

UMass Chan Medical School MSTP Student Council (MSC) End of Year Report

Summary of AY2021-2022 Progress **Objectives and Initiatves for AY 22-23**



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A Message from the Director

Dear UMass Chan MD-PhD students:

Change is scary. When unexpected, it is even scarier. The change of the MD-PhD Program Director in December 2022 was quite unexpected, thus quite challenging. Still, you weathered the storm and can now look forward to a period of stability.

We are deeply honored to lead a program for such vibrant, enthusiastic, and engaged emerging physician-scientists – Catarina as the new Director and Jon continuing as Associate Director. We have appreciated your patience as you have helped us learn the intricacies of this rather complex program (we continue to learn...). We are very grateful that you have trusted us enough to come to us with your problems and hope that our shared enthusiasm and ability to work together will continue to grow over the years to come.

The change of Program Director was not the only upheaval this year. Our wonderful Program Manager, Alicia Birtz, also left for new career opportunities. We are very actively recruiting for her successor. Please bear with us until we find the right candidate – the job market for someone with the right skills is highly competitive. In the interim, we have a functional and supportive infrastructure to tide us over.

The pandemic continues, and our world has changed because of it. We are unlikely to return to a pre-pandemic model of medical and graduate school education. We likely will adjust to hybrid models of both education and employment for the foreseeable future. Although internet-supported learning is challenging, it will promote innovative changes, perhaps more so in the graduate school than in the medical school.

Another change, this one very positive, is that Dr. Tracy Kedian has been appointed as the new Associate Dean for Admissions in the T.H. Chan School of Medicine. As students, you may not recognize how this might impact you. But believe me, it will. The admissions process by which your peers will be selected will follow a somewhat different structure and you will have more opportunity to participate in this important process.

Now, a few words about changes to the program. First, we are working actively on the competitive renewal of the NIH MSTP grant, which funds a limited portion of our program. We intend to submit this renewal application in March 2023. In preparation, we intend to perform a 360-degree review of our program aided by external advisors who are leaders of other MSTP programs. We expect that positive changes will result from this review. Second, we are excited to announce that we have expanded our cadre of MD-PhD mentors with the addition of Dr. Mark Johnson as the MD-PhD mentor for the new Grafton House learning community. Finally, since our program is one of the few MSTP programs nationwide that includes a Clinical and Population Health Sciences (CPHR) track, we intend to build on this strength. We plan both to increase the proportion of CPHR students in our program (currently 10-20%, depending on the year), and to increase the frequency and visibility of scientific activities that benefit from strong collaboration between students and faculty in the BBS and the CPHR tracks.

We appreciate the leadership of the Medical Student Council (MSC) and the commitment that all of you have shown by participating in the work of the various MSC committees. We are proud of you, our students past and present, and of the UMass Chan MD-PhD Program. We look forward to a successful and productive 2022-2023 academic year!

Catarina Kiefe, MSTP Director, 2022

Jonathan Kay, MSTP Associate Director, 2022

Overview

As we begin year 4 of the **MSTP Student Council (MSC)**, it is remarkable to think what we have achieved as a community and the growth we have undergone. This year we journeyed through another year of hybrid learning and labwork, became UMass Chan, welcomed Dr. Catarina Kiefe onboard as MSTP director, and advocated for our program in the upcoming SOM curriculum, Vista. Each step along the way felt like a huge celebration of what we can accomplish with creativity and community. As LC Mentor, Dr. Dave Hatem says, "change is the only constant in life!"

The following End of Year Report highlights the work of many dedicated MD/PhD students on the **MSTP Student Council (MSC)** and a roadmap to continuing this work in the next academic year. The MSC values the opinions of all students in the MD/PhD program and strives to be inclusive, transparent, and solution oriented.

In order to organize student initiatives and maintain longitudinal momentum, the MSC adopted a committee structure and established Standing Committees that encompass areas that benefit from student feedback and commentary: Curriculum, Community Development, Mentorship, Communications/Public Relations, andd Action for Equity and Inclusion Committee. Each committee is chaired by two members of the MSC. Any student in the program, regardless of year, may take part in any of these committees – and we strongly welcome all to participate!

