

Language and Mental Health Study
Principal Investigator: Dr. Chulwoo “Charles” Park

Title:
UMBC SURE Undergraduate Research Assistant

Job Description:

Data show that Asian/Asian American immigrants have experienced a relatively high level of mental health and other health conditions during and after public health crises. There are multiple reasons, including a language barrier, along with its impacts on isolation and marginalization, and a rise in crime and related incidents directed to Asian groups. We will focus on the components of the language barrier (language proficiency and language identity) and its effect on mental health. 1.5 generation Asian/Asian American immigrant young adults—those who migrated to the United States with their parents (1st generation) from Asian countries when they were children aged between 5 and 17, have been living in the United States at least 12 months, and current ages are between 18 and 29—are particularly vulnerable to adverse health consequences. Most of them begin using English as an additional language (L2) once they arrive in the United States, after mainly using a first language (L1) from their parents’ country of origin. However, little research to date has examined how learning an L2 among 1.5 generation Asian/Asian American immigrant young adults informs their sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity as well as their acculturation, socialization, and psychological well-being in American society. To close this research gap, the objective of the proposed work is to investigate the association between learning an L2 and adverse mental health consequences among 1.5 generation young adults from Asian/Asian Americans.

University of Maryland Baltimore County, supported through the Supplement for Undergraduate Research Experiences (SURE), is currently seeking a SURE-eligible undergraduate research assistant who will work on this research project. The selected undergraduate research assistant will be closely working with Dr. Chulwoo “Charles” Park in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Public Health, who will serve as a faculty mentor for the SURE Program. The undergraduate research assistant’s tasks include but are not limited to 1) research team meeting attendance; 2) literature review; 3) designing a poster and some paragraphs; 4) drafting figures and tables of the manuscripts; and 5) overall research project assistance and support.

Expectations are as follows:

- Excellent computer skills (e.g., MS Outlook, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint)
- Ability to design and create infographic, tables, and figures
- Ability to manage multiple responsibilities on a variety of research projects
- Ability to work both independently and collaboratively
- Experience searching and identifying scientific literature, especially in public health
- Excellent writing and proofreading skills
- Self-oriented, highly motivated, well-organized, and hardworking
- Positive, proactive, and sincere mindset
- *Recommended specifications (but not required):* Experience working on global health, immigrant and minority health, mental health, public health equity, and public health education

Eligibility:
Undergraduate students who are new to UMBC in their first four semesters.

Salary:
The salary will be an hourly rate paid.

To Apply:
Interested candidates should send a 1) cover letter, 2) resume/CV, and 3) writing sample (e.g., prior course paper) to cwpark@umbc.edu. It is on a rolling basis, so please apply early.

Start date:
The position starts in Fall 2025.