

Health Equity Research Education Certificate Program 2024-2025

Overview

The Health Equity Research Education Certificate Program (HEREP) at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) is designed to enhance skills in health equity research and grant-writing abilities of early stage investigators or junior faculty. Participants will gain valuable knowledge, mentorship, and networking opportunities to advance their careers in health equity research.

- Through participation in faculty development discussions and workshops, scholars will enhance their knowledge and scientific skills, and gain expertise in health equity/disparities research to become stronger candidates for grant funding as independent investigators.
- A final product of an R03 (or equivalent) grant proposal will be written and submitted by each scholar during the training period or shortly after.

We are now accepting applications for this **one-year research education certificate program which starts in October 2024 and continues through September 2025.**

The **applications are due by Wednesday, September 18, 2024.** [Click here to submit application](#)

Key Benefits

- **Skill Development:** HEREP offers intensive training in research methodologies, data analysis, and grant proposal writing
- **Mentorship:** Participants will work closely with experienced faculty mentors
- **Networking:** Engage with a diverse community of researchers and build professional connections
- **Scientific Writing:** Devote time to write manuscripts for publishing and grant proposals for research funding
- **Career Advancement:** HEREP equips participants with the tools needed to secure research funding and advance their academic careers

Eligibility:

- Junior level faculty at MSM, TU, UA and UAB in health-related fields are eligible to apply
- Mid-level faculty who are new to research or are interested in making a transition to disparities research (transitional faculty) may apply
- Medical fellows and post-doctoral fellows may apply
- Junior level faculty at institutions other than those listed above, which are part of the sponsoring grants (see last page for more info), would need sponsorship by their own institutions (ie, Creighton Univ, Univ of South Alabama, and Univ of Alabama in Huntsville)
- Applicants should have a strong interest in health equity research and knowledge of the sponsoring grants described below (see last page)



Sponsored by grants from the NIH National Cancer Institute (NCI), NIH National Institute on Aging (NIA), and the NIH Common Fund, Creighton University, Morehouse School of Medicine, Tuskegee University, the University of Alabama, the University of South Alabama, and the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and coordinated by the UAB MHERC.

HEREP Application Process

Application Materials:

- All candidates must **submit application through the UAB MHERC website (link below):**
 1. **Application form**
 2. **Current CV**
 3. **Statement of Intent and**
 4. **One Letter of Support (LOS)**
- **Request LOS now - from a supervising senior faculty person, Director, Dean, or Chair, in order to upload with other documents.** The LOS should address support of research career and release time to participate in HEREP.
- **Please have all materials ready to upload in separate Adobe PDF files and submit at one time.**
- **[Click here to submit application](#)**
- **Application deadline is Wednesday, September 18, 2024, by 11:59pm Central Time.**
- Use Edge browser and **short file names with no punctuation.** If the notification is not received immediately switch to a different browser and try it again, or check your filenames.
- You will receive **immediate confirmation** that your application was uploaded successfully. If you do not, and you try again in a different browser, please email annsmith@uab.edu ASAP.

Statement of Intent should include a brief personal statement that addresses the following:

- Why are you interested in this training opportunity in health equity/disparities research?
 - How will you fit the required HEREP time into your current schedule?
 - How does this training program relate to your career goals?
 - When do you plan to submit a grant application on health equity/disparities research?
1. Program Requirements include: at least one manuscript written and submitted, timely submission of HEREP reports, and at least 80% attendance at HEREP activities.
 2. Scholars will be expected to submit a grant application to an external funding agency (K-award or R-series grant); or a pilot grant application, depending on their experience;
 3. If you would like more information, please contact Ann Smith at (205) 934-9903, or via email at annsmith@uab.edu .
 4. Applicants will be notified **by Oct. 4, 2024.**

HEREP Testimonials

“The training was great to improve my skills in health disparities. Great collaboration and knowledge skills from different group members.”

“The training absolutely matched my needs and nurtured my career development. What makes the program so strong, in my humble opinion, is the way that it connects us with high-achieving scholars and mentors. My mentor has been amazing and we have successfully secured funding in my first year as a result of this program. I didn't feel like there were any weaknesses to this program.”

“I loved that we had to develop career roadmaps. This has been instrumental in helping me stay focused on my research goals and also knowing what I need to be more focused on and in which areas. The training did match my needs and help my career development.”

From scholars in the 2020-2023 HEREP cohorts

HEREP Education Program and Schedule Information

The **MHERC Health Equity Research Education Certificate Program (HEREP)** has a one-year training period. As a scholar with the program, you must commit your schedule to include the Faculty Development Discussion webinars and workshops, as well as time to work with your mentor or mentoring team on writing manuscripts for publication and developing a grant proposal and submitting it.

