

Grecia Vargas Meléndez, MSPH

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EDUCATION

Expected May 2025

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Health Policy & Management (Health Services Research & Policy)
Dissertation: *"US Latinos/Hispanics & End-Stage Kidney Disease: Longitudinal Trends, Healthcare Disparities, and Impacts of Place-Based Factors Relating to Kidney Transplantation Outcomes"*
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health | Department of Health Policy & Management

May 2014

Master of Science in Public Health (MSPH) in Health Education & Communication
Graduate Certificate: Bioethics & Health Policy
Thesis: *"The Health Literacy Self-Help Intervention for High Blood Pressure Among Hispanics"*
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (JHSPH) | Department of Health, Behavior, & Society

May 2012

Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Spanish & Portuguese
University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) | Department of Spanish & Portuguese

RESEARCH

July 2023 – Present

Graduate Research Fellow, Department of Pediatrics, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, Baltimore, MD
Principal Investigator: Kiara Álvarez, PhD MEd & Sarah Polk, MD and Centro SOL Lab

- Contribute to a Latino adolescent suicide prevention pilot-study titled: "Partnering with Parents of Adolescent Latinos on Mental Health Assistance (PALOMA)" (NIH R34-funded) as the health education expert
- Conduct and facilitate various study tasks including quantitative survey development & analyses, qualitative focus group data collection and analyses, developing the study website (including carrying out basic SQL coding), creating and publishing a Community Health Worker Training Manual (5 modules total), moderate community participatory research and parent advisory meetings

July 2018 – Present

Graduate Research Fellow Department of Epidemiology, JHSPH, Baltimore, MD
Principal Investigator: Tanjala S. Purnell, PhD MPH & her BOLD Health Equity Initiative Lab

- Support three kidney donation & transplantation studies including: (1) Wellness and health outcomes in live donors study: a multi-center follow-up of living kidney donors, and (2) Exploring patient perception of their social support and quality of educational resources about the kidney transplantation process (3) Structural Racism and the Progression from Chronic Kidney Disease to End-Stage Kidney Disease (NIH R01-funded)
- Usher various study tasks including quantitative survey development & analyses, qualitative in-depth and focus group data collection and analyses, clinical data abstraction, IRB management and submission of applications, and lead/support manuscript writing

Feb 2015-Aug 2018

Research Coordinator Department of Urology, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, Los Angeles, CA
Principal Investigator: Mark Litwin, MD MPH & Jeffrey Veale, MD

- Managed the Chair of Urology, Dr. Litwin's two main research studies: a California-statewide prostate cancer longitudinal study and a cross-sectional quality of life outcomes-focused study of prostate cancer (CaP) patients' transitioning into the Medicaid expansion under the ACA
- Spearheaded the qualitative data analysis of the Kidney Transplant Program Director, Dr. Veale's mixed-methods kidney donation study, which aimed to understand the donation decision-making process and the barriers and facilitators associated with kidney donation in the US. Collaborated with a team of five analysts to apply Grounded Theory technique to analyze 120 in-depth interviews with non-directed & bridge donors
- Coordinated participant recruitment efforts, conducted in-depth interviews, analyze qualitative data, developed databases using SQL code, maintained study databases and IRB applications, and oversaw and mentored three undergraduate research assistants
- Research appointments held at: UCLA Ronald Regan Medical Center; US Department of Veterans Affairs, Greater Los Angeles Hospital; Los Angeles Department of Health Services, Martin Luther King, Jr. Outpatient Medical Center, Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, and Olive-View UCLA Hospital

March 2013-Jan 2015

Research Coordinator Center of Excellence for Cardiovascular Health, Johns Hopkins School of Nursing
Principal Investigator: Hae-Ra Han, PhD MSN BSN RN

- Completed formative-pilot intervention research for the "Health Literacy Self-Help Intervention Program" focused on hypertension prevention and management among Latinos living in the DMV area
- Oversaw all IRB application protocol requirements, maintained relationships with partner clinic sites, translated intervention materials, prepared and moderate all focus groups, performed data collection and analysis, and lead manuscript writer

April-Aug 2013 **Graduate Research Fellow** Division of Internal Medicine, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, MD
Principal Investigator: Neil R. Powe, MD MPH MBA

- Joint Johns Hopkins & UCSF study: Decision Making Support to Improve Preparation for Renal Replacement Therapy Interventions
- Carried out qualitative focus group data Spanish transcription, translation, and preliminary analysis; ensured linguistic quality control and translation of all focus group study materials and protocols

