volunteerism while at UConn. She was the September 2007 Division of Student Affairs Volunteer of the Month and a 2009 Leadership Legacy Student. The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship is a prestigious fellowship, with only 243 graduate students named throughout the US this year. Congratulations to Caitlin, a dedicated Allied Health Professional and a most deserving recipient.

Keeping Connected with Students: All Access Pass to Allied Health

Once students graduate from UConn, staying connected to the University can be challenging. To help bridge the gap between being a student, and then an alumnus, The Friends of Allied Health and the Alumni Association sponsored a dinner to recognize UConn AHS Seniors. This was a well attended and highly reviewed event at the Alumni House on September 27, 2012 - plans are underway for fall 2013! Students in attendance received a free Senior Year Access Pass, a great dinner catered by Ted's Restaurant, and a professional portfolio binder. Students were treated to inspiring presentations and a surprise slide show. Three lucky attendees won donated door prizes.

The Senior Year Access Pass, a \$35 value, can jumpstart a student's future because they are joining the network of more than 225,000 proud UConn alumni worldwide. Seniors will have access to career webinars, alumni mentors, career fairs, job and resume postings and information about resumes and interviews. The benefits of the Access Pass include free oozeball, front of the line access at midnight breakfast, and discounts at many local restaurants. For more information about the Access Pass or to provide more ideas to keep Allied Health Huskies linked to UConn, please contact the AHS Department or Pam Chudzik, Director of Alumni Relations at pamela.chudzik@uconn.edu. Look for future events organized by the newly formed Alumni Liason Committee whose members are Liana Fresher, Maryann Morris, Rosanne Lipcius, Nancy Madrak, Colleen Thompson, Pam Chudzik, and Judy Brown.



Congratulations to Dr. Gregory Weidemann who was appointed by the University Provost Mun Choi to serve a second five-year term as Dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Connecticut. This reappointment follows an extensive evaluation process conducted by a review committee. Dean Weidemann will, in the coming year, develop a visionary strategic plan with clear goals and metrics to guide the growth of the College. The Dean's plan will place emphasis on growing distinguished research and scholarship; developing innovative curriculum especially programs that provide students with opportunities to integrate various disciplines; increasing outreach; enhancing diversity; and developing industry partnerships to support Bioscience CT and Tech Park initiatives. Under his leadership, the College of Agriculture and Natural Researches has become the second fastest growing college of its kind, nationwide.

Allied Health Sciences has more CLASSES!

"This is an exciting time for learning," said Dr. Lawrence Silbart, Department Head. The Allied Health Sciences Department has long been a leader in allied health education. We continue to promote interprofessional education and practice in health care, and are excited to offer new, improved and relevant classes to our students.



Denise Anamani has been teaching in the Dept of AHS for 9 years, drawing on her 15 years experience as a technologist in molecular diagnostics and immunology at Hartford Hospital. Formerly taught by Dr. Silbart, Denise will bring a new enthusiasm and approach to AH 3021 – Environment, Genetics and Cancer this spring 2013, its first offering since 2008. AH 3021 content will include basic principles in tumor biology including the biochemical basis of cell transformation, proliferation, and metastasis. Molecular mechanisms by which environmental chemicals interact with DNA and the role of proto-oncogenes, tumor suppressor genes, as well as biological markers of cancer risk and exposure will be included. The AHS Dept now has 3 courses related to the study of cancer; AH 3021, DGS 4224 (Cancer Cytogenetics) and AH 3133 (Cancer and Your Health). These courses can provide a foundation on which to build a deeper understanding of cancer – the biology, social impacts, diagnostics, prevention and therapeutics. Denise has also designed DGS 4236: Case Studies in Molecular Pathology, a companion course to DGS 4235: Lab in Molecular Diagnostics. DGS 4236 will facilitate application of knowledge in molecular diagnostics to patient outcomes; diagnosis, prognosis and therapy. Educating students about each other's roles and responsibilities in patient health and teaching effective communication, may help encourage collaborations for improved health outcomes.



Lauren Wilson will bring a new twist to an "old" course; AH 4243: Health Care Issues for the spring 2013 semester. Lauren is certified by the Association for Clinical Pathologists in cytogenetics, molecular pathology, and laboratory management. She has used her knowledge in the field of health care and her experiences while taking the course herself in spring 2000 to update course content and delivery. This 3-credit course will be a combination of lecture and discussion and provide a rich learning environment for student engagement. Active learning will be promoted using Clickers, an electronic student response system. Research into this newer classroom technology has shown that overall, students become engaged and enjoy using them. A wide variety of topics will be covered to provide something of interest for everyone - epidemiology, lifestyle, health disparities, genetic screening and reproduction, cloning, pharmacogenetics, antibiotic resistance, vaccines, and the environment. Relevant and recent journal articles will be used as a starting point for class discussion.

For our Allied Health freshman and sophomore students, a number of courses are now available. Maryann Morris and Colleen Thompson are teaching AH 1100: Introduction to Allied Health Professions which is an overview of health professions using a team approach to health care delivery. AH 1030: Interdisciplinary Approach to Obesity Prevention is an Honors core course taught by Dr. Valerie Duffy. Dr. Duffy's class explores the biology of obesity including genetic predispositions and behaviors that increase obesity risk (dietary, physical activity, social, psychological), the obesigenic environment, including how communities are physically built, as well as the economic relationship to obesity risk, and policy and ethical implications for obesity prevention. AH 2000: Fundamentals of Allied Health Care will be offered for the second time this spring 2013 by Dr. Susan Gregoire. This class is an introduction to the basics of the health care system and the role of Allied Health professionals within this system. Topics include ethical and legal responsibility, professionalism, communication, health care delivery systems, insurance and government providers.

AHS students in the Occupational Safety and Health concentration can choose from a menu of seven courses this spring 2013, many of which are taught in an online format. The dedicated faculty who teach in this discipline include Paul Bureau, Rodney Allen, Steven Pasiuk, Nancy Brouillet, Gary Sterner and Stefan Wawzyniecki.