UTHealth Houston
School of Public Health

JINGJING GAO
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Last Update: 01/22/2026

Academic Appointments

UTHealth Houston
Assistant Professor   **May 2023-Current**
Texas A&M
Postdoctoral Fellow   **April 2022-March 2023**

Education

Ph.D. Public Policy
The University of North Carolina at Charlotte
Research Interests: Public Health Policy
Dissertation Titles: Spatiotemporal Emotions' Patterns of Twitter Data on COVID-19 and Health
  Policies   **May 2022**

Graduate Certificate in Geographic Information Science and Technology   **2021**
Master of Public Administration   **2017**
  The University of North Carolina at Pembroke
Master of Social Medicine and Health Management   **2017**
  Henan University, School of Nursing, China
Bachelor of Public Enterprise Management   **2013**
  Henan University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, China

Areas of Interest and Expertise

Public Health Policy • Health Technology • Digital Health • Health Outcomes • Community Health • Quantitative Analysis • Geospatial Analyses • Spatial Visualization • Data Science • Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease • Cancer • Epidemiology

Publications

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles
1. **Gao, J.***, Muinat Abolore Idris, Gabriela A. Gallegos, Bryan Colby Griffin, Sharon V. Munroe, Jason Windett (2025). Diffusion and Division: A Spatial Analysis of Surrogacy Policy Determinants in the United States. *SSN Population Health*
2. Idris, M. A., Gitter, A., Deemer, E., Zhang, Y., & **Gao, J**. (2025). Work-and hydration-related health outcomes prevalence among USA construction workers: evidence from the national survey. *Frontiers in Public Health*, *13*, 1721825.
3. Dai, Y., **Gao, J**., & Radford, B. J. (2024). From fear to hate: Sources of anti-Asian sentiment during COVID-19. *Social Science Quarterly*.
4. Gallegos, G. A., Schaper, K., Roy, S., & **Gao, J**. (2024). Analyzing the Relationships between State School Policies and Absenteeism Rates for 9-12th Grade Students in Texas-Mexico Border Districts. *Research in Educational Policy and Management*, 6(1), 255-268.

5. Cowan-Pyle, A. E., Bailey, R. L., **Gao, J.**, Hess, J. M., Ademu, L. O., Smith, J. L., & Racine, E. F. (2024). Dietary Quality and Diet-Related Factors Among Emerging Adults (18–23 y) in the United States Are a Cause for Concern: National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 2015–2018. *The Journal of Nutrition*, 154(8), 2524-2533.

6. **Gao, J.**, Gallegos, G. A., & West, J. F. (2023). Public Health Policy, Political Ideology, and Public Emotion Related to COVID-19 in the US. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 20(21), 6993.

7. **Gao, J.**, Keenan, O. E., Johnson, A. S., Wilhelm, C. A., Paul, R., & Racine, E. F. (2023). The COVID-19 pandemic, rising inflation, and their influence on dining out frequency and spending. *Nutrients*, 15(6), 1373.

8. Ademu, L., **Gao, J***., Assis, J., Olajide, A., & Atawodi, O. (2023) Taking a Shot: The Impact of Information Frames and Channels on Vaccination Willingness in a Pandemic. *Vaccines*, 11(1), 137.

9. **Gao, J.**, Guo, Y., & Ademu, L. (2022). Associations between Public Fear of COVID-19 and Number of COVID-19 Vaccinations: a county-level longitudinal analysis. *Vaccines*, 10(9), 1422.

10. **Gao, J**. (2022). The Complementary and Substitutive Value of Online Health Information. *Health and Social Care in the Community*.

11. Guo, Y., **Gao, J.**, & Sims, T. O. (2022). Associations between Bonus and Lottery COVID-19 Vaccine Incentive Policies and Increases in COVID-19 Vaccination Rates: A Social Epidemiologic Analysis. *Tropical Medicine and Infectious Disease*, 7(7), 118.

12. Guo, Y., Kaniuka, A. R., **Gao, J.**, & Sims, O. T. (2022). An Epidemiologic Analysis of Associations between County-Level Per Capita Income, Unemployment Rate, and COVID-19 Vaccination Rates in the United States. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(3), 1755.

13. Ademu, L., **Gao, J.**, Thompson, T., & Ademu, L. (2022) Impact of ShortTerm Air Pollution on Respiratory Infections: A Time-Series Analysis of COVID19 Cases in California during the 2020 Wildfire Season. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19.9 (2022): 5057.

14. **Gao, J.**, Radford, B. (2021). Death by Political Party: The Relationship Between COVID19 Deaths and Political Party Affiliation. *World Medical & Health Policy*, 1– 26. https://doi.org/10.1002/wmh3.435.

