The Director’s Corner

We would like to welcome our incoming class for the 2011-2012 academic year. The class includes three Ph.D., seven M.S., and eight M.P.H. students. Enrollment for all three SPM graduate programs now total 57 students. We wish all students success in their graduate studies!

We are already looking ahead and have begun our recruitment efforts for next year. Several students have volunteered to help us with this endeavor. The Department will sponsor a graduate student recruitment booth at the 139th Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association. The meeting will be held October 29-November 2 in Washington, DC. Be sure to stop by our booth if you are attending the meeting.

We wish a fond farewell to Carole Rudra, Ph.D., who has accepted a position as research scientist at Independent Health, effective August 15. Her research will focus on the evaluation of Independent Health disease and care management programs. Dr. Rudra joined SPM as an assistant professor in 2007. We wish her every success in her new endeavor.

- Carl Li, M.D., M.P.H.

Honors and Awards

Margaret Divita, Kelly Kamm and Anne Weaver were selected to receive Robert O’Shea Student Travel Awards. The awards will provide travel funds to present their research at the 60th Annual Meeting of The American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene.

Dhanashri Kohok, M.B.B.S., was selected to receive a 2011-2012 Quality Improvement Award for her project entitled “Management of Cardiovascular Risk Factors at a Renal Transplant Clinic – Interventions to Minimize Clinical Inertia.” The Office of Graduate Medical Education (GME) offers up to five awards, each valued at a maximum of $3,000, to support resident-faculty team projects designed to improve patient care of clinical practice. Projects must be developed and conducted by residents in collaboration with university faculty.

Jean Wachtawski-Wende, Ph.D., was chosen to be the first Ph.D. graduate to receive the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (SMBS) Distinguished Alumni Award. She will be honored at a ceremony on October 28 at The Buffalo Club. This is the first year SMBS has included an award for Ph.D. graduates of the school.

The American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene

The 60th Annual Meeting of The American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene will be held December 4-8 in Philadelphia. Presentations will be made by the following SPM students:

Christina Crabtree-Ide, M.P.H., poster entitled “Household Factors Associated with Indoor Air Pollution in a Low-Income Urban Area in Bangladesh”

Margaret Divita, M.S., poster entitled “Impact of Intensive Handwashing Promotion on Household Transmission of Influenza in a Low Income Setting: Preliminary Results of a Randomized Controlled Clinical Trial”

Kelly Kamm, M.H.S., paper entitled “Associations with Handwashing in the Home and Respiratory and Diarrheal Illness in Children Under Five Years Old in Rural Western Kenya”

Anne Weaver, M.S., poster entitled “Factors Associated with Appropriate Household Diarrhea Case Management in Hospitalized Children, Nyanza Province, Kenya, 2007”
The 23rd Annual J. Warren Perry Lecture, sponsored by the SPHHP, will be held on November 4. A poster presentation will be held at noon in 105 Harriman Hall. Posters from the following SPM faculty and students will be included in the lineup:


**Andrea Licht**, M.S., “Tobacco Retail Outlet Density, Proximity to Schools, and Low Income Areas: City of Buffalo, Erie County, New York”

**Henry Lin**, B.S., “Socioeconomic Status, Food Reinforcement and Obesity”


**Amanda Ziegler**, B.S., “Sensitization of Food Reinforcement Predicts Weight Gain in Adults”

Following the poster presentations Dr. David Katz, associate professor of Public Health and director of the Prevention Research Center at Yale University School of Medicine will present a seminar entitled “The Road to Health is Paved with Good Intentions.”

**Faculty/Student Research**

**Christine Ambrosone**, Ph.D., is co-principal investigator, in collaboration with researchers from Slone Epidemiology Center at Boston University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, on a national study investigating the causes of breast cancer among African-American women. The five-year, $19.3M award from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) is the largest study to date on breast cancer in African-Americans. It will involve 5,500 African-American women from four ongoing studies – the Carolina Breast Cancer Study, the Women’s Circle of Health Study, and the Multiethnic Breast Cancer Study, the Black Women’s Health Study, and the Multiethnic Cohort Study – as well as 5,500 controls. This investigation will be the first to develop comprehensive models for contributions of genetic and non-genetic risk factors for breast cancer subtypes in African-American women. The goal is to discover genetic, biologic, reproductive and behavioral risks for breast cancer subgroups defined by tumor biology and age at onset of disease.

