

Sara E. Fischer

University of Puget Sound
Master of Public Health Program
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Academic Positions

Assistant Professor, Master of Public Health Program, University of Puget Sound, 2022–Present

Visiting Professor, Europubhealth+ Program, EHESP School of Public Health, Rennes, 2023

Education

Ph.D. Government, Georgetown University, 2022

–*Dissertation Title*: “The Power of Language and the Language of Power: Interpretations of Development Discourse in Malawi’s Community Health System”

–*Dissertation Committee*: Lahra Smith, PhD (Chair), Emily Mendenhall, PhD, Andrew Bennett, PhD

M.A.-in-passing, Government, Georgetown University, 2018

M.P.H. Public Health, University of Copenhagen, 2011 (with Distinction)

Public Health, University of Sheffield, 2011 (with Merit)

B.A. Psychology, Pennsylvania State University, 2006 (with Distinction)

Teaching

Instructor of Record

Global Health, Fall 2022, 2023, University of Puget Sound

Qualitative Research Methods, Spring 2023, 2024 University of Puget Sound

Integrative Learning Experience, Spring 2023, 2024 University of Puget Sound

Healthcare Systems and Policy, Fall 2022, Spring 2023, 2024, University of Puget Sound

Public Health Leadership and Interprofessional Practice, Fall 2022, 2023, University of Puget Sound

Integration Module, Summer 2023, Europubhealth, EHESP, Rennes, France (Visiting)

Professionalism and Ethics, Summer 2023, University of Puget Sound

Global Health, Spring 2015, SUNY College at Old Westbury (Adjunct)

Guest Lecturer

“Framing Power: Malawi’s Malaria Vaccine Implementation Program” for Professor Jessi DeFusco, University of Texas-Dallas, Global Human Rights & Health Policy, Spring 2022

“The Power of Language and the Language of Power: Foreign Aid, Development, and Health in Malawi” for Professor Michael Chasukwa, University of Malawi, Chancellor College, Theories of Development, Fall 2021

“Observation” for Professor Matthew Kavanagh, Georgetown University, Qualitative Research Methods for Global Health, Fall 2021 [Online]

“Malawi: The Making of Political History” for Professor Lahra Smith, Georgetown University, African Politics and Government, Fall 2020 [Online]

Teaching Assistant

Qualitative Research Methods for Global Health, Professor Matthew Kavanagh, O’Neill Institute, Georgetown University, Spring 2021 [Online]
–*Nominee for Graduate Student TA Award*

Comparative Political Systems, Professor Eric Langenbacher, Georgetown University, Fall 2020 [Online]

Comparative Political Systems, Professor Eric Langenbacher, Georgetown University, Fall 2018

Comparative Political Systems, Professor Joel Simmons, Georgetown University, Spring 2018

Comparative Political Systems, Professor Eric Langenbacher, Georgetown University, Fall 2017

Publications*Journal Articles*

Fischer SE, Vitale L, Agutu LA, Kavanagh MM (2024). Intellectual Property and the Politics of Public Good in COVID-19: Framing Law, Institutions, and Ideas during TRIPS Waiver Negotiations at the WTO. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*. 49(1): 9–42. [Link]

O’Connell KA, Kebede AT, Menna BM, W/Tensay MT, **Fischer SE**, Samandari G, Kassaw JK (2022). Signs of a turning tide in social norms and attitudes toward abortion in Ethiopia Findings from a qualitative study in four regions. *Reproductive Health*. 19 (Supp. 1), 198. [Link]

Fischer SE, Patil P, Zielinski C, Baxter L, Bonilla-Escobar FJ, Hussain S, Lai C, Walpole SC, Ohanyido F, Flood D, Singh A, Al-Shorbaji N (2020). Is it about the ‘where’ or the ‘how’? Comment on *Defining global health as public health somewhere else*. *BMJ Global Health*. 5:e002567. [Link]

Naber SK, Knudsen AB, Zauber AG, Rutter CM, **Fischer SE**, Pabiniak CJ, Soto B, Kuntz KM, Lansdorp-Vogelaar I (2019). Cost-effectiveness of a multitarget stool DNA test for colorectal cancer screening of Medicare beneficiaries. *PLoS ONE* 14(9): e0220234. [Link]

