

Health Services to Advance Equity and Diversity (HSAED) Lab Manual

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PURPOSE

“The HSAED Lab merges concepts and approaches from the health services and health psychology fields to further our understanding of how and why some socially defined groups are disproportionately affected by type 2 diabetes and its related conditions. The HSAED Lab focuses on the health of immigrants and people of color, and how multiple forms of discrimination, from interpersonal to structural, ‘get under the skin’ to impact their health.”

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WELCOME TO THE LAB

Welcome to the HSAED Lab, and congratulations on reaching this milestone. You are here because you have demonstrated a commitment to health equity, scientific rigor, and public service.

It's crucial to understand that the next few years are not just another academic endeavor, but rather a comprehensive training program designed to shape you into both a scientist and a public servant. What sets this training program apart from the academic education you have completed to date is its emphasis on real-world application and impact.

Graduate training is challenging. It is designed to challenge you. You will be challenged to think deeply about the roots of existing structures and systems and to strategize ways to shape a more equitable future. It is precisely these challenges that serve as the catalysts for growth and development. We are not training you in just science; we are preparing you to grapple with tough social issues.

Trust is key. I ask you to trust in my guidance and expertise as an advisor and mentor, knowing that my primary goal is your success and the betterment of public health. I am also asking you to conduct yourself responsibly. Participating in doctoral-level training is a privilege, not a right. You are here because you earned it. At the same time, it is your responsibility to demonstrate that this path, which is one of many, is the best fit for your values, strengths, and aspirations. The trust given to you, first as a doctoral student and then as a PhD-holding scientist, extends not just to us but also to the broader public whose lives may be impacted by your future contributions.

The next few pages lay out the expectations and standards you are committing to.

CODE OF CONDUCT

As aspiring psychologists, we understand the significance of our training and the responsibilities that come with it. This Code of Conduct reflects our collective commitment to excellence, ethical conduct, and the pursuit of public good. This serves as a guiding framework for the behaviors and actions expected of all members of the HSAED Lab as we navigate our training and professional development. By joining the lab, each member agrees to uphold the standards outlined herein.

1. Recognize the Privilege and Responsibility of PhD Training: As members of the HSAED Lab, we recognize the privilege and responsibility inherent in pursuing a PhD. Obtaining a PhD is a privilege that few achieve. According to recent Census statistics, less than 2% of the US population holds a PhD. It's crucial to recognize that this privilege comes with responsibilities and standards we must uphold. As such, we commit ourselves to upholding the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, and respect in all aspects of our work, and humbly recognize our limitations. We understand that recognizing our limitations is not a sign of weakness but rather a demonstration of our willingness to prioritize our own well-being and that of those we serve.

2. Practice Professional Conduct as Graduate Students and Colleagues: Graduate students must recognize the distinction between undergraduate and graduate-level conduct. Graduate students are expected to carry themselves with the professionalism and maturity befitting the status of emerging scholars and colleagues in the field of psychology. This includes respect for time and academic opportunities. In our interactions within the lab and in academic settings, we must demonstrate respect for others' time and effort. This includes punctuality for classes, meetings, and research sessions, as well as actively engaging in class discussions and assignments as opportunities to demonstrate competencies and receive valuable feedback.

3. Demonstrate Clinical Responsibility and Professionalism: When involved in clinical work, it's imperative to understand the gravity of our actions. Diagnoses and treatment plans can have profound and lasting impacts on individuals' lives. Therefore, we are committed to maintaining a high level of clinical skill and ethical conduct, including practicing outside scheduled sessions and approaching each client with empathy, professionalism, and respect.

BUILDING PUBLIC TRUST THROUGH PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY

In the HSAED Lab, we understand that our training and titles carry significant public trust. We view our training as a pathway to becoming public servants. As public servants, we are dedicated to serving the community's needs. Public servants are expected to act in the public interest, prioritizing the needs of the community over personal gain.

The trust put into scientists is a privilege, not a right—it is our responsibility to maintain that trust through transparency, accountability, consistency, competence, effective communication (verbal and written), and responsiveness to public health needs and concerns.

1. **Transparency:** Being open and honest about actions, decisions, and processes in research and in practice. Providing clear and accurate information builds trust by demonstrating integrity and accountability. Transparency helps others learn.
2. **Accountability:** Taking responsibility for actions and decisions. When mistakes are made, acknowledge them and take appropriate steps to rectify the situation. Accountability helps identify areas for improvement and facilitates constructive feedback and learning opportunities, ultimately contributing to overall success.
3. **Consistency:** Acting consistently over time reinforces reliability and predictability. Consistently upholding standards and values helps establish credibility with the lab and public.
4. **Competence:** Demonstrating competence in carrying out research responsibilities and delivering services inspires confidence in the lab and the public. Continuous improvement is critical to maintaining competence. Competence is not an end, but a means.
5. **Communication:** Science is only useful when communicated and heard. As public servants, we have a responsibility to advocate for and advance projects that have the potential to address pressing social issues, promote equity, and improve outcomes for marginalized populations. We must be able to clearly articulate the significance of our research in both verbal and written formats, justify the need for funding, and outline our research plan and objectives.
6. **Responsiveness to Needs:** Being responsive to the public's needs and interests demonstrates a commitment to serving their best interests. We commit ourselves to conducting research relevant to public health, identifying actionable findings or recommendations with the potential to translate scientific discoveries into practical applications, involving community stakeholders in collaboration, and contributing to health equity and social justice.

