

Department of Population and Quantitative Health Sciences

Weekly Newsletter

NOVEMBER 17-21, 2025



UMass Chan
MEDICAL SCHOOL

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, November 19, 2025, 10:00 – 11:00 AM

Research Methods Meeting

Presenter: Lisa Lix, BSHEc, MSc, PhD, PStat

Title: Leveraging synthetic data to mitigate cohort imbalance in algorithm validation studies

Abstract: This talk will examine the use of synthetic data, artificially created datasets that retain the properties of real-world data, to improve the representativeness of clinical registry data for evaluating the validity of case-finding algorithms for administrative health data. My team assessed the effect of data augmentation, supplementing real-world data with synthetic data, on the performance of algorithms to measure smoking status in administrative health

data. We compared the effect of synthetic data generation model on validity estimates for augmented and non-augmented model training datasets. We found that the choice of synthetic data generation models influenced algorithm performance estimates for males and younger adults, who were under-represented in the clinical registry. Synthetic data can improve subgroup equity in validation studies, but must be used with caution.

Bio: Dr. Lisa Lix is a Distinguished Professor of Biostatistics in the College of Community and Global Health at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada. She holds a Canada Research Chair in Methods for Electronic Health Data Quality. Dr. Lix's expertise lies in developing and applying statistical and machine-learning methods to evaluate and improve the quality of administrative health data, electronic medical records, and clinical registries. She is a Fellow of the American Statistical Association and Canadian Academy of Health Sciences.

Click [here](#) to join.



Thursday, November 20th from 3pm – 5pm

Gretchen Weaver, a UMass graduate student, will be competing in the 3 Minute Thesis Competition. Click [here](#) to RSVP. It is open to the UMass Chan community. Gretchen will be giving a 3-minute pitch on my research amongst 10 finalists, and we will be competing for a \$1,000 cash prize. Also, there is a fan favorite award of \$750, so the more people who come and support her, the better chances she has of winning!



New England ATTC Presentations

Wednesday, November 19, 2025, 12:00-1:30 PM

Register: [Exploring the intersection of HIV and tobacco use for addiction and behavioral health professionals](#)

Join the New England ATTC and Dr. Trish Cioe, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, to learn about the high rates of tobacco use among people living with HIV, its impact on health outcomes. Dr. Cioe will discuss biological, psychological, and social factors contributing to tobacco dependence, as well as barriers to cessation. Dr. Cioe will also discuss evidence-based strategies for tobacco screening, counseling, and pharmacotherapy, emphasizing the importance of integrating cessation support into HIV care and behavioral health settings. By the end of the session, attendees will understand the importance of addressing tobacco use as part of comprehensive, trauma-informed, and responsive HIV care.

Wednesday, December 10, 2025, 1:00-2:30 PM

Register: [Gambling Disorder: Relationship to Suicide and Resources for Help](#)

Kristen Beall is offering a second training on a critical topic: Gambling disorder, which is recognized by the American Psychiatric Association as a behavioral addiction with the highest rate of suicide risk. This session provides crucial information on identifying warning signs using DSM-5 criteria, understanding co-occurring disorders, and initiating life-saving conversations. Leave equipped with essential resources and mitigation strategies to address this public health concern in your community.

Tuesday, December 16, 2025, 1:00-2:30 PM

Register: [Impact of the Games We Play](#)

Ted Hartwell is back to the impact of the games we play. Digital gaming has become one of the most dominant forms of entertainment worldwide—surpassing the movie and music industries combined. But with growing popularity comes growing concern. This training explores the line between healthy and problematic gaming, highlighting

features in video games and social media that can quickly lead to harm, especially among younger users. Participants will gain insight into how gaming and gambling behaviors intersect, learn to identify warning signs, and discover practical resources to address gaming-related harms.

Please feel free to share this with anyone who may be interested. We hope to see you there! Keep checking our [website](#) and our [LinkedIn](#) page for updates!

The New England ATTC Team

New England ATTC
Population and Quantitative Health Sciences
UMass Chan Medical School
New England ATTC - Addiction Technology Transfer Center (ATTC) Network
NewEnglandATTC@umassmed.edu

FYI



This is the start of our annual employee giving campaign, UMass Chan Cares, a time when our Medical School community comes together to demonstrate care and compassion for our friends and neighbors. Over the years, our students, faculty and staff have contributed millions of dollars to employee giving campaigns to strengthen our communities and make a difference in thousands of lives.

The dollars you have raised help support research and education initiatives on our campus, break down barriers to academic success for K-12 students in Worcester and bolster many charitable organizations close to your hearts. Your donations help to relieve the economic pressures that charitable organizations face.

By visiting UMassChanCares.org, you may donate by payroll deduction, check or credit card, and direct your donation to a variety of worthy organizations and causes. They are:

- **UMass Chan's North Quadrant Support Services** initiative, which is our partnership with the Worcester Public Schools providing support to address socioeconomic barriers to academic success faced by students in our community.
- Several funds administered by the UMass Chan Medical School Foundation:
 - **The Research Fund** supports UMass Chan research that advances treatments and cures for a range of diseases, creating a better future for all of us.
 - **The Student Financial Aid Fund** provides students who are financially disadvantaged with opportunities to pursue education here at UMass Chan—opportunities that otherwise may not be accessible otherwise.
 - **The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Fund** supports institution-wide efforts to raise awareness among members of our community about the importance of diversity and inclusion and address bias.
 - **The Max Baker Resources Center** is available to students in all three schools facing food insecurity or barriers to accessing food and essential supplies including personal hygiene products.
 - **The UMass Chan Medical School Fund** provides important unrestricted financial support to our world class institution and allows UMass Chan to put the funds to use wherever and whenever the mission-critical need is greatest as situations arise throughout the year.
- **United Way of Central Massachusetts** or more than 1,000 nonprofit organizations through our partnership with the United Way of Central Massachusetts

I continue to be proud and inspired by your incredible generosity and look forward to another successful and impactful campaign. Thank you, in advance, for your participation in this year's UMass Chan Cares Employee Giving Campaign.