Alatise OI, **Fischer SE**, Ayandipo OO, Omisore AG, Olatoke SA, Kingham TP (2017). Health-seeking behavior and barriers to care in patients with rectal bleeding in Nigeria. *Journal of Global Oncology*. 3(6):749–756. [Link]

Fischer SE, Alatise OI, Komolafe AO, Katung AI, Egberongbe AA, Olatoke SA, Agodirin OS, Kolawole OA, Olafe OO, Ayandipo OO, Rotimi O, Brennan MF, Kingham TP (2017). Establishing a cancer research consortium in low- and middle-income countries: Challenges faced and lessons learned. *Annals of Surgical Oncology*. 24(3):627–631. [Link]

Mendelsohn RB, Winawer SJ, Jammula A, Mills G, Jordan P, O'Brien MJ, Close GM, Dorfman M, Church TR, Mandelson MT, Allen J, Feld A, Kauff ND, Morgan GA, Kumar JM, Serrano V, Bayuga-Miller S, **Fischer SE**, Kuk D, Zauber AG (2017). Adenoma Prevalence in Blacks and Whites Having Equal Adherence To Screening Colonoscopy: The National Colonoscopy Study. *Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology*. 15(9):1469–1470. [Link]

Fischer SE and Strandberg-Larsen M (2016). Power and agenda-setting in Tanzanian health policy: an analysis of stakeholder perspectives. *International Journal of Health Policy and Management* 5(6):355–363. [Link]

Knudsen AB, Zauber AG, Rutter CM, Naber SK, Doria-Rose P, Pabiniak C, Johanson C, **Fischer SE**, Lansdorp-Vogelaar I, Kuntz KM (2016). Estimation of benefits, burden, and harms of colorectal cancer screening strategies: Modeling study for the US Preventive Services Task Force. *Journal of the American Medical Association*. 315(23):2595–2609. [Link]

Winawer SJ, **Fischer SE**, Levin B (2016). Evidence-based, reality-driven US colorectal cancer screening guidelines: The critical relationship of adherence to effectiveness. *Journal of the American Medical Association*. 315(19):2065–2066. [Link]

Book Chapter

Dionne KY, Dulani B, and **Fischer, SE** (2021). Pandemic amid political crisis: Malawi's experience with and response to COVID-19. In *Coronavirus Politics: The Comparative Politics and Policy of COVID-19*, edited by Greer SL, King EJ, Peralta-Santos A, and da Fonseca EM. 541–559. University of Michigan Press. [Link]

Technical Reports and Working Papers

Grande A, with **Fischer SE**, Sayre J. 2020. *Chinese Medical Teams: Knowledge Transfer in Ethiopia and Malawi*. Working Paper No. 2020/33. China Africa Research Initiative, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, DC. [Link to report]

Fischer SE. Côte d'Ivoire Civil War: 2002-2011. Case study for the Civil War Settlement Project. February 2018. *Political Instability Task Force*.

Aubrey S, Singh H, Vlahinic I, Ramachandran A, **Fischer SE**, O'Callaghan R, Shoup N, Singh J, Sangokoya D, Pestre G, Martinez C. (2017). Mining case law to improve countries' accountability to Universal Periodic Review. *Clinton Global Initiative*. [Link to project] [Link to working paper]

Knudsen AB, Naber SK, **Fischer SE**, Rutter CM, Pabiniak C, Kuntz KM, Zauber AG, Lansdorp-Vogelaar I (2015). Cost-effectiveness of a multitarget stool DNA test for colorectal cancer screening of Medicare beneficiaries: Report to CMS from the Cancer Intervention and Surveillance Modeling Network (CISNET). December 2015. *Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)*.

Zauber AG, Knudsen AB, Rutter CM, Naber SK, Doria-Rose P, Pabiniak C, Johanson C, **Fischer SE**, Lansdorp-Vogelaar I, Kuntz KM (2015). Evaluating the benefits and harms of colorectal cancer screening strategies: A collaborative modeling approach. Technical report from the Cancer Intervention and Surveillance Modeling Network (CISNET). September 2015. Rockville, MD: *Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (US)*.

Works In Progress

"Perspectives on positionality: Differing approaches on the ethnography of NGOs in international development" [with Mirriam Banda and Sandra Ngombende] (*In Press at Collaborative Anthropologies*).

“Parallel paths: How the global health industry undermines local health systems” [with Michael Chasukwa] (*In Press as a chapter in the Oxford Handbook of the Malawi Economy*).

