



Postdoctoral Associate in Place Effects on Health at the University of Utah

Qualifications/Responsibilities: Applicants must have their doctoral degree in epidemiology, sociology, geography, economics, or a related field by the start of the position. Expertise in areas of social, structural, and/or geographical determinants of health is strongly preferred, as is experience with longitudinal and spatial analysis. Duties of the postdoctoral associate include preparation of area-level data, data analysis, and manuscript writing. The position will entail working closely with an interdisciplinary team of investigators from the fields of lifespan development, population health, sociology, geography, and biostatistics. The associate will engage in self-directed research and team science, as they take the lead on one to two manuscripts per year and co-author several additional ones. Advanced research training and access to University resources will be provided to help the associate prepare for a research career.

Application Procedure: Submit a cover letter, curriculum vitae, list of three references, and two relevant publications or preprints at <https://utah.peopleadmin.com/postings/144226>. Review of applications will begin on March 1, 2023 and will continue until filled. The start date is flexible but ideally will begin no later than July 1st, 2023. This position is anticipated to be for at least two years, with renewal after the first 12 months contingent on performance. For inquiries, please contact the primary supervisor Dr. David Curtis at david.curtis@fcs.utah.edu.

A second postdoctoral associate position is available at Hong Kong University. This position is linked to this research project and has similar qualifications and expectations, but the employer and employment site will be Hong Kong University. Direct inquiries to the site faculty mentor, Ming Wen, at mingwen@hku.hk.

Related Information: The project is NIH/NIA-funded and examines how place-based features influence midlife mortality risk among the working-age population, especially from cardiometabolic conditions as well as drug, suicide, and alcohol-related causes. Recent mortality trends have generated considerable attention, and the underlying structural forces are partly known to include: reduced opportunities for working-age adults without a college degree; an increase in prescribed opioids from 1999-2011 and recent surge in availability of synthetic opioids; and obesogenic built environments and social norms. Yet, the specific mechanisms linking these structural forces to health and mortality are not well understood. Moreover, little is known about the interconnections between structural forces and features of the social, built, and natural environments as they relate to health. The project draws from two unique datasets linked with multidimensional area- and place-based data that will enable us to overcome limitations of prior research on area effects on health. First, the Midlife in the United States (MIDUS) study includes three waves of rich psychosocial and health assessments from 1995 through 2014 and more than twenty years of mortality follow-up. Second, the Utah Population Database (UPDB) includes Utah death records, covering the period of 2000 through 2020, linked within families and to an extensive set of state administrative and health records. While MIDUS provides national scope and breadth of psychosocial processes, UPDB will allow for

examining rich place-based measures with a large sample of working-age Utahans ($N = 1,614,470$; 142,330 deaths observed), modeling spatial processes, and considering family risk factors.

The position is in the Department of Family and Consumer Studies (<https://www.fcs.utah.edu>) at the University of Utah. The University is a PAC-12, Carnegie RU/VH Research University, a member of the Association of American Universities, and Utah's flagship university. The University is located in beautiful Salt Lake City, which offers an outstanding quality of life in a metropolitan area of 1.5 million residents, nestled in the foothills of the Wasatch Mountains. Utah's great outdoors are close by and offer world class skiing, hiking, and mountain biking. The city is cosmopolitan with theater, arts, sports, entertainment, and nightlife. Salt Lake City has a racially/ethnically diverse population and the 10th highest proportion of LGBTQ residents of metro areas.

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