

Weekly Newsletter December 16-20, 2024

PQHS NEWS

UPCOMING EVENTS



Research Methods Meeting

Wednesday, December 18th, 10:00 – 11:00 AM

Title: Why does it matter and what does it mean to validate a model?

Presenters: Arlene Ash, PhD and Randall Ellis, PhD

Bios: Dr. Ash has a PhD in mathematics and is Division Chief of Biostatistics and Health Services Research in PQHS. Dr. Ellis has a PhD in economics and is a professor in the Economics Department in the College of Arts and Sciences at Boston University. The

speakers have worked together, since the mid-1980s, to develop risk models for managing health care that are now used by the federal government and many others.

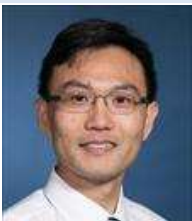
Description: We will share learning from decades of model building and testing, including: what questions are answered by different kinds of validation procedures; how validation and cross-validation differ; why validation is crucial when N is small, especially compared to p (the number of potential predictors); which aspects of models or measures of model performance might be unstable, even when built on 10s of millions of observations and p is not large; why and how to use bootstrapping for cross-validation (and how to do so efficiently with huge N s).

To join the meeting click [here](#).

Research Methods Meetings - 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month at 10 AM until June 18, 2025

- The goal is to share innovative research methods, explore current challenges like reducing inequities, highlight method-focused publications, seek feedback on research problems for grants, and identify collaborators for new or ongoing projects.
- If you would like to receive a reminder prior to each seminar, please email judi.saber@umassmed.edu to be added to the distribution list. If you are on this list, you will also receive an Outlook invitation to your calendar.
- We also invite you to consider presenting your work at one of our meetings. Please contact arlene.ash@umassmed.edu if you'd like to learn more.
- We look forward to seeing you there and engaging in valuable discussions!

PQHS SHOUT OUT



Feifan Liu has been awarded the designation of Fellow of AMIA, FAMIA and will be inducted into the 2025 class of FAMIA in May 2025.

A machine-learning pilot project (a collaboration between **Feifan Liu's** iAI4Health lab and MassHealth) was honored with the "Community Hero Award" at the inaugural Executive Branch AI Showcase Day (11/18/2024).



Join the Diversity Action Committee!

Our Diversity Action Committee (DAC) continues to work to ensure that PQHS is an environment where all are welcomed, feel a sense of belonging and inclusion across our workplace/community.

We are looking for passionate individuals who are eager to make a positive impact, share their perspectives, and contribute to shaping our initiatives. Whether you're interested in policy advocacy, organizing events, or supporting related programs, your voice matters!

Why Get Involved?

- Help drive change and ensure diverse voices are heard.
- Collaborate with like-minded individuals who are passionate about inclusion.
- Make a tangible difference in creating a more welcoming and equitable environment for all.

Interested? Reach out to Sharina Person for more information on how to join.

Together, we can foster a more inclusive future!

In December people of different cultural and religious backgrounds celebrate their traditions:



Winter Solstice

WINTER SOLSTICE – December 20, 2024

Celebrated by Pagans and Wiccans, the Solstice is the first day of winter and the shortest day of the year. This day represents a celebration focusing on rebirth, renewal, and new beginnings as the sun begins to move farther away from Earth



12/25 – 1-02 HANUKKAH

Hanukkah commemorates the victory of the Maccabees over the Syrians and the re-dedication of the Second Temple of Jerusalem around 165 BC. Candles are lit each night of Hanukkah to commemorate the miracle. [Hanukkah is not the Jewish version of Christmas](#), but often children receive gifts, especially in areas where Jewish and [Christian](#) children are in close contact.



12/25 CHRISTMAS DAY

Christmas is an annual festival commemorating [the birth](#) of [Jesus Christ](#), observed primarily on December 25 as a religious and cultural celebration among billions of people [around the world](#). A [feast](#) central to the [Christian liturgical year](#), historically in the West Christmas lasts [twelve days](#) and culminates on [Twelfth Night](#).



12/26-1/1 KWANZAA

Kwanzaa is a celebration that honors African heritage in African American culture. Every year from December 26 – January 1, Kwanzaa brings people together for feasts, gift-giving, and the celebration of family, community, and culture. The name Kwanzaa comes from the phrase “matunda ya kwanza” which means “first fruits” in Swahili.



World AIDS Day

The first World AIDS Day took place in 1988, providing a platform to raise awareness about HIV and AIDS and honor the lives affected by the epidemic. This year the 37th World AIDS Day has the theme, “Collective Action: Sustain and Accelerate HIV Progress.” The focus of the day is to be a moment of unity that rallies the country to give all those affected by AIDS the care, hope, and support they deserve. (source: <https://www.hiv.gov/events/awareness-days/world-aids-day>)



International
Day of
Persons with
Disabilities
3 DECEMBER

International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD)

International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) is observed annually on December 3, established by the United Nations in 1992. This day aims to promote the rights, dignity, and well-being of individuals with disabilities, raising awareness about their challenges in society. IDPD encourages collective efforts to foster inclusivity and accessibility across all aspects of life. Each year focuses on a specific theme.

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) themes have evolved significantly over the years, reflecting changing priorities and global challenges. Initially, themes focused on accessibility and independent living, such as "Accessibility for All for the New Millennium" in 1999 and "Independent Living and Sustainable Livelihoods" in 2002. Over time, the emphasis shifted to include broader societal integration and rights, with themes like "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Dignity and justice for all of us" in 2008. More recent themes have highlighted leadership and participation, such as "Leadership and participation of persons with disabilities toward an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-COVID-19 world" in 2021. The 2024 theme, "Amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future," underscores the importance of empowering individuals with disabilities in decision-making processes.

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/day-of-persons-with-disabilities>



International Human Rights Day

International Human Rights Day, observed on December 10th each year, commemorates the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. This day aims to raise awareness about human rights issues globally, promoting dignity, equality, and justice for all individuals. It highlights the importance of protecting the rights of every person, regardless of race, gender, or nationality. Various activities, including discussions, campaigns, and educational events, are held worldwide to encourage governments, organizations, and individuals to act towards safeguarding human rights for all.

Click the link for an animation video of the human rights day 2024

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= TP5f_PllE4

UMASS CHAN REMINDER



Deadline to Use Your Personal Time

The last day for all employees to use their 2024 Personal Time will be on January 11, 2025.

Employees will be awarded their 2025 Personal Time on Wednesday, January 14, 2025, which will be available in their timesheet. The 2025 personal time will be reflected on the January 17, 2025 Pay Advice.

To avoid the potential loss of any Personal Time, we suggest you check your Personal Time by using [HR Direct](#). If you have Personal Time that has not been used, work with your manager to plan for the use of the time. Your manager must approve your planned Personal Time in advance. Also, please review and update any home address information in [HR Direct](#) in anticipation for the tax season.

To view the UMass Chan Personal Time policy, click [here](#) or the policy image to the right. You will need to be logged into the intranet system to view the page.



UMass Chan Medical School's [Office of Communications](#) is initiating regularly scheduled opportunities where faculty, staff, and students can have a professional headshot taken. Photos are taken every other Wednesday from 9 AM to 3 PM on the fifth floor of the Sherman Center by the elevators. Each session caps at 50 people. Anyone at UMass Chan can sign up using this document found on the SharePoint site. **See updated link for new options: [Photo Sign-Ups \(office365.com\)](#)**

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 Kellie (kellie.armstrong@umassmed.edu) & Sarah (sarah.yeboah@umassmed.edu) by Friday each week.