

MAY 2021

HEALTH & SOCIETY



Message from the Director

Congratulations on making it through such a challenging year! Though COVID-19 cases have dropped precipitously in Los Angeles County and elsewhere around the country, many people continue to grapple with the impacts of COVID on their families and communities. Around the world, case rates and deaths continue to climb.

The coronavirus pandemic raises important issues at the heart of the Health and Society minor. These include how societies respond to health challenges, how the social patterning of disease reveals broader social inequities, who has access to care, how individuals experience and make sense of health challenges in their own lives, and lessons we can learn from health challenges of the past.

Many public health scientists now predict that SARS-CoV-2 will be with us for years to come. It will be interesting to track how we remember the first year of the pandemic, how we respond to changing public health guidance, whether our experience of the pandemic will shape our willingness to tackle other important issues like climate change and systemic racism, and whether adaptations we've made during the pandemic will reshape how we live, work, and play in the future.

This spring, the Health and Society program sponsored two talks on vaccine politics to address some of these issues. One featured Dr. Jennifer Reich, who discussed why parents refuse vaccines and how this refusal is tied to neoliberal parenting logic. The second talk featured Harriet Washington, who outlined the history of

scientific racism and racism within the health system as well as the ways in which the contributions of Black doctors have systematically been erased. These two talks provided much-needed insight on the pandemic and the politics of vaccination.

We are excited to announce the Ellen Carol Barreto Research Fellowship in Health and Society, which was created to support student-initiated research projects in health and society. Details of the fellowship are described on page 6.

I want to express a special thanks to the Health and Society Advisory Committee, composed of Dr. Carla Bittel (HIST), Dr. Inas Kelly (ECON), Dr. Mairead Sullivan (WGST), and Dr. Heather Tarleton (HHSC). Dr. Tarleton has been appointed Associate Dean of Diversity and Inclusion in Seaver College of Science and Engineering and will be stepping down at the end of spring semester.

-Rachel Washburn

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Reflections from Graduates

We reached out to graduating Health and Society minors to get their thoughts on the minor and to learn about their post-grad plans.



Miriam Admasu

Major: International Relations

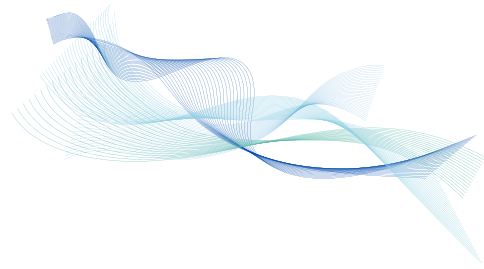
Minor: Health and Society

Q: Why did you decide to minor in Health and Society?

Miriam: I decided to add the minor when I realized I wanted to pursue an MPH degree. Before HEAS existed, my only options were to add a Biology, Chemistry, BioChem, or Psychology minor, even though those minors weren't what I actually wanted. The HEAS minor came at a perfect time and the courses have given me some type of health background, which is important to me since I have none with the major I hold. I really appreciate how relevant the minor is and wish it had existed earlier.

Q: What are your post-grad plans?

Miriam: I plan on taking a gap year before pursuing grad school so that I can get professional experience in the health sector. Much of the health internships/fellowships that I have been applying to ask for relevant coursework or experience and for me that is the coursework I've completed with the HEAS minor.



Kate Harrison

Major: Sociology

Minor: Health and Society

Q: Why did you decide to minor in Health and Society?

Kate: I was first interested in adding the HEAS minor because I thought it shared relevance with my sociology major and my long-time interest in studying health. I am glad to have added the minor in a year with so many new challenges to individual health and health care systems.

Q: What are your post-grad plans?

Kate: I am still unsure what the future holds for me after graduation, but I am thankful for what I have learned through my HEAS courses and hope to use the information in future jobs or life in general.

Reflections from Graduates



Reilly Grzywacz

Major: Environmental Studies

Minor: Health and Society

Q: Why did you decide to minor in Health and Society?