Peer-Reviewed Book

1. West, J.F., **Gao, J.**, and Jang, S. (2021). *The Factors and Behaviors Associated with Legislator Use of Communication Technology*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Under Review

1. **Gao, J**. Gabriela A. Gallegos (**2025 Revised & Resubmitted**). The Impact of the Public's Stress Level and Governor's Political Party Affiliation on Public Health Policy Effectiveness.

2. **Gao**, J., Idris, M. A., Hang, Y., Bi, K., & Jones, E. (**2025 Revised & Resubmitted**). Inequities in pandemic resilience: A spatial-temporal study of mortality and economic recovery during COVID-19. *Frontiers in Public Health*

3. **Gao, J.** Lilian Ademu; Beth Racine; Ben Radford; Jason Windett (2025 under review). Public Emotion, Public Policy, and Working from Home During COVID-19.

4. **Gao, J**.*, Eric C. Jones; Louis D. Brown; Benjamin J; Jack Tsai, (2025 under review). Factors Associated with Artificial Intelligence (AI) Adoption for Cancer Institutions

5. **Gao, J**.*, Eric C. Jones; Louis D. Brown; Benjamin J. Radford; Jiaming Liang; Jack Tsai, (2025 under review) The Geographic Digital Divide among Caregivers of People Living with Dementia in the U.S.: A Cross-Sectional Study

6. **Gao, J.**, Idris, M. A., Lilian O. Ademu, Bryan Colby Griffin, Yue Zhang, Yun Hang, Gabriela A. Gallegos. (2025 under review). Food Delivery Services in Enhancing WIC Participation in the United States: Bridging the WIC-Eligible Access Gap

7. Munroe, S. V., Jones, E. C., Ferguson, G., Idris, M. A., & **Gao, J.*** (2025 under review). Supporting the mental health of high school students in Travis County, Texas: A geospatial analysis.
8. Gallegos, G. A., Patel, P., & **Gao, J.** (2025 under review). Bring a friend: How first-time adult triathlon participants get started.
9. Gao, J., Idris, M. A., Kim-Vences, S. I. H., & Windett, J. H. (2026.). Patterns and predictors of anxiety medication use among U.S. adults: A national analysis with a focus on racial disparities in the Asian population.

Works in Progress
1. **Gao, J.,** (2025). Cost-Effectiveness Analysis of COVID-19 Scholarship Lottery Policy among Young People.
2. **Gao, J.,** (2025). Health Care Resources and Racial Disparities in Children Vaccination Rate: a county-level analysis, Preventive Medicine.
3. **Gao, J.,** (2025). Seeking Online Health Information Among Patients with Multiple Health Conditions.
4. **Gao, J.,** (2025). AI and Rare Disease
5. **Gao, J.,** (2025). Cultural Intervention Through Gardening to Improve Mental Health Among Asian American Population

*Note***:** Some works in progress may not yet include all authors.

Awarded Grants

$30 Million Rio Grande Colonias USDA Regional Food Business Center. Texas A&M AgriLife Research /US Department of Agriculture (USDA). (Role: Postdoc Fellow; PI: Elizabeth F. Racine)	2023-2028
$500 Travel Funding from Graduate & Professional Student Government The University of North Carolina at Charlotte	2022
$6000 The Graduate School Summer Fellowship Program (GSSF) The University of North Carolina at Charlotte	2020
$500 Travel Funding from Graduate & Professional Student Government The University of North Carolina at Charlotte	2020
$1000 Travel Funding from Graduate & Professional Student Government The University of North Carolina at Charlotte	2019
$500 Travel Funding from Graduate & Professional Student Government The University of North Carolina at Charlotte	2018

Submitted Grants (Pending)

NIH R01-Technologies among Alzheimer Patients' Family Caregivers in the U.S. (2.6 million Role: PI)	2026-2031
NIH R01-Surrogacy Policy Environments and Health Outcomes. (2.5 million Role: PI)	2026-2031
NIH R21-Utilizing Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technologies for Cancer Treatment. ($429,000 Role: PI)	2026-2028
NIH R21-Impact of Hydration Break Policy Rollback on Texas Construction Workers' Health: A natural Experiment (Role: Co-I)	2026-2028
NIH R21-Hydration Break Policy Rollbacks Impact on Heat-Related Health Outcomes Among Construction Workers in Texas: A Time Sensitive Natural Experiment Assessment (Role: Co-I)	2026-2028
CPRIT-Leveraging All-Payer Claims Data to Map Breast Cancer Treatment Pathways by Insurance Type Among Texas Women Under 65 (Role: Co-I)	2026-