**Andrew Hyland**, Ph.D., was awarded a $4,263,774 five-year grant entitled “Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act National Longitudinal Study” from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). The National Longitudinal Survey of Tobacco Use (NLSTU) will develop a cohort of nearly 38,000 adults and 7,000 adolescents
who will provide baseline biospecimens and annual tobacco use survey data. The NLSTU will heavily oversample tobacco users, young adults, racial/ethnic minorities, and those susceptible to tobacco use as it creates a framework for both evaluating FDA regulations on tobacco as well as broader scientific issues related to tobacco use. Dr. Hyland was also recently awarded two grants from the National Cancer Institute. “A Community Trial to Speed the Diffusion of Smoke Free Multunit Housing Policies” is a five-year, $548,114 grant whose aim is to conduct a randomized community-based intervention to test whether increases in SHS knowledge, support for smoke-free MUH policies, and actual policy implementation can be achieved through an educational intervention that delivers credible scientific information to the appropriate target audiences. A one-year, $341,319 grant, “Monitoring and Assessing the Impact of Tax and Price Policies on US Tobacco Use,” will help to improve understanding of the impact of tobacco tax and price policies on tobacco use and related behaviors. This will be done through a combination of original data collection; acquisition of existing archival, survey, and commercial databases; and merged data analyses that build on the research team’s work as part of the Bridging the Gap/ImpacTeen (BTG) project, the International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Study (ITC), and related efforts.

Pavani Ram, M.D., is principal investigator for two recently awarded grants. “Impact Evaluation of Cholera Vaccine and Behavior Change Interventions in Urban Dhaka,” a one-year grant funded by The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, subcontracted through the International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research, will examine the effectiveness of intervention with an oral cholera vaccine and the effectiveness of a handwashing and home water treatment behavior change in reducing diarrhea due to cholera. A second award from UNICEF will provide support for monitoring and evaluating handwashing promotion programs managed by UNICEF country offices.

News and Notes

Sarah Ackroyd and Amanda Ziegler were nominated to serve as MPH ambassadors from the Department of SPM. The role of ambassador is to represent SPHHP at selected regional recruitment and other activities where the school has a presence.

Katie Dobson Amato, Joseph Green, Kelly Kamm and Yanli Li successfully passed their Preliminary Exams.

Imran Ahmad, M.B.B.S., was elected to the UB Residents’ Committee (UBRC) for 2011-2012. He will represent Preventive Medicine residents in matters related to all aspects of residency education and serve as a liaison to the Graduate Medical Education Committee (GMEC).

K. Michael Cummings, Ph.D., retired from Roswell Park Cancer Institute, effective September 29, after more than 30 years of service. He has relocated to South Carolina where he has accepted a position in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Medical University of South Carolina.

Andrew Hyland, Ph.D., has been appointed chair of the Department of Health Behavior at Roswell Park Cancer Institute.

James Olson, Ph.D., recently completed his service on the National Academies Institute of Medicine panel on Veterans and Agent Orange. The panel biennially reviews studies published in peer reviewed journals and issues a report to the Veterans Administration on the health effects associated with exposure to herbicides used during the Vietnam War. The biennial reports will continue through 2014.

Maurizio Trevisan, M.D., has accepted a position as dean at the Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education at City College of New York, effective August 1.

Alumni News

Priyanka Dua, M.P.H. (’11), is working as a Community Health Intern at Kaleida Health.

Walter Iwanenko, Ph.D. (’03), has been named dean Graduate Studies at Hilbert College, effective July 2011.

Nicoleta Voian, M.D., M.P.H. (’09), has accepted a position as director of clinical genetics at Roswell Park Cancer Institute.

SPM Graduates: September 2011

The following students successfully completed all degree requirements established by the Department of SPM and the University at Buffalo for September 1, 2011 degree conferral. Congratulations to our graduates!

