

Oct 31, 2024

Dear Review Committee:

It is my pleasure to recommend Yuxian Cui for the Dr. Mary K. Beyrer Graduate Student Scholarship at the Foundation for Advancement of Health Education. I am a Professor in the Department of Prevention and Community Health and Associate Dean for PhD & MS Programs within the Milken Institute School of Public Health at George Washington University (GW). Yuxian is a third-year PhD student in Social and Behavioral Sciences in our department. I am very familiar with Yuxian, as I have experience with her as a student and as a member of our research team since August 2022. Because I have had the privilege of working with many students over the years at various levels including the master's and doctoral levels, I can evaluate Yuxian's potential for a high-impact research career in health education and health promotion.

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, Yuxian was already 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 already established her interest in health education and health promotion particularly in relation to substance use prevention and control, and she began to form a firm foundation of research productivity, publishing several peer-reviewed manuscripts in this area.

Since beginning the doctoral program at GW, Yuxian has demonstrated her 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 year. 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 just some evidence of her productivity and commitment to disseminating research findings to ensure population impact. On a personal level, Yuxian is an absolute joy, demonstrating kindness, generosity, enthusiasm, and passion in her efforts to advance the field of health education and health promotion.

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. I most highly recommend Yuxian Cui for the Dr. Mary K. Beyrer Graduate Student 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 stylized flourish at the end.

Lorien Abrams, ScD, MA

Professor, Prevention and Community Health

Associate Dean for PhD/MS Programs

George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health