

Oct 31, 2024

Dear Review Committee:

It is my pleasure to recommend Yuxian Cui for the Dr. Delbert Oberteuffer Scholarship at the Foundation for Advancement of Health Education.

I am a Professor of Prevention and Community Health at The George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health and the Associate Dean for PhD/MS Programs. I am also a founder and co-director of the George Washington University Bright Institute, whose mission is to promote research and training in the area of digital health promotion. My research focuses on the application of communication technologies for smoking cessation and other health behaviors and I have produced over 100 peer reviewed publications in this area. My work includes the development of several mobile programs for smoking cessation including Text2Quit, a leading text messaging program that has been integrated into quitline services in the U.S. and has over 1 million subscribers since its launch in 2012.

Yuxian is a third-year PhD student in Social and Behavioral Sciences in our department. Yuxian has been a student in my class and a member of one of my research teams since August 2022. Yuxian joined our PhD program at GW via recommendation from her master's training mentors at Johns Hopkins University, who recognized her high potential in health education and health promotion career. Prior to entering our PhD program, she was credentialed as a Certified Health Education Specialist (awarded by the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing) and held a Health Education Certificate and a Health Promotion Certificate (awarded by Johns Hopkins University). Further, she had established her interest in health education and health promotion particularly in relation to substance use prevention and control. Yuxian has begun to create a foundation in research, publishing several peer-reviewed manuscripts in this area.

Since beginning the doctoral program at GW, Yuxian has demonstrated a high potential. As the Associate Dean for PhD/MS Programs, I carefully review her annual Ph.D. reflections and have been impressed with her progress and accomplishments in the last year. She has excelled in her courses to date, earning a 3.97 GPA (37 credit hours) during her first two year and entering candidacy. In her role as a student research assistant, she has been involved in various studies. I am most familiar with her in the context of our NCI-funded R01 focused on novel tobacco product regulation and marketing, which involves cross-country research on heated tobacco products in the US and Israel (R01; MPIs: Berg, Levine). As part of this research team, Yuxian has been particularly interested in examining tobacco industry influence on consumers, especially youth and young adults, in order to inform regulatory and educational efforts to combat industry influence. In conducting this work, she has demonstrated her strengths including her ability to conceptualize timely and relevant research questions, as well as her methodological skills, critical thinking, work ethic, and interpersonal skills. Since she joined GW, Yuxian has published 32 peer-reviewed publications (leading 7 of them), 10 of which I co-authored, and she has 2 papers under review (leading one) and received Doctoral Dissertation Research Grant from National Science Foundation (#2415890). She has also co-authored 13 abstracts at key conferences. This is truly a remarkable level of productivity! On a personal level, Yuxian is very kindness and a pleasure to work with.

In short, Yuxian has already established a firm foundation for her professional future in health education and health promotion, and through her doctoral work, she will secure the successful launch of her career as an independent researcher focused on community-engaged research examining policies and interventions to enhance public health, particularly for youth health. I most highly recommend Yuxian Cui for the Dr. Delbert Oberteuffer Scholarship at the Foundation for Advancement of Health Education and hope you look favorably upon her application. Do not hesitate to contact me for any additional information that may be helpful!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Abrams', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Lorien Abrams, ScD, MA
Professor, Prevention and Community Health
Associate Dean for PhD/MS Programs
George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health