M.S. Epidemiology

William Lainhart, “Characterization of the 2009 Influenza Pandemic Using Absenteeism Data Collected with a School-Based Surveillance System in Erie County, NY.” Committee members include Drs. Pavani Ram (major), Heather Lindstrom and Jihnhee Yu. Bill is continuing his doctoral studies in the Department of Biomedical Sciences at the University at Albany.

Sarah Morrow, M.D., “The Effect of Years of Achieved Education on the Relationship Between Deep Gray Matter Atrophy and Impairment on Measures of Processing Speed in Multiple Sclerosis.” Committee members include Drs. Jean Wactawski-Wende (major), Ralph Benedict and Bianca Weinstock-Guttman. Sarah is an assistant
professor of neurology in the Department of Clinical Neurological Sciences, University of Western Ontario.

M.P.H. Health Services

Tara Short, J.D., “Fighting Obesity Through Legal Interventions.” Committee members include Drs. Donald Rowe and Carl Li.

SPM News Students Fall 2011

The Department of SPM welcomes our new students entering Fall 2011.

Ph.D. Epidemiology

Mark Glasgow, B.S. biotechnology and M.P.H., University at Buffalo. Mark is a predoctoral fellow in the Cancer Epidemiology Multidisciplinary Program in the Department of SPM.

Albina Minlikeeva, B.S. health sciences, Northeastern University; M.P.H., SUNY Upstate Medical University.

Ajay Myneni, M.B.B.S., Manipal Academy of Higher Education; M.P.H., University of Illinois.

M.S. Epidemiology

Rikki Cannioto, Ed.D. health promotion, University of Kentucky; B.S. psychology and physical education, SUNY College at Brockport. Rikki is an assistant professor in the Department of Kinesiology, Sport Studies and Physical Education at SUNY College at Brockport.

Tyler Evans, M.D., Sackler School of Medicine, New York State American Branch; B.S. gerontology, University of Southern California – Los Angeles; M.P.H., Columbia University. Tyler is a PGY II in the Preventive Medicine Residency Program Cancer Prevention Track.

Swapna Kumar, B.S. biomedical engineering, University of Rochester.

Henry Lin, B.S. microbiology. Henry is a student in the MD/PhD Medical Scientist Training Program at the UB School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

Jordon Rabey, B.S. biomedical sciences, University at Buffalo.

Emily Trueisdell, B.S. biochemistry/biomedical sciences, University at Buffalo.


M.P.H. Epidemiology

Imran Ahmad, M.B.B.S., Aga Khan University. Imran is a PGY III in the Combined Internal Medicine/Preventive Medicine Residency Program.

Lamya Hamad, B.S. pharmacological sciences, Cairo University.

Elizabeth Mills, B.S. psychology, University at Buffalo.

M.P.H. Environmental Health

Christopher Fenar, B.A. history, University at Buffalo.

M.P.H. Health Services

Sarah Ackroyd, B.A. statistics and B.S. biochemistry/psychology, University of Rochester.

Robert Reed, B.S. finance, Boston College. Robert is a quality analyst at Roswell Park Cancer Institute.

Bi Tadzong, M.D., Hershey Pennsylvania State College of Medicine; B.S. biochemistry, University of Maryland. Bi is a PGY II in the Preventive Medicine Residency Program.

Amanda Ziegler, B.S. biochemistry, University of Rochester.

New Course Offering

Spring 2012

SPM 522FRE Selected Topics: A Life Course Approach to Chronic Disease Epidemiology (3 credits)*
Reg. No. 24249
Instructor: Jo Freudenheim, Ph.D.
Thursday 9:00-11:40

There is increasing evidence in order to understand the etiology of chronic diseases it is important to examine early life events. This course will be an exploration of what the emerging understanding is of the role of early life in adult chronic diseases and the methodological issues inherent in the study of such risk factors. We will examine current literature as well as recent reviews, both of epidemiology and of relevant research on potential mechanisms. The course will have a seminar format.

*Note: Selected Topics courses are variable credit. Be sure to confirm your registration for 3 credit hours.