

# RSA News

Fall 2021



Hello and welcome back to campus! It's your Research Scientists Association Council Co-Chairs here, with an update on our work, as another fall semester passes quickly. But first - New England in the fall is a wonderful experience. Whether it's your first or 40<sup>th</sup>, be sure to take some time to get out and enjoy the colors and flavors of the season—you won't be disappointed! Last year, we made great progress on our goals of enhancing

- 1) Research Scientists' visibility, connectivity, and contribution to the community,
- 2) Research Scientists' access to HSPH training offerings, and
- 3) Diversity, inclusion, and belonging within the Research Scientist community.

This year, we will continue to work and advocate in these important areas, and in the coming months we will send out a survey to assess any issues/concerns the RS community has.

In this edition of the newsletter, we highlight the variety of teaching roles RSs have across the school. Participating in the education of HSPH students is an often-overlooked contribution by RSs. We see you and thank you for your contributions! Looking forward to a productive year!

Kind regards,

Sandy Munger & Leigh Graham (2021-2022 RSA Council Co-Chairs)

## RSA Updates

### Teaching Activities Research Scientists are Involved in:

**Eric Franzosa** (Senior Research Scientist, Biostatistics) is teaching "Introduction to Programming" in Fall 1 and "Genomic Data Manipulation" in Spring 2. Eric is affiliated with Curtis Huttenhower's lab and is doing a mix of teaching, computational methods development for microbiome analysis, and mentorship of trainees.

**Jeremy Furtado** (Senior Research Scientist, Nutrition) will co-teach "The Biological Basis of Human Nutrition" with Frank Sacks in the Spring semester. This is an intermediate-level course in nutrition science, covering topics related to lipids and lipoproteins, proteins and amino acids, carbohydrates and fiber, vitamins and minerals, energy homeostasis, and the role of nutrition in disease prevention from a metabolic perspective. Additionally, as the Director of the Nutritional Biomarker Laboratory, he coordinates a hands-on lab for Alberto Ascherio's "Advanced Nutritional Epidemiology" course in alternate fall semesters, in which students perform the protocol for the analysis of antioxidants, learn about the lab's HPLC instrument, and analyze the data they create.

**Rebekka Lee** (Research Scientist, Social and Behavioral Sciences) is the course director for Harvard Catalyst's Community-Engaged Research course and will teach "Program Planning" and "Program Implementation & Evaluation" in Spring 2022.

**Kassandra Munger** (Senior Research Scientist, Nutrition) co-teaches "Introduction to Nutrition Science" with Shilpa Bhupathiraju. Required for students in the nutrition program, and open to anyone with an interest in nutrition, this course covers the basics of macronutrients and micronutrients—what they are, how they are digested/absorbed, and nutrient metabolism.



**Gillian SteelFisher** (Senior Research Scientist, Department of Health Policy and Management) will teach a survey research seminar called “Applied Survey Research for Health Policy and Management,” in Spring 2. Students learn how to do high-quality survey research by working on their own projects and applying rigorous techniques at each stage. They learn about survey methodology and about research design. She tries to focus on giving students a lot of one-on-one time and detailed feedback on their projects. Examples of surveys developed during this class: supporting physicians working with at-risk patients in hospitals along the US-Mexican border, providing care for a gender-diverse community in Southern California, understanding the needs of dental practitioners working in long-term care settings, and enhancing vaccination programs for middle school girls in Japan.

**Antonella Zanobetti** (Principal Senior Research Scientist, Environmental Health) will co-teach “Advanced methods in Environmental Epidemiology” with Joel Schwartz in Spring 1. The class includes both lectures and labs where students learn R and how to apply the methods to real data, and it is usually attended by between 15 and 20 students.

### **Congratulations to the RSA Award Recipients FY2021-2022!**

#### **Jennifer Mitchel, Environmental Health:**

Jennifer studies the airway epithelium, a tissue that is essential to airway homeostasis and repair. Aided by the RSA grant, Jennifer hopes to test the hypothesis that compression-induced unjamming impairs coordination of ciliary beating in the differentiated airway epithelium to generate pilot data and intends to develop this novel hypothesis into a new proposal.

#### **Danielle Braun, Biostatistics:**

For more than ten years, Danielle has been working on Mendelian cancer risk prediction models. Identifying individuals who are at high risk of cancer due to inherited germline mutations is critical for effective implementation of personalized prevention strategies. To model the complexity of many cancer-mutation associations, she and her team developed a new software tool, PanelPRO which is expected to have a large impact on clinical care. Danielle plans to use her RSA Award to fund publication costs for her manuscript describing PanelPRO, which has received favorable reviews after being submitted to eLife.



### **New RS appointments**

**Catherine Arsenaault**, Global Health and Population, 09/21  
**Terence Cheng**, Global Health and Population, 05/21  
**Patricia Geli**, Global Health and Population, 08/21  
**Jacob Jacobson Tennesen**, Immunology and Infectious Diseases, 05/21  
**Mi-Sun Lee**, Environmental Health, 10/21  
**Zilin Li**, Biostatistics, 07/21  
**Megan Marx Delaney**, Health Policy and Management, 07/21  
**Susan Peters**, Social and Behavioral Sciences, 09/21  
**Konrad Stopsack**, Epidemiology, 10/21

### **Promotions**

**Carlee Brooks Moser**, Senior RS, Biostatistics (07/21)  
**Elena Savoia**, Principal RS, Biostatistics, (07/21)  
**Marta Guasch-Ferre**, Senior RS, Nutrition, (07/21)

### **CONGRATULATIONS ALL!**

### **Dates to Know**

#### **Monday, November 15th, 1-2pm**

RSA Seminar Series: Drs. **Jennifer Mitchel** and **Danielle Braun** will present their work! Zoom invite will follow.

#### **Monday, November 8, 2021 &**

#### **Monday, January 3, 2022**

**Due dates** for application materials for new RS appointments, re-appointments, promotions for consideration at the **RS review committee meetings** on November 23, 2021 & January 18, 2022.

**\*\* More details for all events via email \*\***