

Ethnic Minority Mental Health Research Group
Dr. Joyce P. Chu
Email: jchu@pgsp.edu

Current/Proposed Projects

The Ethnic Minority Mental Health Research Group is focused around understanding and improving mental health services for ethnic minority individuals with mood disorders. Ethnic minority individuals are often underserved and have low rates of service utilization. Our lab is dedicated to understanding the barriers to service use and developing culturally congruent outreach and treatment options for these communities. The work in this lab is often community-based. Main projects study special subpopulations of Asian Americans, but research projects examining other ethnic minority groups are also welcome. The lab also has a particular focus on older adults.

** Students are also encouraged to propose their own new projects.

Following describe ongoing research projects:

- Treatment efficacy and cultural modification. Two community-collaborative studies with both Chinese Hospital and UCSF. We aim to modify and test Problem Solving Therapy (PST) as a treatment for depression in Chinese and Chinese Americans.
 - o UCSF: This study aims to test and modify Problem Solving Therapy for English-speaking Chinese American older adults dealing with depression. We have 100+ referrals from General Medicine at UCSF. Research clinical duties may include: structuring clinical diagnostic interviews, clinical phone interviews, doing qualitative focus groups or one-on-one interviews, study management, and a possibility of being a study therapist.
 - o Chinese Hospital: Aims of this study are to modify and administer PST for a Chinese-speaking population dealing with chronic medical illness (including hypertension, congestive heart failure, diabetes, and coronary artery disease). PST will be modified and integrated with other treatments to serve as the mental health component of an overall health education program. Cantonese-speaking students may have the opportunity to provide these group treatments. Non-Chinese speaking students may also be involved in analysis, administration, etc.
- Ongoing data analysis:
 - o Help-seeking among depressed immigrant elderly: This principal objective of this study was to characterize differences between clinically depressed Chinese immigrant elderly who accept versus reject a mental health services referral. Literature has suggested a number of possible reasons contributing to low rate of mental health service utilization among Chinese, including a reluctance to seek help, culturally-based stigma regarding mental health, lack of resources, and a tendency to express depression in somatic rather than emotional or mental health terms. This study was community-collaborative with Family Service Agency in San Francisco, and assessed a combination of clinical, practical, system, and cultural predictive factors towards help-seeking behaviors. Participants are depressed Chinese elderly who all entered the health care system via an outpatient clinic, case management program, or senior housing program, were assessed by staff members as experiencing clinical depression, and received a referral for professional mental health treatment.

- Emotion expression and regulation among Chinese American college students: Data includes coping, family, acculturation, and emotion expression measures on approximately 100 Asian American male, 100 Asian American female, 100 Caucasian male, and 100 Caucasian female undergraduate students.

Openings: 2 to 4 openings to join the group in Fall 2008.

Apply: Students interested in joining the group starting Fall 2008 are asked to submit the following items to Dr. Chu (via email) by 5 pm April 11, 2008.

1. Curriculum Vitae
2. One or two page essay discussing past research experience, how and why the student became interested in ethnic minority mental health, and specific research and clinical interests in ethnic minority mental health.
3. A writing sample, which can be a paper submitted for a psychology class while a student at PGSP.

Notification: Students accepted into Ethnic Minority Mental Health Research Group for the Fall 2008 cycle will be notified by email no later than Friday, May 9, 2008.