Reilly: Though I know programs like Health & Society are often tailored to those in the health sciences, it has really become the perfect complement to my Environmental Studies major. First and foremost, this minor program has helped me solidify my area of interest: the intersections between environmental protection, social justice, and public health. It's provided me with another lens through which to learn about social structures and justice on the ground, and the professors have taught me meaningful content that I never would have learned otherwise. At the same time, the program left room for me to make my own discoveries and connections between the environmental studies and health sociology fields. I've used this knowledge not only in my course studies but also in my own activism on campus through Divest LMU and ECO Students, and I look forward to deepening this knowledge.

Q: What are your post-grad plans?

Reilly: My plans for the future are still foggy. This fall, I plan on applying to graduate programs on the East Coast which are centered around environmental justice and health. I hope to eventually work conducting research in the nonprofit sector, or maybe helping write health-focused climate policies in the public sector. I especially wish to focus on how sustainable urban development can be implemented to combat climate change while simultaneously protecting and enhancing the lives of vulnerable populations.

Before all of that, though, I plan on taking a break. Enduring a pandemic during my senior year of college has been exhausting, and I'm looking forward to a couple of months of rest. I plan on painting, catching up on reading, finding new places to hike, continuing to learn Spanish and ASL, and traveling as soon as it's safe—all things that I haven't had a chance to fully dedicate myself to during my time at LMU.

Student Spotlight: Becoming a Contact Tracer

McKenzie Martin, Sophomore HHSC major and HEAS minor, became a contact tracer to gain valuable hands-on experience during the pandemic.



McKenzie Martin

Major: Health and Human Sciences

Minor: Health and Society

Q: How did you become a contact tracer for LA County?

McKenzie: In December, HHSC provided students an opportunity to become contact tracers with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, working alongside Professor Beaudion. I thought this would be a unique opportunity to obtain experience in the public health realm, while also working directly with patients during a once-in-a-lifetime health crisis.

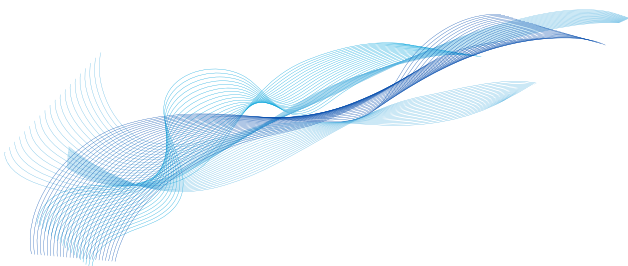
Q: Tell us about your experience doing the work.

McKenzie: Every Sunday, a team of five other LMU students and I are assigned cases in which we conduct interviews with LA residents regarding their potential exposure to COVID-19, the ultimate goal being to slow the spread of the infectious disease. Since beginning in January, I have been exposed to a wide array of challenges and have developed skills critical in a healthcare environment. Being able to enhance my conversational and interpersonal skills and communicate without face-to-face interaction has emphasized the value of empathetic and effective communication with cases.

Q: What else have you learned?

McKenzie: During this internship, I began to notice an emphasis on race and ethnicity in medical surveys, specifically related to the contact tracing script. This curiosity inspired my Honors research project in which I will seek to answer the question: how can health systems move away from using racial identity as a proxy to measure where health disparities lie?

In the future, I hope to work towards finding effective solutions to decrease health disparities in America. Through this experience, I have been able to nurture those pursuits both through hands-on experience and in my academic projects; thus, I am extremely grateful to the HEAS minor and Professor Beaudion for this opportunity.



Student Spotlight: Researching the Health of Refugees

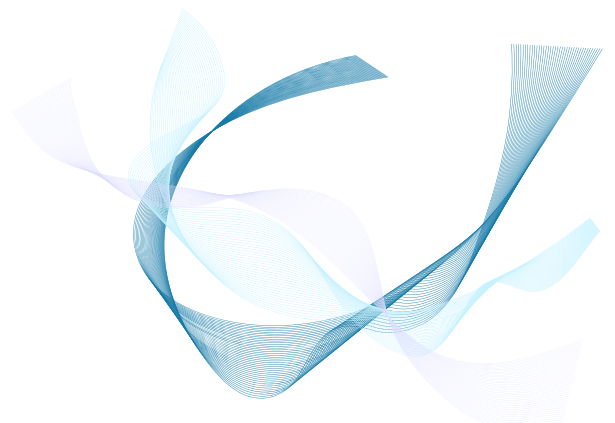
Annie Heckman, Junior Biochemistry Major and Health and Society Minor, investigated how newly settled refugees view health and their experiences with the U.S. healthcare system. She presented her findings at the Undergraduate Research Symposium.



