



PHS LAUNCH

Day 1

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PhD in Population Health Sciences
Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health

Get the slides



On a Post-It note, write down a word
that describes how you are feeling right now.

Stick your Post-It note on the large sheet
of poster paper at the front of the room.

very mindful, very demure



PHS LAUNCH 2025

• MONDAY – PHS Orientation activities

9:00 am - 9:30 am	Light Breakfast & Check-In	Kresge 200
9:30 am - 11:15 am	PHS Program Welcome	Kresge 200
11:30 am - 1:00 pm	Introduction to PHS2000A; What are population health sciences?	Kresge 200
1:00 - 2:00 pm	PHS Lunch	Kresge 200
2:00 - 3:00 pm	PHS Community Building Session	Kresge 200
3:00 - 4:00 pm	Creating Your Community: Norms & Values	Kresge 200
4:00 - 5:00 pm	IT Support, Connect to Wi-Fi, R & R Studio Installation	Kresge 200
5:00 - 7:00 pm	First Year Welcome @ Harvard Griffin GSAS (optional)	CGIS South, Concourse

• TUESDAY - Harvard Chan Orientation activities

9:00 am - 10:00 am	Light Breakfast/Check-In for Harvard Chan	JBM Lobby
10:00 am - 11:30 am	Harvard Chan Welcome Address and Keynote	JBM Amphitheater
11:30 am - 12:30 pm	Harvard Chan International Student Meeting	JBM Amphitheater
11:30 am - 2:00 pm	Lunch (vouchers provided)	Various locations
11:30 am - 2:00 pm	Campus Tours and Countway Library Orientation	JBM or Kresge G2
2:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Field of Study Sessions	Various locations
5:00 pm - 6:30 pm	Harvard Chan New Student Reception	Kresge Café

• WEDNESDAY – PHS Orientation activities

8:00 am - 9:00 am	Light Breakfast (for those attending ID1000P Session)	JBM Lobby
9:00 am - 10:30 am	ID100P Session (only those enrolled in the course)	JBM Amphitheater
9:00 am - 9:30 pm	Light PHS Breakfast	Kresge 200
9:30 am - 10:15 am	PHS Intentions & Reflections	Kresge 200
10:30 am - 11:00 am	PHS Get To Know You Activity (outside!)	HMS Quad
11:15 am - 12:30 pm	PHS2000A: Math Notation Review	Kresge 200
12:30 pm - 1:30 pm	Lunch	Kresge 200
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm	Thriving In Your Program: Resources for Student Success	Kresge 200
2:45 pm - 3:45 pm	Developing Research Relationships	Kresge 200

PHS LAUNCH 2025

- **THURSDAY – Harvard Chan Orientation activities (optional for PHS)**

11:00 am - 12:00 pm	HSPH Session: Colors & Connections: <i>Short workshop that provides orientation on loneliness as a public health issue.</i>	Kresge 2nd floor (Lounge or Kresge 200)
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	<i>Attend a time that fits your schedule</i>	
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm		
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Career & Professional Development Office Hours	Kresge G4
2:00 pm - 3:20 pm	Case Study Method Workshop: <i>Attend at a time that fits your schedule</i>	Kresge 2nd floor (Lounge or Kresge 200)
3:40 pm - 5:00 pm		
5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	New Student Game Night	Kresge Café

- **FRIDAY – PHS Orientation activities**

9:00 am - 9:30 am	Light Breakfast provided by PHS	Kresge 200
9:30 am - 10:30 am	PHS2000A: Math & Probability Review	Kresge 200
10:30 am - 11:00 am	Intro to SBS 506: Theory in Action	Kresge 200
11:15 am - 12:30 pm	Reflections on Self Care	Kresge 200
12:30 pm - 1:30 pm	Lunch/Presentation from the Harvard Graduate Student Union	Kresge 200
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm	Scheduled 1-1 Office Hours for PHS2000 (optional)	Kresge G10

PHS LAUNCH 2025

- This week is action-packed, so pace yourself!
- Opportunities to engage intellectually, but also opportunities for self-reflection and community connection
- We want to empower you to take care of yourself, and if that means skipping a session (whether a math session or a community/experiential session), there will be other opportunities to engage with the material.
 - slides available on GitHub and the PHS2000A Canvas site
 - all didactic lectures will be recorded and available on Canvas
 - we will be holding PHS evening seminars and community events throughout the year
 - if you are interested in further engaging with the material on personal growth throughout your year, feel free to reach out to Jarvis



Questions?