“Inequity and hesitancy: Accounting for (lack of) COVID-19 vaccination in Malawi” [with Karen Ferree, Boniface Dulani, and Kim Yi Dionne] (*Under Review*)

“Bureaucracy as Resistance: Everyday Acts of Power in the Malawi Ministry of Health” (*Under Review*)

Grants

University of Puget Sound Enrichment Committee Conference Participation Award, 2022, 2023

Georgetown Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Dissertation Research Travel Grant, 2020

Georgetown Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Conference Travel Grant, 2020

Summer Research Award, Georgetown University Department of Government, 2020

Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship (U.S. Department of Education), FY2018 (for fieldwork January 2019–February 2020)

Cosmos Club Foundation Scholars Grant, 2018-19

Summer Co-Authorship Grant, Georgetown University Department of Government (with Prof. Lahra Smith), 2018

SAIS China Africa Research Initiative field work grant (with Allison Grande and James Sayre), 2018

Danida Fellowship Centre travel grant (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark), 2011

Fellowships, Trainings, and Awards

NW5 Consortium Narrative Medical Scribe Training, 2023

Apprenticeship in Teaching Program, Georgetown University Center for New Designs in Learning and Scholarship, Completed 2022

Best Graduate Student Paper Prize, ISA Global Health Section, 2021

Nominee for Graduate Student TA Award, 2021

Institute for Civically Engaged Research (APSA-ICER) Fellow, 2021

Finalist for the International Studies Association Global Development Studies Section Edward Said Award, 2021

ISA-NE Interpretive and Relational Research Methodology Workshop Fellow, 2020

USC South/South Critical Ethnographies Workshop Fellow, 2020

Cancelled due to COVID-19

Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research (IQMR) scholarship, 2018

Silver Award poster presentation, European Public Health Conference, 2011

Conference Presentations

American Anthropological Association, November 2023

Executive Panel Paper Presentation: “The Pitfalls of Reliance on Traditional Development Aid for Funding Health Systems: A Normative Inquiry”

European Conference on African Studies, May 2023

Paper Presentation: “Bureaucracy as Resistance: Everyday Acts of Power in the Malawi Ministry of Health”

International Studies Association, March 2023

Paper Presentation: “Bureaucracy as Resistance: Everyday Acts of Power in the Malawi Ministry of Health”

International Studies Association, March 2022

Paper Presentation: ““We want money, not Fanta”: Allowance Culture and Human Capital in Malawi’s Community Health System”

International Studies Association, April 2021

Paper Presentation: “Lost in Translation: Health Policy Implementation from Global to Local”

–*Finalist for the Edward Said Award*

–*Best Graduate Student Paper Prize, Global Health Section*

African Studies Association, November 2020

Paper Presentation: “Partnership in practice: How development rhetoric obscures power asymmetries”

Symposia on Global Health Policy Research and Health Systems Research, November 2020

Paper Presentations: “Who ‘owns’ development projects? Theory vs. practice in Malawi’s health sector”

Global Symposium on Health Systems Research, October 2018

Paper Presentation: “Parallel Paths: How the Global Health Industry Undermines National and Community Health Systems”

International Studies Association, April 2018

Paper Presentation: “Development Effects of Compliance with World Bank Aid Agreements.”

African Studies Association, November 2017

Paper Presentation: “Unfreezing Libya’s Assets: Missed Opportunity for Neotrusteeship?”

Global Health and Innovation Conference, April 2015

Poster Presentation: “Stating the case for strong data collection in impact evaluation: Evidence from a domestic violence program in South Asian communities.”

European Public Health Conference, November 2011

Poster Presentation: “Health policy agenda-setting in Tanzania: National and international stakeholder perspectives.”

Invited Presentations

EHESP School of Public Health, June 2023

Expert Presentation: “Vocabularies of Development: How Buzzwords Obscure Power Relations in Global Health”

Oregon State University, Anthropology Lecture Series, February 2023

Paper Presentation: “Bureaucracy as Resistance: Everyday Acts of Power in the Malawi Ministry of Health”

University of Malawi Chancellor's College, April 2020

Paper Presentation: "Shaping Malawi's Health System: The local effects of global attention to community health"

Cancelled due to COVID-19

SAIS-CARI Annual Conference, April 2019

Paper Presentation: "Chinese Medical Teams: Knowledge Transfer in Ethiopia and Malawi"

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, December 2015

Paper Presentation: "Cost-effectiveness of a multitarget stool DNA test for colorectal cancer screening of Medicare beneficiaries."