ETHICS

The HSAED Lab values fostering an inclusive and open environment for all students and trainees. In accordance with [UIC's policies](#) and statements regarding anti-discrimination and harassment, any form or amount of discrimination, prejudice, or harassment based on someone's beliefs, identities, or values will not be tolerated! If you feel any of these have taken place, please inform someone with whom you feel comfortable sharing (Loretta, other faculty, the Director of Graduate Students, the Director of Clinical Training, etc.). UIC's formal grievance procedures can be found [here](#).

Research Ethics

UIC and the HSAED Lab are committed to scientific and research integrity. Some specific examples of these principles are described below. More information about UIC research integrity policies can be found [here](#). Information on what to do in cases of research misconduct can be found [here](#).

Data Collection

You must honestly report all data collected. If you realize you made a mistake, let someone know and document it. It is ultimately up to the student to understand the details of their collected data/dataset: how the data were collected, which specific variables were measured, why specific variables were included or excluded from their analyses, etc. Understanding the meaning behind your data is just as important as working with it!

Data Storage/Documentation

All data must be stored and organized within the lab's Box drive. If you are collecting new data, make a data guide or protocol to show your work. All analyses are documented. Data is the university's property, not the student's, and will be stored here even after the student's departure. To take data with you, you need a formal agreement with the university.

Data Analysis

Falsification or fabrication of data during analysis is completely unacceptable.

Authorship

Discussing authorship at the start of a project is good practice, but things can change! All authorship issues should be discussed openly throughout the project, as projects can take unexpected turns, labor distributions can shift, and new collaborations can be formed. Please feel free to bring up questions about authorship with Loretta at any time if you're not sure of your authorship status on a project.

[APA guidelines](#) regarding authorship credit state:

"Authorship credit should reflect the individual's contribution to the study. An author is considered anyone involved with initial research design, data collection and analysis, manuscript drafting, or final approval. However, the following do not necessarily qualify for authorship: providing funding or resources, mentorship, or contributing research but not

helping with the publication itself. The primary author assumes responsibility for the publication, making sure that the data are accurate, that all deserving authors have been credited, that all authors have given their approval to the final draft; and handles responses to inquiries after the manuscript is published.”

At the start of a new project, the student taking the lead role can expect to be the first author of published work, with Loretta typically being the last author. Additional students who help over the course of the project may be added to the author list depending on their contributions, and their placement will be discussed with all other authors. If a student takes on a project but subsequently hands it off to someone else, they likely will lose first authorship to the person they pass it on to, unless co-first-authorship is appropriate.

If you leave the lab with unpublished work, you should discuss with Loretta about whether you plan to continue to work with her to write it up and manage responsibilities needed for revision after leaving, or if the final project write-up and revisions should be reassigned to another lab member. In this case, authorship questions to determine whether you will retain first authorship will be revisited.

Some work may be done in collaboration with other labs. In such a case, each lab member's contributions and authorship will be discussed at the start of collaborative work and re-evaluated throughout.

EXPECTATIONS

All Students

- No academic misconduct, discrimination, or harassment! Respect others.
- We encourage transparency, collaboration, and community. Ask if you have a question, let someone know if you have a problem, and feel free to ask if you need something. Help your lab mates when you can.
- Self-reflect. What is working (or not)? What strengths do you bring to a situation? Where do you need support?
- Read and stay up to date with current literature that is relevant to your interests, lab projects, etc.
- All lab members are expected to attend lab meetings as active participants.
- Find balance outside of your work and the lab! Your health and happiness are important.

Lab Meetings

Weekly lab meetings (typically lasting 1 hour) will be used in a variety of ways, depending on how we as a lab decide is the best use of this time together. Possible topics include (but are not limited to!) journal club readings, data/project presentations and feedback, idea/brainstorming sessions, and teaching meetings. As lab meetings are part of your 8 hours/week commitment to lab work, **all lab members are expected to attend**, with exceptions for unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances, such as illness or family issues.

Do not schedule travel, other meetings, or client/patient visits, and do not prioritize other activities over lab meetings. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis if you let Loretta know ahead of time (we may be able to change the lab meeting time for that week).

The timing of the lab meeting will be determined on a semester basis based on everyone's respective schedules. The lab meeting agenda is maintained in the "Lab Agenda" doc on Box. If you realize you will miss a lab meeting, please let Loretta know as soon as possible. Please add topics and updates to discuss during the lab meeting agenda doc in Box at least **24 hours before the lab meeting**. Your attention and participation are important and expected! Please be professional and respectful when using phones and laptops during meetings.

General outline of lab meetings:

Loretta: General updates

Lab members, in order: Updates on individual projects (e.g., milestones), and updates on lab-wide projects (e.g., pilot projects)

Lab topic of the week: For example, journal club

No lab meetings are conducted over the summer.