Constructive Group Behaviors

- **Cooperating:** Is interested in the views and perspectives of other group members and willing to adapt for the good of the group.
- **Clarifying:** Makes issues clear for the group by listening, summarizing, and focusing discussions.
- **Inspiring:** Enlivens the group, encourages participation and progress
- **Harmonizing:** Encourages group cohesion and collaboration. For example, uses humor as relief after a particularly difficult discussion.
- **Risk Taking:** Is willing to risk possible personal loss or embarrassment for success of the overall group or project.
- **Process Checking:** Questions the group on process issues such as agenda, time frames, discussion topics, decision methods, use of information, etc.

Adapted from Brunt (1993). Facilitation Skills for Quality Improvement. Quality Enhancement Strategies. 1008 Fish Hatchery Road.
Madison WI 53715

"Destructive" Group Behaviors

- **Dominating:** Uses most of the meeting time to express personal views and opinions. Tries to take control by use of power, time, etc.
- **Rushing:** Encourages the group to move on before task is complete. Gets tired of listening to others and working with the group.
- **Withdrawing:** Removes self from discussions or decision making. Refuses to participate.
- **Discounting:** Disregards or minimizes group or individual ideas or suggestions. Severe discounting behavior includes insults, which are often in the form of jokes.
- **Digressing:** Rambles, tells stories, and takes group away from primary purpose.
- **Blocking:** Impedes group progress by obstructing all ideas and suggestions.
"That will never work because..."

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Group Agreements



- Practice active listening
- Lean in to your constructive group behaviors.
- Be mindful of the emotions that trigger destructive group behaviors.
- ...
- ...

WE'RE GOIN' UP, UP, UP
IT'S OUR MOMENT
YOU KNOW TOGETHER WE'RE GLOWIN'
GONNA BE, GONNA BE GOLDEN



- When we set out to develop this course, we wanted to give you exposure to a broad range of methods from across our various fields of study. These include methods from epidemiology, sociology, psychology, econometrics, demography, statistics...
- Some of our disciplines have well established frameworks and vocabularies for thinking and talking about particular methodological concepts that are based in the history and conventions of our fields
 - sometimes different words are used for the same concept
 - sometimes there are subtle differences in definitions
 - sometimes similar language can obscure differences

The course is interdisciplinary.

- interdisciplinary faculty instructors and TFs
- interdisciplinary topics and methods
- interdisciplinary language and concepts

The course will prepare you to read through and critically assess various literatures in the population health sciences.

PHS2000A/B

We want to help you make an informed decision about when to take PHS2000A/B:

- Talk to your academic advisor.
- Most of you are well positioned to take PHS2000A/B this year
- Consider:
 - your prior coursework in statistics and quantitative research methods
 - your performance on the biostatistics pre-assessment
 - your experience with the summer online biostatistics course
 - your experience with the math reviews that are part of PHS LAUNCH this week

Options

- Take PHS2000A/B this year (2025-2026)

Options

- Defer PHS2000A/B to 2026-2027, and instead
 - Take BST201 (Fall) and BST210 (Spring), OR
 - Take BST210 (Spring) and additional statistics course in spring (e.g. at GSE).

Options

- Take PHS2000A in Fall 2025, but defer PHS2000B to Spring 2027.
 - Take an intermediate biostatistics course in Spring 2026, e.g. BST223 (Applied Survival Analysis), BST226 (Applied Longitudinal Analysis), or SBS263 (Multilevel Statistical Methods: Concept and Application)

Options

- all of these options are valid options
- Please note that waiting to take PHS2000A/B until next year does not have to slow down your progress in the program!
- You can usually prioritize fulfilling other field of study requirements in the first year, take PHS2000A/B next year, and still take your PQEI exam on schedule
- Your academic advisor and your field of study administrator(s) can help you figure out your courses if you choose to take this approach

Options

- In rare situations, students who have already taken coursework that covers the material in PHS2000A may opt to request a waiver.
 - Students will have access to course materials and all recorded lectures and labs and are welcome to sit in on relevant parts of the course if they need to brush up on the material
- Please refer to the PHS Handbook for details on the waiver application process.