Annie Heckman
Major: Biochemistry
Minor: Health and Society

Since Fall of 2020, I have been conducting a research project under the mentorship of Dr. Washburn. My research focuses on cultural conceptualizations of health. More specifically, I am investigating how refugees' cultural understandings of health inform the way that they interact with the US healthcare system. I was first motivated to do this research during my internship with a refugee resettlement agency. My internship opened my eyes to the healthcare barriers faced by refugees in the United States, so I wanted to conduct research so I could better support refugees as they interact with the US healthcare system.

In December and January, I interviewed several refugees in order to understand their experiences with health in the United States. I then analyzed these interviews and presented my findings at the Undergraduate Research Symposium. As a Biochemistry major, I didn't know what to expect as I prepared to present at the Social Sciences poster session. However, once I presented and saw other students present, I realized that everyone was super welcoming and curious to hear about everyone's research. It was exciting to share my research and also hear about all the amazing work that has been done by other students. If given the opportunity, I highly recommend engaging with research on campus to dig deep into an issue that you care about.



New: Ellen Carol Barreto Research Fellowship

In April 2021, the **Ellen Carol Barreto Research Fellowship in Health and Society** was created to honor the life and legacy of Ellen Barreto by supporting student-initiated research projects that contribute to knowledge on the social foundations of health, broadly defined. Ellen Barreto was a devoted spouse and mother to Lizzie Copulsky (class of 2014) who cared deeply about education, social justice, and women's health. Among Ellen's final wishes was to create a lasting opportunity for women, first-generation students and others to carry out independent research and benefit from the close mentorship of Health and Society faculty. Two fellowships will be offered in 2021 in the amount of \$4,000 each, with some additional funds available for research expenses. Fellowship recipients will be known as Barreto Fellows.



Ellen Carol Barreto

The deadline for applications is June 1, 2021. For more information, please email Health and Society Director, Rachel Washburn at rachel.washburn@lmu.edu.

Fall 2021 Classes

HEAS 2000, Introduction to Health and Society

BIOE 1999, Introduction to Bioethics

EVST 3998, Agriculture, Food, and Justice

FTVS 4600, Film Genre: Reproductive Health & Horror

HHSC 312, Healthcare Administration

HHSC 322, Public Health

HIST 1900, Science, Nature & Society in the West

HIST 4433, Health and Disease in American Culture

JOUR 3998, Health & Science Journalism

PSYC 4033, Community Psychology

PSYC/WGST 3998, Refrigerator Moms and Wild Boys

SOCL 3998, Community Organizing

URBN 3046, Sustainable Cities

WGST 2998, Women's Bodies, Health, and Sexuality

Past Events: Vaccine Politics Series



LMU Health and Society Program
with Sociology and
Communication Studies
Presents

FROM PARENTS' VACCINE REFUSAL TO A COVID VACCINE: UNDERSTANDING THE POLITICS OF IMMUNIZATION

Dr. Jennifer Reich, Sociologist, University of Colorado at
Denver

THURSDAY FEB. 18 | 3:30 PM

Drawing on her award-winning book on why parents reject vaccines for their children, sociologist Jennifer Reich examines how parents make decisions about their children's health generally and vaccines specifically. Building on this work, Dr. Reich will also examine how vaccines against the novel coronavirus responsible for the covid-19 pandemic are presenting new questions about vaccine hesitancy and trust. This talk concludes by considering why vaccines work best when used by a critical mass of people and how we balance personal liberty and community responsibility.