Graduate Students

Lab Hours

Grad students will be registered for research credits and have some time in the lab all semesters, including summer sessions. Please refer to the Graduate Student Handbook for information on the specific course hours for each semester (including summer terms) to dedicate to research. Note that the course number for research hours varies depending on the milestone (for example, PSCH 596 for prelim research hours is different than PSCH 591 for Master's thesis research hours).

Lab Responsibilities

Lab responsibilities generally fall into three categories:

- Participating in meetings (including ~1 hr for lab meeting, ~1 hr for individual meeting)
- Completing/maintaining assigned lab management tasks (e.g., maintaining the lab website)
- Conducting research tasks for Loretta/the lab (e.g., literature reviews)

These lab responsibilities are in addition to any paid Research/Teaching/Graduate Assistantship duties. That is, 20% of your time throughout the year will be dedicated to lab duties regardless of funding stream (i.e., RA/TA/GA).

Generally speaking, and because this is a research-intensive lab, you will find that lab members work on their own first-authored research (e.g., milestones) when not engaged in lab duties, coursework, clinical work, and assistantship work.

Requested Time Off

Time-off requests do not necessarily require formal approval, but should be communicated as soon as possible to ensure smooth coordination within the lab. While there is no strict limit on the number of hours off, exercise responsible judgment. Excessive time off may result in additional burden on colleagues or hinder progress in lab activities. Therefore, it is important to maintain a balanced approach and be considerate of your responsibilities as a member of the lab community. Being a good lab citizen entails managing time off responsibly to ensure collective productivity and collegiality within the team.

Letters of Recommendation

Letters of recommendation (LORs) are common as students apply to different funding opportunities, externships, etc. Please consider the following guidelines when you would want/need an LOR from Loretta:

- Please notify Loretta no later than 2 weeks (preferably more!) before your letter submission deadline.
 - If you are asking with fewer than 2 weeks to the deadline, expect to be asked to draft the first version of the letter.
- Send along important details about the opportunity you are applying for. At a minimum, this should include:
 - Due date for letter writers.

- Directions for submitting (e.g., website link, email address).
- A brief description of the funding/opportunity, including a website if possible.
- Who the other letter writers are, if applicable.
- Keywords *directly from the application/description* describing what characteristics or skills the reviewers are looking for. For example, “applicants interested in interdisciplinary teamwork to address adolescent mental health in community health settings.”
- Relevant experiences matched with those specific keywords. For example, “spearheaded project with interdisciplinary team of pediatricians, patient navigators, psychologists, and adolescents leading to a manuscript examining...”
- Your personal statements, if required by the application.
- Any other information you’d like her to address in her letter? For example, you may want me to address a gap in your research CV by discussing a particularly personally challenging year.
- Any other pertinent information. Err on the side of overdoing it. More info is better than less info!
- Please also let Loretta know if this is a non-standard letter. Consider opening your applicant portal and/or carefully reviewing your application’s LOR requirements ahead of time, and plan to notify Loretta if exceptional requirements (e.g., longer LORs, many short-form essays rather than an LOR) are needed. Loretta often works from prior LORs, but if this application requires, for example, three separate essays touching on three different aspects of your candidacy, let her know *as soon as possible*. Please understand that Loretta will likely require more than 2 weeks’ advance notice.
- LORs can often take time to talk over and edit; please plan accordingly! After you request an LOR, consider scheduling a 30-minute meeting with Loretta to review the LOR and application details. Please be prepared to discuss aspects of your application or experiences that Loretta should highlight in her letter, how to make your personal statement and LORs cohesive, etc.
- Last note: Your personal statement will be reviewed and edited by Loretta just as with any other piece of written work. Please send her the final draft you have, and understand that there may be a back-and-forth editing process. Plan accordingly.

End of Year Review

There is a **formal UIC clinical psychology program-required annual review at the end of each year**. You will receive a notification from the DCT when they are due at the end of the year (usually due in late April). You will fill out this form and are expected to review it before submitting to REDCap.

To prepare for this, select an existing 1:1 time slot or schedule a separate time slot. During this meeting, Loretta will also review her progress report with you. You will be rated on a scale of 1-5 on several research competency benchmarks. As a rule, a rating of 3 is **meeting expectations** (for your stage in training). Please do not read into it if you do not rate as **somewhat exceeding** or **considerably exceeding** expectation—these, as a rule, are rare.

Please use this time and space to reflect on what you would like to improve upon, what you have done well, and what feedback you have for the lab and/or Loretta that would be helpful!

Undergraduate Students

Lab Hours

Unpaid: For undergrads registered for credits, 2 credits ~ 6 hrs/week.

Paid: Undergrad students who are being paid will have several hours consistent with their approved hours/pay.

General Considerations

Undergraduate research assistants bring their own skill sets and value to the HSAED lab! Please feel free to let the lab know if you have specific areas of interest that you would like exposure to in terms of research projects (e.g., helping with systematic reviews), building specific skills (e.g., working with large, population-level data, conducting literature reviews, etc.), or building off of strengths you already excel at (e.g., web/poster design, etc.). All trainees, including undergraduate research assistants, are encouraged to pursue professional development opportunities, such as participating in the [Psychology Undergraduate Research Readiness \(PURR\) program](#), attending UIC research days, publishing in undergraduate journals, leading a journal club, etc. A general overview of undergraduate research assistant expectations can be found in the lab Box [here](#).