Kota Day Conference, April 2015

Expert Presentation: "The importance of holistic monitoring and evaluation."

US Preventive Services Task Force, March 2015

Paper Presentation: "Evaluating the benefits and harms of colorectal cancer screening strategies: A collaborative modeling approach."

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam, November 2014

Expert Presentation: "Negotiation and decision-making in international arenas."

Service

For the Academy

Invited Reviewer for Social Science and Medicine; International Journal of Health Policy and Management; Global Public Health; BMJ Global Health; VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations; Anthropology of Consciousness; African Affairs; Social Science and Medicine - Mental Health; Global Social Policy

Andrew Price-Smith Book Award Committee Member, ISA-GHS, 2022

APHA 2022 Annual Meeting Abstract Reviewer, 2022

Co-lead of 'Power' Conversation Group of SHAPES (Health Systems Global), 2021

Mentor for AuthorAID, 2021

Selection Panel Member, 2020/21 Fulbright Foreign Student Program (Lilongwe, Malawi)

For the University

Graduate Writing Excellence Award Committee Member, University of Puget Sound (2024)

Panelist for *The Janes* screening talk-back on reproductive rights, University of Puget Sound (2022)

Steering Committee Member and Doctoral Student Representative, Georgetown College Executive Council (2020–2021)

Africa and the World Seminar Group Treasurer (2018–2019)

Georgetown Graduate Student Government General Assembly Representative (2018–2019)

Georgetown Alliance of Graduate Employees (GAGE) Department Organizer (2017–Present)

Workshop Assistant for Ethnographic Perspectives on Health Systems in sub-Saharan Africa (Fall 2017)

African Studies PhD Working Group, Co-Founder (2016)

For the Department

- Experiential Learning Department Liaison, UPS Master of Public Health Program, 2023–2024
- Search Committee Member, UPS Master of Public Health Program, 2022, 2023
- Tenure and Promotion Committee Member, UPS Master of Public Health Program, Fall 2022
- PhD Student Representative, Justice, Equity, and Inclusion Committee for the GU Department of Government (2020–2022)
- GU Graduate Political Science Association President (2018–2019)
- GU Graduate Political Science Association Comparative Government Representative (2017–2018)

Professional Memberships

- American Anthropological Association, 2020–Present
- International Studies Association, 2017–Present
- Health Systems Global, 2018–Present
- African Studies Association, 2017–2021
- American Public Health Association, 2022
- American Political Science Association, 2017–2022
- Georgetown Alliance of Graduate Employees, 2016–2022

Professional Experience

Employment

- Editorial Assistant, Journal for the Anthropology of Consciousness, 2020–2023
- Research Assistant, Justice, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, Department of Government, Georgetown University, Spring 2022
- Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Intern, EngenderHealth, 2020
- Research Associate, Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center, Georgetown University, 2016–2018
- Epidemiology Research Coordinator, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, 2015–2016
- Research Lab Manager, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, 2013–2015
- Managing Partner, Global Insight, 2013–2015
- Public Health Fellow, World Health Organization, 2011
- Junior Project Manager, Mapi Research Trust, 2009

Consulting

Project Evaluation, ExpandFPII Project (DRC), EngenderHealth, 2021

Case study, Civil War Settlement Project, Political Instability Task Force, 2018

Business Plan, Kota Alliance, 2015

Violence Against Women Accountability Initiative, Clinton Global Initiative Commitment to Action [with ICAAD, CKM Advisors, and Data Pop Alliance], 2016

Program Evaluation, Sakhi for South Asian Women [with Jillian J. Foster and Rachel Harris], 2014

Skills and Competencies

Languages: English (native), French (fluent), Chichewa (novice)

Software: NVivo, Dedoose, R, L^AT_EX, Endnote/Zotero, basic HTML/CSS

Research Skills: Field methods (in-depth interviews, ethnography), qualitative methods (case studies, process tracing, text analysis), statistical methods (building and analyzing datasets, survey research)

Cultural Competency: Research/Work/Study in Malawi, Tanzania, Ethiopia, France, UK, Denmark, Sweden (with leisure travel to many other countries)

Other/Miscellaneous: Certified Yoga teacher (RYT-200); Creator of Inner Professor™, a stress and burnout recovery course for academics

Last updated: March 7, 2024