Teaching Experience

Lecture:
UTHealth Houston
2251PHD-3918L700: Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
2251PHM-3918L700: Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
2252PHM-3715L700: Management and Policy Concepts in Public Health
Teaching Assistant:
The University of North Carolina at Charlotte
GRAD 8103: Classificatory Methods and Time Series, Graduate School
GRAD 8102: Categorical Outcomes, Graduate School DTSC 2301: Modeling and
Society, School of Data Science
Invited Lecture:
The University of North Carolina at Pembroke
Quantitative Methods, Master of Public Administration (MPA)

Conference Presentations

1. Gao, J., and Muinat Abolore M Idris (2026) Diffusion and Division: A Spatial Analysis of Surrogacy Policy Determinants in the United States, *SPSA*, New Orleans
2. Gao, J., (2025) Identify in Adopting Technologies among Family Caregivers of Alzheimer in the U.S, *American Public Health Association*, Washington, DC
3. Gao, J., and Bryan Colby A Griffin (2025) Determinants of State-Level Surrogacy Policy Adoption in the United States, *American Public Health Association*, Washington, DC
4. Gao, J., and Muinat Abolore M Idris (2025) Spatial-Temporal Analysis of Resilience to COVID in Europe and the Americas, *American Public Health Association*, Washington, DC
5. Gao, J., and Bryan Colby A Griffin (2025) Supporting WIC-Eligible Mothers with Infants through Food Delivery Services: A Spatial Analysis of Access and Equity, *American Public Health Association*, Washington, DC
6. Gao, J., and Muinat Abolore M Idris (2025) Water Break Access and Occupational Health Outcomes Among Construction Workers: Evidence from the National Health Interview Survey, *American Public Health Association*, Washington, DC
7. Gao, J., Gallegos, G., (2025) Governor Political Affiliation, Public Emotion, and Staying at Home During COVID–19, *Annual Southern Political Science Association Meetings*, San Juan, Puerto Rico
8. Gao, J., (2023). Public Emotions and Public Working Modes in COVID-19: Moderate Roles of Public Policy, *Annual Southern Political Science Association Meetings*, St. Pete Beach, Florida.
9. Gao, J., Radford, B., & Dai, Y., (2022). The Mechanism of Policy Diffusion of COVID-19 Vaccine Incentive Policies. The 79th Annual *Midwest Political Science Association* (MPSA) Conference, Chicago.
10. Gao, J., Dai, Y., & Radford, B., (2022). From Fear to Hate: Anti-Asian Sentiment During COVID-19. Annual Southern Political Science Association Meetings, San Antonio, Texas, January 15, 2022.
11. Gao, J. (2020). Chronic Diseases, Health Insurances, and Online Health Information Searching Behavior. Annual Southern Political Science Association Meetings, Puerto Rico, January 2020.
12. Maestas, C., Gao, J., Cawvey, M., Levens, S., and Atkeson L. (2019). Expressing Anxiety: Emotion Regulation Strategies and Social Sharing of Policy Information. Annual Southern Political Science Association Meetings, Austin, Texas, January 17, 2019.

13. West, J.F., Gao J. (2019). Legislator Use of Communication Technology: The Critical Frequency Theory of Policy System Stability. The 77th Annual Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) Conference, Chicago.
14. West, J.F., Gao J. (2019). Legislator Use of Communication Technology and the Critical Frequency Theory of Policy System Stability. North Carolina Political Science Association (NCPSA), Charlotte.
15. Gao, J. (2018). The Relationships between Diseases and Online Health Information Searching Behavior (Poster). The 76th Annual Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) Conference, Chicago.
16. Gao, J. (2017). Utilizing Social Media as a Policy Tool: An Examination of the Impact of Social Media on Healthcare Outcomes in Chinese University Students. The 75th Annual Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) Conference, Chicago.
17. West, J.F., Gao, J. (2017). Death of a Trustee: An Examination of Traditional Legislator Roles in an Era of Increased Legislator-Constituent Linkages Precipitated by Internet-Enabled Communication Technologies. The 75th Annual Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) Conference, Chicago.
18. West, J.F., Gao, J. (2016). Evolution and the Internet: A Theoretical and Empirical Exploration of State Legislator Choice of Communication Technology. 2016 Southeastern Conference for Public Administration (SECoPA), Raleigh.

Other Positions

Graduate Research Assistant   August 2017-May 2022
The University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Graduate Research Assistant   October 2015 - December 2016
The University of North Carolina at Pembroke

Compensated Internship   June 2016—August 2016
North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC); Four-department rotations: Government Relations, Communications, Member Service/Education, and Research.

Reviewer of Journal
World Medical & Health Policy; Work

Languages and Skills

- Chinese (native), English (fluent)
- Python, R, ArcGIS Pro, GeoDa, QGIS, Voxler (3D Visualization), Tableau, MATLAB, SQL, SPSS, STATA