MILESTONES

Master's Thesis

The Master's thesis serves as a crucial opportunity for you to demonstrate your ability to identify a novel, clinically-relevant research question of public health significance. A strong thesis demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the literature specific to the chosen area, as evidenced by a well-crafted introduction, a clear justification for the research topic's importance, and a clear rationale for all hypotheses. Additionally, proficiency in basic statistical analysis, commensurate with what is typically acquired by the end of the first year of statistics coursework, is expected.

It is important to note that the MA project is not intended to be the pinnacle of your academic career but rather a foundational step towards future research. You are encouraged to thoughtfully consider your thesis topic as it often (but not always!) sets the trajectory for your subsequent research endeavors. Finally, because you will be spending the majority, if not all, of your first precious 12 months in the program working on your thesis, my policy is to greenlight only projects with publication potential (while recognizing that publication outcomes are subject to various factors often outside of your control).

Considerations for Master's Thesis Project

- The first-year project that you begin working on during the summer before the start of your first year can (but does not necessarily) develop into your Master's thesis project. Consider if you 1) enjoy and 2) see further potential in your first-year project that is submitted for the early fall abstract season. If yes to both, coordinate with Loretta to start brainstorming ways to develop the project into a thesis-level project (e.g., adding a statistical analysis).
- Use the first semester PSCH 595 (*Methods and Measurement in Clinical Psychology*) course to your advantage! This course was designed to help first-year students begin considering and developing potential Master's thesis ideas. For this course, you will propose a research project through a final paper. While your proposed project for this course does not necessarily *have* to turn into your Master's, it is helpful if it does, as you would have already completed the literature review and gained a grasp of your topic of interest. This course's assignments could lay the groundwork for a thesis-level project in conjunction with your first-year project.
- Start to consider potential Master's committee members before the winter of your first year. Work with Loretta to identify connections in your area of interest whose expertise may lend itself to your project.
 - It may be beneficial to consider a third committee member external to UIC to enhance your professional network.
 - Once you have finalized your committee members, you will need to obtain departmental approval. To do so, you will need to complete and submit Part 1 of the [Committee Members and Prospectus Approval Form](#) to the Director of Graduate Studies (Dr. Amanda Roy; alroy28@uic.edu) and the Psychology Program Director (Yazmin Rodriguez; yrodrig5@uic.edu). Once the department has signed, you will complete Part 2 by having your committee members sign it during the proposal. Once Part 2 is completed, the form should be returned to the department.

- Around the time of your proposal, you will also need to complete Part 1 of the AI Usage Form (please see other lab members for a copy) and circulate it when the proposal is sent. After the defense, you will collect signatures from committee members and return a copy of the signed form to the Director of Graduate Studies and Program Director.
- Before defending (not proposing) your Master's thesis, you will need to complete and submit a [Committee Recommendation form](#) for the UIC Graduate College. Once submitted, it may take the Graduate College several weeks to approve committee recommendations. Thus, don't leave this approval process to the last minute before your planned Master's thesis defense and graduation.
 - Be sure to include the CVs of any external committee members when you submit this form.
- If your committee member(s) cannot attend your defense in person (e.g., they are at an out-of-state institution), you will need to submit a [Defense Hybrid Request Form](#) for the UIC Graduate College.
- Don't "bite off more than you can chew" in terms of statistical analyses. While help from other lab members is expected to complete analyses for your first-year project abstract, it is hoped that by the end of the first year, students can complete their own analyses for the Master's thesis independently, with support from departmental statistics resources (stats professors, UIC stats clinic, etc.). Analyses that can be completed by a first-year student who has completed the required year-long statistics course sequence are absolutely considered appropriate for a Master's thesis.
- If you are on track to propose your Master's thesis project in the spring of your first year, aim for April rather than May to give yourself (and your committee members) more time before end-of-semester busyness.

Master's Committee - Non-UIC Member

- [Master's Thesis Defense](#) and [Exams & Defense Committee Membership Policy](#) pages
 - "One member of the committee may be from outside the department, academic unit, or outside the University, in which case the member must demonstrate equivalent academic standards, and his/her curriculum vitae must accompany the Committee Recommendation form."
 - Make sure that the outside committee member has equivalent qualifications to your UIC members (i.e., a PhD or other terminal degree in your discipline or a discipline related to your work), and be sure to include an up-to-date CV for the outside member that shows their current employment.

Defending and Obtaining an MA Degree

- Your MA defense must occur before the end of the semester you intend to graduate. Be sure to complete an Examination Report Form after your defense and submit it to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS).
- Be sure to apply to graduate in the semester that you intend to defend your MA thesis. Typically, the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) will send an email to the Psychology Department soliciting an "intent to graduate" from students with further instructions.
- To submit to UIC and obtain your MA degree, your thesis must be reformatted to meet specific criteria. *The content will remain the same.* Contact Boyd Bollinger (larnhe2@uic.edu) for

more information on proper thesis format, and be sure to ask whether the Graduate College will be hosting an informational session on thesis and dissertation formatting. This must be completed and submitted before the end of the semester you intend to graduate with your MA.