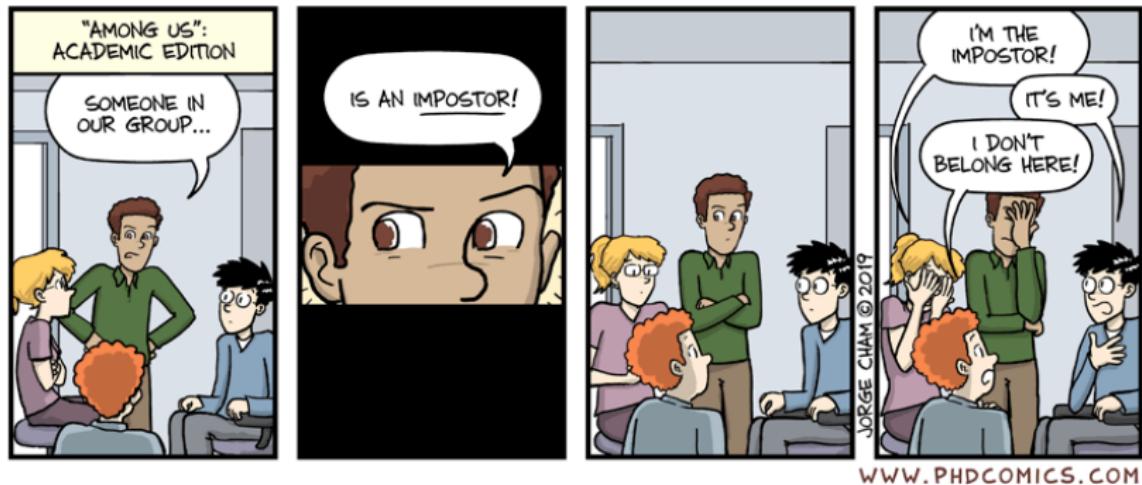
Options

- All of these options are valid choices. The most important thing is that you feel comfortable with your learning process and how you are using your time.
- You are welcome to meet with Jarvis Chen (jarvis@hsph.harvard.edu) during office hours on Friday this week if you would like to discuss further.



Questions?

A Reminder: Community Matters



A Reminder: The Learning Pit



As described by James Nottingham

A Reminder: Two Mindsets

FIXED MINDSET

"intelligence is static"

Leads to a desire to look smart and therefore a tendency to...

...avoid challenges

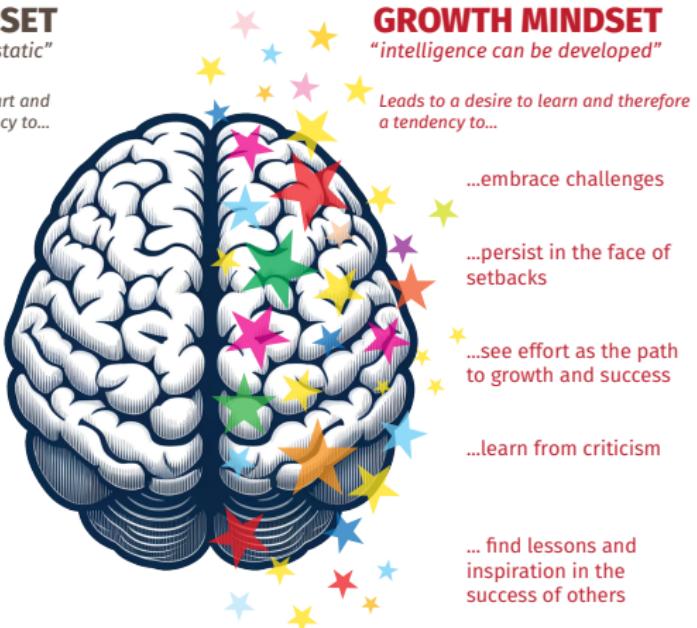
...give up easily

...see effort as fruitless or worse

...ignore useful critical feedback

...feel threatened by the success of others

As a result, they may plateau early and achieve less than their full potential



GROWTH MINDSET

"intelligence can be developed"

Leads to a desire to learn and therefore a tendency to...

...embrace challenges

...persist in the face of setbacks

...see effort as the path to growth and success

...learn from criticism

... find lessons and inspiration in the success of others

As a result, they become life-long learners and find joy in the process of evolving their knowledge and skills

Breakout: Who are you and how did you get here?

Think about

- your secret origin story
- a person or an event
that you are grateful for, that
led you to where you are today

and

share this with your small group.

*"You
exist in the context of all in which
you live and what came before you."*



Small Group Discussion

- What are you most excited about this year?
- What do you hope to get out of the PHS Core Curriculum?
- Think about a time when you truly learned a new skill. What factors made this possible?
 - environment? mindset? peers? teacher? learning styles? etc.
 - What aspect of this experience do you think might translate to getting the most out of your first year in PHS?



Some strategies for PHS

- Strength in numbers: community matters
 - peer groups; homework partners; tutoring groups; etc.
 - many classes encourage peer to peer collaboration
- Ask questions: instructors, teaching fellows, faculty advisors, academic administrators, fellow students
- Engage with ongoing debate and dialogue: population health sciences is a dynamic field and new ideas and methods are constantly being developed and refined
- Multiple modalities for engagement: find a combination that works for you and don't worry about consuming everything all at once
 - lectures, labs, lab handouts, reference texts, office hours, homework groups, tutoring
- Pace yourself: the PhD program is a marathon, not a sprint!
- Take care if your whole self