REGISTER

[lmu.zoom.us/meeting/register/72464997469Nv0BHuAoJelNDKdZ3Hf6BN](https://lmu.zoom.us/j/72464997469Nv0BHuAoJelNDKdZ3Hf6BN)



MEDICAL APARTHEID GOES VIRAL: AFRICAN AMERICANS, HISTORICAL BIOETHICS AND THE CORONAVIRUS VACCINES

Dr. Harriet Washington, Award-winning
Author & Ethicist

MONDAY MARCH 15 | 3:30 PM

After portraying the historical roots of racial mistreatment in the US medical-research arena, Dr. Washington will discuss contemporary challenges to ethical healthcare, including the dissemination of vaccines and the elision of informed consent through the lens of the coronavirus-19 pandemic. This talk will be held virtually over Zoom.

**CLICK HERE
TO REGISTER**

Presented by the Health and Society Program, Bioethics Institute, and African American Studies, with collaboration from Seaver College of Science and Engineering, Office of Intercultural Affairs, Communication Studies, History, Journalism, Sociology, and Women's and Gender Studies.



Faculty Teaching in the Program

Dr. Amanda Apgar (amanda.apgar@lmu.edu)

Dept: Women's and Gender Studies

Courses: Women's Bodies, Health, and Sexuality;

Gender and Disability

Dr. Magaela Bethune (magaela.bethune@lmu.edu)

Dept: African American Studies

Courses: Race, Health and Social Justice

Dr. Carla Bittel (carla.bittel@lmu.edu)

Dept: History

Courses: Science, Nature & Society in the West; Health and Disease in American Culture

Dr. Nicholas Brown (nicholas.brown@lmu.edu)

Dept: Bioethics

Courses: Introduction to Bioethics

Dr. Stacy Burns (stacy.burns@lmu.edu)

Dept. Sociology

Courses: Drugs and Society

Dr. Chris Cappelli (christopher.cappelli@lmu.edu)

Dept: Health and Human Sciences

Courses: Public Health

Dr. Deanna Cooke (deanna.cooke@lmu.edu)

Dept: Psychology

Courses: Poverty and Community Resilience

Dr. Cheryl Grills (cheryl.grills@lmu.edu)

Dept: Psychology

Courses: African and Black Psychology; Community Psychology

Dr. Devon Golaszewski (devon.golaszewski@lmu.edu)

Dept: History

Courses: Global Health in Africa

Dr. Cheryl Hertz (cheryl.hertz@lmu.edu)

Dept: Biology

Courses: Epidemics and Infectious Diseases

Dr. Inas Kelly (inas.kelly@lmu.edu)

Dept: Economics

Courses: Health Economics

Dr. Mikki Kressbach (mikki.kressbach@lmu.edu)

Dept: Film and TV Studies

Courses: Science, Medicine, and Digital Media

Dr. Carla Marcantonio (carla.marcantonio@lmu.edu)

Dept: Film and TV Studies

Courses: Science Fiction and Biopolitics

Dr. Anna Muraco (anna.muraco@lmu.edu)

Dept: Sociology

Courses: Sociology of Aging

Dr. Allison Noyes (allison.noyes@lmu.edu)

Dept: Communication Studies

Courses: Communication and Healthcare

Dr. Mona Seymour (mona.seymour@lmu.edu)

Dept: Urban and Environmental Studies

Courses: Agriculture, Food, and Justice; Sustainable Cities

Dr. Mairead Sullivan (mairead.sullivan@lmu.edu)

Dept: Women's and Gender Studies

Courses: Women's Bodies, Health, and Sexualities

Dr. Heather Tarleton (heather.tarleton@lmu.edu)

Dept: Health and Human Sciences

Courses: Public Health; Health Services for Marginalized Populations; Healthcare Administration

Dr. Rachel Washburn (rachel.washburn@lmu.edu)

Dept: Sociology; Health and Society

Courses: Introduction to Health and Society; Sociology of Health, Illness, and Biomedicine

Congratulations Seniors!

**We wish we could celebrate with you in person
and wish you all the best as you embark on new
pursuits and adventures.**

**For more information about the Health and Society program please contact
Rachel Washburn at rachel.washburn@lmu.edu**