- Be sure to complete the Transfer Credit Petition form (which DGS should send to all students who have applied to graduate that term).
- Additional resources (milestone process forms) are available [here](#). Alternatively, reach out to Yazmin Rodriguez (yrodrig5@uic.edu) for support or with questions about milestones or departmental requirements. Yazmin also tends to host informational sessions about the proposal and defense process for milestones each semester.

Past HSAED Lab Graduate Student Master's Theses:

Asher Hong, 2026 "Examining Indications for Antidepressant Use in Older Adults: Prevalence and Differences by Immigrant Status and Non-English Language Preference in NHANES 2013-March 2020"

Committee: Robin Mermelstein, PhD; Esther Yoon, PhD

Clare Wongwai, 2026 "The Association of Age at Immigration with the Likelihood of Endorsing Feeling Depressed Among Immigrant Adults in the US: Data from National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) 2015-2018"

Committee: Robin Mermelstein, PhD; Lin Zhu, PhD

Viviana Uribe, 2026 "The Association of Having a Primary Care Provider and Visiting a Mental Health Professional: Data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) 2011-2018"

Committee: Robin Mermelstein, PhD; Erika Gustafson, PhD

Maya Lee, 2024 "The Association of Nativity and Mental Health Treatment Use Among Asian and Latine Groups: Data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey"

Committee: Robin Mermelstein, PhD; Milkie Vu, PhD

Example MA Thesis Proposal/Defense Timeline

Date	Due	Additional Action Items
March 30	Proposal/defense	
March 23	Finalize presentation, practice presentation	Send reminder email to committee members
March 16	Send finalized document to committee members	Practice presentation run-through with Loretta and lab

March 9	Finalize document	Work on presentation edits
March 2	Last rounds of edits to document with Loretta, practice run-through presentation with lab	
February 23		Edit document, edit presentation
February 16	Send almost finalized document to Loretta, rough practice of presentation with Loretta during 1:1 meeting	
February 9	Send almost finalized presentation to Loretta	Edit document
February 2		Edit presentation, edit and nearly finalize document
January 26 (2 months prior to proposal/defense date)		Start presentation, edit and nearly finalize document

Prelims

Your prelims are a portfolio that includes one publishable empirical research project and a series of clinical pieces (ask OAPS for more details—we will only be discussing the research project here). The prelims portfolio has two functions, outlined below.

First, the prelims research project serves as a pivotal demonstration of your ability to conduct *independent* scholarly work. It is designed to showcase your ability to conduct rigorous and thorough research autonomously, emphasizing independence as a fundamental skill in academic and professional endeavors. The research project can (and will most likely be) done collaboratively with others, but you are expected to show how you were a leader on the project.

Second, the prelims portfolio provides faculty with an opportunity to assess your progress and proficiency in research and clinical skills. The preliminary project is considered one of the final mechanisms through which faculty can provide support and guidance, ensuring that students are appropriately prepared for the advanced stages of their academic journey.

In the HSAED Lab, our policy is that the preliminary research project consists of a review (e.g., systematic or scoping) and, if applicable, a meta-analysis. You may propose other projects (e.g., a qualitative project) if you have a strong idea, but this is the baseline expectation. This is deliberate: a review not only provides you with valuable experience in conducting reviews during your graduate studies but also positions you as an expert in your chosen and specific content area. Moreover, by

selecting a topic relevant to your dissertation, you can seamlessly integrate your preliminary research into your dissertation's introduction.

As a starting point, UIC Library Services has created an [extremely helpful webinar series](#) covering several review types, their differences, considerations, and applications. You should expect to dedicate 2-4 weeks to complete this prerequisite investigation into reviews. Should you decide that a systematic review is your chosen prelim trajectory, participation in a systematic review course, such as the [free Coursera](#) course (the Hopkins one), is expected. This course will equip you with the skills and knowledge to conduct systematic reviews effectively.

After successfully defending your prelims, you can officially change your title to Doctoral Candidate. Congrats!

Considerations for Prelims Project

- In the name of building your “program of research,” consider both your thesis and your dissertation. What questions did your thesis bring up, and can you answer those questions with a review? What dissertation do you want to do, and what will your intro need to focus on? Some examples of developing a program of research from thesis to dissertation are below:
 - Example 1:
 - Thesis discovery: Immigrants are less likely to be prescribed insulin than metformin despite similar A1Cs and diabetes complications.
 - Question arising from thesis: Is this due to therapeutic inertia?
 - Prelims topic: A systematic review of barriers and facilitators to therapeutic inertia in type 2 diabetes.
 - Prelims findings: Surprising lack of studies focus on the patient's perspective on therapeutic intensification.
 - Dissertation: A mixed-methods study on patient perspectives on therapeutic intensification among patients with type 2 diabetes and limited English proficiency.
 - Example 2:
 - Thesis discovery: Older immigrants are most likely to use antidepressants compared to other age groups.
 - Question arising from thesis: Is this because of more frequent contact with healthcare and thus more opportunity to catch depression, or because of non-depression conditions for which antidepressants are effective (e.g., insomnia)?
 - Prelims topic: Using EHR data to characterize the diagnostic profiles of older adults on antidepressants.
 - Prelims findings: Among older adults, antidepressants are most commonly prescribed for conditions other than depression, despite a high prevalence of depressive symptoms.
 - Dissertation: A mixed-methods study of older immigrant patients' understanding of their antidepressant medications.