Your attendance is required for all activities listed below. The program will provide you:

1. **Faculty Development Discussion Video Conferences (VC) weekly** connecting via zoom. 26 x 1.5 hour sessions (3-5/mo thru May). **Tuesdays at 1:30-3:00pm Central Time (2:30-4:00 ET) - proposed start is Oct 22, 2024**
2. **Two one-day virtual Workshops on Bioethics** and cross-cultural issues hosted by Tuskegee University (a Friday in Nov and May)- **proposed dates are Friday, Nov. 15, 2024 and April 25, 2025**
3. **Independent research and grant proposal development guided by a mentor**
4. **Individual Grant Development and Critique Session (Grant Writing Retreat)** – Grant Writing methodological training and in-depth critique of research grant proposals-Dates TBD

The **Objectives** of the **MHERC Health Equity Research Education Certificate Program** are to:

1. Develop independent researchers in health equity/disparities research through individualized mentored training.
2. Provide instruction in scientific research methodology and design.
3. Provide training on the topic of health disparities and innovative approaches to reduce them.
4. Teach scientific writing and grant preparation skills to produce a grant submission to an external agency.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- *What is the HEREP?*
The MHERC Health Equity Research Education Certificate Program (HEREP) is a 1-year individualized mentored research training certificate program, which is sponsored by multiple grants and institutions, and coordinated by the UAB Minority Health & Health Equity Research Center (UAB MHERC).
- *How much time is required?*
The HEREP involves approximately 4-6 hours per week, including workshops, seminars, and independent work. Scholars are required to participate in scheduled video conference faculty development discussions. The week of the Grant Writing Retreat requires a full three days (Wed-Thurs-Fri), likely in March, exact dates TBD
- *How are participants selected?*
A committee composed of leaders from the sponsoring grants reviews applications based on merit, commitment, and alignment with grant goals.
- *Is financial support available?*
No stipends are available for this program, nor is there tuition or a charge to participate.
- *What will selected scholars do?*
The scholars will focus on health equity research, secondary data analysis, and development of manuscripts for publication and grant proposals for submission, in addition to the faculty development discussions.
- *What does the mentoring include?*
As part of the **individualized mentoring**, each HEREP Scholar will develop a Scholar/Mentor Research Work Plan Agreement. The scholar and mentor will work together at times scheduled by the scholar/mentor dyads to set the scholar's personal HEREP goals based on where the scholar is in his/her career, and grant and publication history.
- *What types of grants can scholars apply for?*
Individual Scholars will be encouraged to apply for small pilot projects, larger intramural pilot grants, or larger foundation or NIH grant funding, based on their experience and needs.
- *How is the certificate earned?*
Individual Scholars who complete all program requirements will receive a Certificate in Health Equity/Disparities Research, signifying specialized training in Health Equity/Disparities Research.

HEREP Sponsoring Grant Information

The HEREP is sponsored by these grants – see more info below:

- **MSM/TU/O'Neal comprehensive Cancer Center at UAB Cancer Partnership –**
 - The Partnership between Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM), Tuskegee University (TU), and the O' Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Alabama at Birmingham is supported by the NIH National Cancer Institute (NCI)
 - The primary objectives are to maintain progress in establishing productive cancer research programs at MSM and TU, to persist in developing a pathway of prospective investigators at TU, and further expand cancer disparity research at O' Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at UAB
 - Develop stronger national cancer programs aimed at understanding reasons behind significant cancer disparities and impact on minority populations regardless of zip code
 - Reduce or eliminate cancer disparities
 - <https://www.uab.edu/msm-tu-uabcccpartnership/>

- **Resource Center for Minority Aging Research (RCMAR) –**
 - The Deep South RCMAR focuses on health problems that are particularly prevalent among older African Americans in both rural and urban settings. Specific aims include:
 - Provide high quality research training and individualized career development support for faculty
 - Identify, engage, and mentor outstanding, diverse faculty committed to academic careers in health disparities and aging research
 - Support innovative, high impact pilot projects
 - Provide expertise and resources for working collaboratively with communities and for the recruitment and retention of older African Americans in research
 - Provide expertise and resources for culturally sensitive measurement and analysis; and
 - Disseminate research results to scientific, professional and lay audiences
 - <https://www.uab.edu/medicine/dopm/research/rcmar>

- **Cancer Awareness, Research, Engagement, and Support (CARES) Center –**
 - The CARES Center aims to reduce the burden of cancer and cancer disparities in areas where large parts of the population have been affected by poverty for decades, i.e. areas that experience persistent poverty
 - The CARES Center will expand research to evaluate interventions to reduce cancer risk factors, specifically those that i) make changes in the living environments, these being the physical, social, economic, or service environments, and
ii) increase the capacity of communities to implement and disseminate evidence-based interventions
 - Inquire to see CARES Center Scholar Expectations
 - <https://sites.uab.edu/cares-partnership/>

- **FIRST Benjamin-Carver Scientists program**
 - The FIRST Benjamin-Carver Scientists program is funded in part through the NIH Common Fund's Faculty Institutional Recruitment for Sustainable Transformation (FIRST) program
 - Scientists selected to participate are deemed a "Benjamin-Carver Scientist" and will benefit from relationships with both the University of Alabama at Birmingham and Tuskegee University
 - Benjamin-Carver Scientists are committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in research areas pertaining to health disparities
 - <https://sites.uab.edu/benjamin-carver-first/benjamin-carver-scientists/>

- Selected HEREP scholars may be sponsored by a grant or by their own center, institution, or professional association.