July 2011-June 2012 **Undergraduate Research Fellow** Department of Community Health Sciences, UCLA School of Public Health
Principal Investigator: Michael Prelip, DPA MPH

- The Corner Store Makeover Project, funded by NIH’s Summer Research Experience Program (R-25)
- Co-led the development of a nutrition curriculum for 3 Los Angeles Unified School District high schools, performed a literature review on after school nutrition and fitness program evaluations; developed mixed method evaluation tools, conducted interviews, and assisted in data analysis and manuscript writing

TEACHING

(29 Courses Total)

Lead Graduate Teaching Fellow Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, MD

- Robertwood Johnson Health Policy Scholars Course (Inst: Keshia Pollack-Porter, PhD)
- Managed Care and Health Insurance Course (Inst: Jonathan Weiner, DrPH)
- Seminar in Health Disparities (Inst: Darrell J. Gaskin, PhD & Roland Thorpe, PhD)
- Latino Health: Measures and Predictors (Inst: Fannie Fonseca-Becker, DrPH)

1st - 4th Term 2020-22
 3rd Term 2020-22
 1st Term 2020 & 2022
 4th Term 2014

 Summer Term 2021-23
 4th Term 2023
 4th Term 2021
 4th Term 2021*
 3rd Term 2020* & 2021*
 2nd Term 2020 & 2023
 1st Term 2020

Graduate Teaching Fellow Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, MD

- Public Health Policy (Inst: Joshua Sharfstein, MD)
- Health Equity Research Methods to Address Social Determinants of Health (Inst: Tanjala Purnell, PhD)
- Leadership for Change and Patient Safety & Quality Improvement (Inst: Michael Rosen, PhD)
- Local & Global Best Practices in Health Equity Research Methods (Inst: Lisa Cooper, MD & Tanjala Purnell, PhD)
- Applications of innovative Methods in Health Equity Research (Inst: Lisa Cooper, MD & Tanjala Purnell, PhD)
- Patient Safety & Medical Errors (Inst: Albert Wu, MD & Kisha Ali, PhD)
- Assessing Health Status and Patient Outcomes (Inst: Albert Wu, MD)

* All 3 courses received the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health “Excellence in Teaching Award” Distinction

LEADERSHIP & SERVICE

Feb 2020 **Graduate Student Writer** Clinical & Translational Research Institute, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine

- Race and Ethnicity Working Group Member focused on diversifying research participation

June 2013-May 2014 **Graduate Student Founder** Latino Alliance, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD

- Developed the university’s first schoolwide organization aimed to improve access, retention, and graduation rates for Hispanic/Latino faculty, staff, and students and create a professional Latino network
- Recognized by Bloomberg School of Public Health’s former Dean Klag for my contributions and commitment to promoting diversity

Sept 2009-June 2012 **Freshman, Transfer, & Graduation Raza Day Chair** Community Programs Office & MEChA, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA

- Facilitated, in part, the recruitment, and transition into college of over 2000 admitted Latino undergraduates, with aims to increase the presence of underrepresented students at UCLA; spearheaded the school’s second largest student-initiated university graduation program; led committees of 20-30 students and carried out the development and implementation of all programs
- Supervised yearly budgets of \$20,000 to \$30,000, coordinating logistics and selection of venues, in addition to coordinating a speaker series featuring keynotes from two distinguished recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Ms. Dolores Huerta and Ms. Sylvia Mendez, under President Obama, and U.S. Congressman from California’s 36th District, Dr. Raul Ruiz

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

2019-Present Academy Health, Member
 2019-Present American Society of Nephrology, Member; Graduate Fellow, Kidney STARS Program
 2017 Journal of Health Disparities Research and Practice, Ad Hoc Reviewer
 2013-Present American Public Health Association, Latino Health Caucus, Member; Ethics Section, Abstract Reviewer

SKILLS Qualitative (Grounded Theory, in-depth and focus group interviewing), quantitative (primary & secondary data; longitudinal and time-series analysis), & mixed-methods research study design, implementation, & evaluation; meta-analyses & systematic reviews; manuscript & grant writing; Standard Query Language/SQL program; Microsoft Access, REDCap; Covidence; Qualtrics; STATA; R; ATLAS.ti; LaTeX; Canva graphic design. Languages & Interests: Spanish – native fluency (reading, writing, & speaking); Portuguese – non-native fluency (reading, writing, & speaking); completed four full marathons (26.2 miles each) since 2011 (San Francisco 2011, Los Angeles 2012 & 2018, Washington DC 2013)