CONFERENCES

Abstract Season: Timeline

Our lab emphasizes writing, presenting, and disseminating our work! Scientific conferences, symposia, publications, etc., are a large part of this and help launch academic/research careers.

Some conferences present and share research aligned with the lab's work, which we historically try to attend: the [Society of Behavioral Medicine](#) and the Society for Biopsychosocial Science and Medicine (formerly the [American Psychosomatic Society](#)). This doesn't mean that lab members will attend each year, but they are good conferences to aim to submit to/present at. Because abstracts for these are due close to the start of the academic year (typically in early September), we try to anticipate or create projects that could be submitted as original abstracts for presentation later in the year (around mid-March). Please see the checklist below for how this process could look!

Checklist

1. **(May/June)** Meet with the lab to discuss potential project ideas that you would be interested in executing and submitting an abstract about.
2. **(June/July)** Work with another, more senior lab member to finalize your project, clean, and analyze your data.
3. **(July/August)** Working with other lab members, interpret your results.
4. **(mid-August)** Begin writing up your project in abstract form. Lab members will work collaboratively to refine and edit your abstract. Once an abstract is nearly finalized, the first author (that's you) should send it to all co-authors for review. Co-authors should be given **two work weeks** to turn around comments. Comments should be addressed, and a second near-finalized version should be sent to co-authors for final approval. One to two weeks to wait for the co-author's final approval is sufficient, depending on the extent of the changes. The abstract *cannot* be (ethically) submitted without co-author approval.
5. **(Early September)** Submit your abstract to the chosen conference by the deadline! Tip: Open the submission portal early and note everything you need for submission. Sometimes, submission portals will ask for COI Statements, CVs, and all kinds of extra stuff that you will need time to collect.
6. **(After submission)** Send the citation of your abstract to coauthors for addition to the appropriate people's CVs!
7. **(January/February)** Begin composing your poster, making necessary tables and images, etc.
 - a. Circulate a semi-finalized version of your poster to all listed co-authors for feedback, edits, and for them to sign off on the poster.
 - b. Apply for the Student Travel Award by downloading the form, completing it, and emailing it to Jennifer at jvais@uic.edu. This should cover up to \$800 of conference-related costs (hotel fees, ride shares to/from conference/airport, etc. [more on travel awards below])
 - c. Coordinate with Michelle at (mkong5@uic.edu) to purchase airfare tickets to/from Chicago to the conference site.
8. **(Early March)** Anticipate your poster printing deadline around this time!

9. **(After conference)** Contact Michelle to either establish a Chrome River account or use Chrome River to file for reimbursement for conference-related expenses. Saving receipts from these expenses will be your best friend.

Conference Travel Awards

- Department Student Travel Award (Psych Department)
 - Support for graduate student attendance at a conference in a presenting role. This award can cover any travel-related expenses, including airfare, lodging, registration fees, etc (up to \$800). This can be used throughout the fiscal year (7/1 to 6/30) until the \$800 award is fully used. See attached STA Application Form for more details.
- Graduate College Student Presenter Award (the department does not manage this)
 - <https://grad.uic.edu/funding-awards/graduate-college-fellowships/student-presenter-awards/>
 - The Graduate College offers up to \$150.00 (depending on actual expenses) to eligible graduate students to help defray costs associated with presenting original research or scholarly work at a meeting or conference. The meeting or conference must be a part of a nationally or internationally recognized scientific or scholarly society. Applicants must be the primary presenter of the original research or scholarly work. The award may be used for transportation (outside the Chicago metropolitan area only), lodging, and/or registration expenses.
- Graduate Student Council Travel Award (the department does not manage this)
 - <https://gradstudentcouncil.uic.edu/awards/travel-awards-2/>
 - The UIC Graduate Student Council Travel Award is available to students attending academic or professional meetings. The GSC awards eligible applicants up to \$550, which may be used to cover conference costs for transportation, lodging, registration fees, and meals. (This does not include conferences taking place in the city of Chicago)

Poster Considerations

- For abstracts accepted as poster presentations, please anticipate your workload throughout the semester (typically beginning in January) and plan to make, edit, and submit your poster accordingly. Note that both SBM and SBSM typically hold conferences in mid-March, meaning your poster needs to be printed by the beginning of March.
- Poster composition and design:
 - Add HSAED Lab and UIC logos.
 - Not bound to UIC branding colors, but could make the poster look more cohesive.
 - Use AMA (not APA) style references. You can include your references directly on the poster or use a QR code. Check the lab Box for examples of both.
 - Remember to include a Table 1 for Demographics or other study participant characteristics, and aim to include a Table 2 or a Figure to present the main results (e.g., a forest plot or histogram).
 - Double-, triple-, and quadruple-check the recommended poster dimensions on the conference website before getting too far along in your poster design process!
- Aim to send your poster to lab members and co-authors for digital suggestions/comments, preferably at least 1 month before the printing deadline.