Please email our department lead, Carla McDonald, if you have any questions or need assistance.

Working Wisdom: Celebrating Diversity in How We Work

Diversity shows up in many ways — not just in our backgrounds, but also in our **behaviors, communication styles, and energy sources**. Some of us thrive in bustling group settings, others prefer quiet reflection, and many move between both.

This new *Education Corner* in the **Diversity Digest** will offer **short, engaging insights** into how personality and behavior shape our workplace experience. Each installment will highlight a different angle — from introversion and extroversion to communication, decision-making, and well-being — with quick takeaways and fun polls to spark reflection.

Together, we'll explore the **full spectrum of diversity in how we work** — and celebrate the strengths each style brings to our community.




Week 4

Working Wisdom: Celebrating Diversity in How We Work




Risk & Decision-Making — Quick Leaps or Careful Plans?

When it comes to making decisions, we don't all approach risk the same way. Some of us are comfortable leaping into new opportunities, while others prefer to weigh the details before moving forward. Most of us fall somewhere in between.

The Science Behind It

- **Extroverts**  are more likely to seek out *immediate rewards*, even if they involve risk.
- **Introverts**  tend to be more *cautious and deliberate*, often prioritizing long-term goals.
- **Ambiverts**  adjust their style depending on the situation and stakes.

At a Glance

| |  Extrovert |  Introvert |  Ambivert |
|------------------------|--|--|---|
| Definition | Action-oriented, comfortable with uncertainty | Deliberate, risk-averse, values stability | Flexible, balances boldness with caution |
| Risk Style | Takes risks for short-term gains | Avoids risk, prefers security and planning | Weighs context before deciding |
| Style in Action | Jumps into new projects quickly | Prefers to research and prepare before committing | Can act fast or plan deeply, depending on the need |

Your Turn

When making decisions, do you:

- Jump in quickly and figure things out as you go
- Research and plan carefully before acting
- Adjust based on the situation

Take this quick, two-question poll and see where our department lands

 <https://arcsapps.umassmed.edu/redcap/surveys/?s=HXP44NKJ38NC9MTT>

💡 Practical Tip

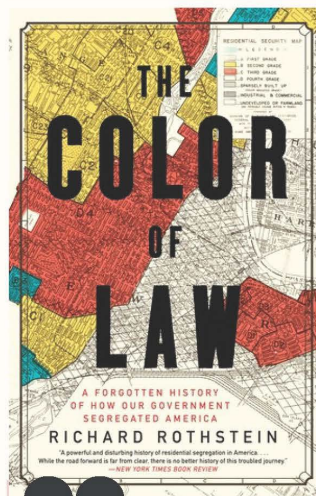
In group settings, pair bold decision-makers with careful planners. Extroverts can bring momentum, while introverts help ensure details aren't overlooked — together, teams make stronger choices.

📌 **Next Week:** We'll explore **Happiness & Well-Being** — why some personalities report more joy, and how expression shapes the way we see happiness.

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|----------------|----|-------------------------|---|------------------------------|----|
| | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| | | Revolution Day | | International Men's Day | *Black Consciousness Day *Transgender Day of Remembrance | | |
| | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| | *Feast of Christ the King *Labor Thanksgiving | | | | *Thanksgiving Day *The Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Baha | Native American Heritage Day | |
| | 30 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| | *Advent (11/30-12/24) *Bonifacio Day *Native American Women's Equal Pay Day *St. Andrew's Day | | | | | | |



Book Corner



“Today’s residential segregation in the North, South, Midwest, and West is not the unintended consequence of individual choices and of otherwise well-meaning law or regulation but of unhidden public policy that explicitly segregated every metropolitan area in the United States

The Color of Law is a powerful, accessible history of how federal, state, and local governments deliberately created and enforced racial segregation in the United States. Rothstein shows that the divides we see today—between Black and white neighborhoods, schools, and opportunities—were not the result of personal choices or “de facto” patterns, but of explicit public policies.

Through clear storytelling and real examples, the book reveals how housing laws, zoning decisions, lending practices, and urban planning shaped inequality that persists across generations. It’s an eye-opening read that sparks important conversations about justice, accountability, and what it will take to build more equitable communities.

Brought to you by the PQHS
Diversity Action Committee

UMASS CHAN REMINDERS

A Reminder from Payroll Services: 2026 Personal Time Schedule

- Employees have until 1/10/2026 to use 2025 personal time
- 2026 personal time will be granted on 1/13/2026
- Employees may begin using 2026 personal time after 1/13/2026 for the week beginning 1/11/2026

Remaining Holiday Schedule for 2025:



- Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 27th
- Day After Thanksgiving – Friday, November 28th
- Christmas Eve – Wednesday, December 24th
- Christmas Day – Thursday, December 25th

PQHS Weekly will be sent to all members of PQHS on Monday mornings. The intent is to provide a snapshot of what is going on that week in PQHS and to share our faculty and staff activities with the department. We depend on you to provide the items we need to share. Please send suggestions of events, faculty invited seminars & talks, honors, student thesis presentations, and news – new babies born! – to Judi (judi.saber@umassmed.edu) & Sarah (sarah.yeboah@umassmed.edu) by Friday each week.