- Typically, aim to present a nearly finalized version of your poster during lab meeting ***two weeks*** before the printing deadline.
- Printing:
 - You can print posters in various sizes at UIC by emailing uiccds@uic.edu (UIC Creative and Digital Services).
 - Please be prepared to do this in advance, as it can take up to 5 business days for your poster to be printed after sending your finalized version.
 - In this initial email, ask for a pricing estimate based on your requested poster dimensions. Send this estimate along to Loretta, and the lab will sort out covering printing costs.
 - Pick up your printed poster on the West campus *or* select “Deliver” and have it delivered to East Campus (we recommend delivery).
- Be sure to circulate your finalized poster (title and all!) to all involved lab members so they can add it to their CVs!
 - ***Please*** add your own poster to your own CV!!

Example timeline for poster making, editing, and printing:

Date	Action Item
Mid-January	Begin drafting poster
First week of February	First draft of poster due to Loretta
Mid-February	Poster practice run during weekly lab meeting
Late-February	Make poster edits, send revisions to Loretta
First week of March	Second poster practice run during weekly lab meeting
Mid-March	Deadline for printing!
Late-March	Typical SBM/SBSM presentation

PUBLISHING

In academia, publishing is the currency that counts, regardless of your career path. The ability to disseminate your findings through publication is an indispensable skill set (indeed, disseminating findings is often listed as a training activity in grants). Publishing is more than just writing; it is a distinct skill set that demonstrates the value of your work to the scientific community. Peer-reviewed publications signal credibility and contribute to your professional reputation. Let's explore the steps to effective publishing.

Setting Up Your Paper

Research products, including those submitted to meet program milestones, should be converted to a publishable format as early as possible (i.e., right after your defense is passed). Step 1 is identifying a journal and downloading its Author Guidelines, which will provide information on word limits, table limits, etc. Please know that each journal has its own quirks—so read the guidelines carefully. Each journal has its own formatting guidelines, but typically you will be expected to include: Title Page (including Authors, Author Affiliations, and Corresponding Author), Abstract, Intro, Methods, Results, Discussion, References, Tables, and Figures. Tables will go in separate files from the main manuscript or appear at the end of the manuscript, after references. (I personally prefer them to be separate so I can look at the Tables while following the text.) You may also be expected to write a Cover Letter. Loretta has resources for how to write a Cover Letter. You may also be expected to gather Conflict of Interest statements from all co-authors.

Loretta will typically be the Corresponding Author. You can copy-paste the Corresponding Author info below:

Corresponding Author:

Loretta Hsueh, PhD
Department of Psychology
University of Illinois Chicago
1007 W Harrison, Chicago, IL 60607
Email: lhsueh@uic.edu

Co-Author Etiquette

It is standard to give your co-authors the names of journals you plan to submit to. For the sake of time and clear inboxes, target at least three journals and list them in order. An example email is below:

“Dear Coauthor and Coauthor,

Thank you for your continued support of this manuscript. I plan on submitting to the *Journal of Really Impactful Research* by March X. If rejected, I plan on then submitting to the *Journal of Regular Impact* and then the *Journal of Good Enough*, but please let me know if you have suggestions for other journals that might be interested in this work.”

When you submit your manuscript for the first time, please update the co-authors accordingly and provide a suggested citation for their CVs. You only need to do this once until a journal finally bites and accepts.

For each journal rejection, please update the co-authors and let them know which journal is next.

Submission Etiquette

Ask Loretta for login information for the journal's submission portal. Do not create your own account. As the corresponding author, Loretta is responsible for all official external communication. However, you are responsible for uploading and submitting all submission material yourself.

Rejection

The most common outcome of journal submissions is flat-out rejection (not sent out for review). Dust yourself off and keep going.

In some cases, the Editor may have sent the manuscript out for review, but the reviewers recommended rejection. It will be painful, but do read the criticisms! Address the criticisms that *improve the paper* and trash the rest. Not all criticisms are worth responding to at this stage.

Revise and Resubmit/Responding to Reviewers

If you get a Revise and Resubmit—congratulations!

1. Celebrate!
2. Skim the reviewer comments. Put them away for a few hours and come back to them.
3. Give the reviewer comments a deeper read, and draft your responses accordingly.
4. After you have your first draft, review it with Loretta.
5. When changes are agreed upon, follow the journal's guidelines for responding to reviewers. Some may ask for a clean version and a tracked-changes version; others might ask for a point-by-point response to reviewer comments, and still others might ask for your response to reviewers in a table format. Each journal is different.
6. **Always** ask your co-authors to approve both the Response Letter and the Revised Manuscript. As with any other submission, a two-week turnaround is appreciated, so plan accordingly.

Examples of Response Letters can be found on the lab Box. In addition, a short primer on how to effectively respond to reviewers can be found here:

Cushman, M. (2023). How I respond to peer reviewer comments. *Research and Practice in Thrombosis and Hemostasis*, 7(2).

Acceptance

This is it! You did it! See above Step 1. Step 2 is to update your co-authors of the good news and any further steps they may need to take. Please also provide an updated CV citation at this stage (with “In Press” as the new status). Generally speaking, you (the first author) are responsible for reviewing proofs and catching any editing mistakes that the journal makes. Be aware that journals very often ask for a **tight turnaround (as short as 48 hours)** on proofs.

Helpful Notes

- Find a system, any system, to preserve well-written but discarded work. There may come a day when you need to write a similar sentence or paragraph, and it's more efficient to build on previous work than to start from scratch. For example, I keep a Word document on Box labeled with each

project I'm working on, and I dump discarded paragraphs there. This way, if I need to make the same statement in the future, I can easily find and reuse it.

- Be aware that journals are increasingly asking for separate Conflict of Interest (COI) forms from all co-authors. This can add time if you have busy co-authors, so it's best to get this out of the way as soon as you know.
- Current etiquette is that it is okay to nudge the Editor if your paper has been in their hands for three to four months.
- It is completely acceptable to ask for an extension on revisions, commiserate with life circumstances or the extent of requested revisions, but do not expect the extension to be granted.
- Writing resource: The UIC writing center offers assistance with reviewing written work. <https://writingcenter.uic.edu/> For graduate students, there is a specific tutor who assists all graduate students. Their name is Lindsay Mashall. Here is her email: lmash4@uic.edu

Suggested Journals

If you're uncertain about where to submit your manuscript, consider these journals. Each publication caters to a unique audience, so it's important to be intentional. A good practice is to examine recent articles published by a journal and determine if your manuscript aligns well with their content. Additionally, review your reference list; you may notice that you've cited a substantial amount of work from particular journals. Since you've already shown interest in those topics, those journals are likely to welcome your submission. Otherwise, the journals we commonly consider are listed below in alphabetical order:

[Health Psychology](#)

[Journal of Clinical Psychology](#)

[Journal of General Internal Medicine](#)

[Journal of Health Psychology](#)

[Psychiatric Services](#)

ONBOARDING

UIC Clinical Psychology PhD Milestones

Clinical program graduate students are expected to regularly fill out the Graduate Student Training Plan template as they progress throughout their semesters and training (see example below, but ask Loretta for the full version):

Graduate Student Training Plan For:

YEAR 1	Research	Clinical	Classwork	Teaching	Priority Goals/Plans
Year 1 Fall	Milestones – Develop MA idea Write MA Proposal	Milestones – Observe intakes	591 Research Apprenticeship 1hr 595 Methods & Measures in Clin. Psych. 2hrs 571 Psychopath. 3hrs 581 Interviewing 2hrs 543 Research Design & Analysis 4hrs 579 Current Topics 1hr (CT DSK? _____) 508 Teaching Psych 1hr 507 Emerging Research Issues 1hr 584 Prac. for Clinical Trainees 1hr 541 Intro to Computing in Psych 1hr		
Year 1 Spring	Milestones – Obtain IRB Approval Form MA Committee Propose MA	Milestones – Conduct intakes while shadowed by older student	591 Research Apprenticeship 2hrs 582 Prac. in Psych Assessment 4hrs 545 Multivariate Analysis 3hrs 579 Current Topics 1hr 584 Prac. for Clinical Trainees 1hr 507 Emerging Research Issues 1hr AND 575 Psychotherapy Theory and Research 3hrs OR 577 Ethics and Professional Development 3hrs OR DSK Course?		
Year 1 Summer	Milestones – Conduct MA Research	Milestones – Conduct independent intakes Start assessments	584 Practicum for Clinical Trainees 1-2hrs 598 M.A. Thesis 3-6hrs		

Don't be intimidated by this outline! It's only a suggested timeline of the typical progression through the program. Loretta will work with you to determine your own goals and refine a more detailed timeline once you start your first year. For more information, please see the [UIC Clinical Psychology Student Handbook](#) (updated every year). Please note that you are beholden to the guidelines of the Clinical Psychology Student Handbook *for the year you were admitted*.

Societies to Join

There are a few professional societies that HSAED lab members should and often join. Listed below are those that are mandatory to join. Loretta will work with you to obtain membership:

- [Society of Behavioral Medicine](#) (SBM)
- [Society for Health Psychology](#) (APA Division 38)—note, do not join APA, only join Division 38

Others that lab members are often interested in joining:

- [National Latinx Psychology Association](#) (NLPA)
- [Asian American Psychological Association](#) (AAPA)
- [American Heart Association](#)

- [American Diabetes Association](#)
- [Society for Biopsychosocial Science and Medicine \(SBSM\)](#)

EXPECTED PRODUCTIVITY OUTCOMES AT GRADUATION

- If all milestone goals are met, you can expect to leave for an internship with two first-author publications either published or under review (thesis and prelims). You may also expect several co-authored publications from collaborating with others in the lab or outside collaborators (e.g., committee members).
- You are expected to attend at least one conference a year (APS, SBM, ADA, etc.) to the best of your ability.
- I strongly encourage you to obtain some qualitative analysis experience, either through a collaboration or as part of a milestone. Please note that qualitative studies may suffice for theses or prelims, but do not usually suffice alone for a dissertation.
- I strongly encourage you to form relationships with community members and organizations. This can be done in many ways, including through volunteer work, presenting workshops or research to community members, consulting with community organizations when conceptualizing research, etc.
- I strongly encourage you to obtain at least one national service activity before you leave the program. Typical national service activities for graduate students include serving as a Special Interest Group member in a scientific society or as a Student Representative on a national committee (e.g., Student Representative to CUDCP).