As a whole, each committee set the framework to allow for further growth and improvement in the upcoming years. Among the successes of this year's committees include an another enriching year of the Physician Scientist Forums (PSF), multiple AEI-led Book Clubs, the first year of the MD/PhD-specific LC mentoring system, this year's 16th MD/PhD Research Retreat, our program's first year of Instagram (@UMassMDPhD) and Twitter (@UMassMDPhD) social media pages, the first official year of working with Community Harvest Project, and multiple community-building social events including Wolfpack dinners and program breakfasts. The summaries of each committee's goals, achievements, and future plans are documented herein. These are a testament to the incredible efforts already put forth by many of our colleagues and we are thrilled to use this report to celebrate their past and present succesful initiatives.

On behalf of the MSC, we look forward to this next academic year to further support our ever-growing and vibrant MD/PhD community.

Jillian Belgrad, GS2, 2022 and Lael Ngangmeni, GS2, 2022 Co-chairs of the MSTP Student Council P.S. Please enjoy our 2021 Program Photo!



Joining the MSC

Below please find the Universal Calendar for MSC Standing Committee Meetings:

MSC	Executive Council	Curriculum	Mentorship	Community Development	Communication	AEI
Second Tuesday	Third Wednesday	First Tuesday	Second Wednesday	First Thursday	Third Thursday	Third Tuesday
12-Jul-22	7/20/22	7/5/22	7/13/22	7/7/22	7/21/22	7/19/22
8/9/22	8/17/22	8/2/22	8/10/22	8/4/22	8/18/22	8/16/22
9/13/22	9/21/22	9/6/22	9/14/22	9/1/22	9/15/22	9/20/22
10/11/22	10/19/22	10/4/22	10/12/22	10/6/22	10/20/22	10/18/22
11/10/22	11/16/22	11/1/22	11/9/22	11/3/22	11/17/22	11/15/22
12/13/22	12/21/22	12/6/22	12/14/22	12/1/22	12/15/22	12/20/22
1/10/23	1/18/23	1/3/23	1/11/23	1/5/23	1/19/23	1/17/23
2/14/23	2/15/23	2/7/23	2/8/23	2/2/23	2/16/23	2/21/23
3/13/23	3/15/23	3/7/23	3/8/23	3/2/23	3/16/23	3/21/23
4/11/23	4/19/23	4/4/23	12-Apr	4/6/23	4/20/23	4/18/23
5/9/23	5/17/23	5/2/23	5/10/23	5/4/23	5/18/23	5/16/23
6/13/23	6/21/23	6/6/23	6/14/23	6/1/23	6/15/23	6/20/23

If you are interested to learn more about a committee or join, please <u>use this brief form</u> (also linked in email) to join the committee email list for Zoom and meeting information.

Curriculum Committee AY 22-23 Co-chairs: Carly Herber & Jason Freedman AY 21-22 Co-chairs: Philip Feinberg & Carly Herbert

Curriculum Committee Members:

Philip Feinberg Carly Herbert Nicholas Peterson Jason Freedman Jordan Smith, Grace Masters, Amy Cheung, Noah Silverstein, Eric Ding, Samantha Tse, Julianna Buchwald, Claire Tocheny, Vincent Azzolino, Jillian Belgrad

The **Curriculum Committee** is responsible for representing the MD/PhD student body in all matters relating to academic coursework and physician scientist training. As outlined in the bylaws passed in September 2019, there are four primary areas that the Curriculum Committee serves. 1) Formulating and updating a list of PhD thesis mentors that have mentored previous MD/PhD candidates 2) Formulating and updating a list of recommended clinical preceptors for completing clinical hour requirements during the PhD thesis years 3) Serving as the main point of contact for students with concerns or issues pertaining to MD/PhD-specific coursework 4) Assessing student feedback on courses and formulating recommendations to program administrators for quality improvement. Over the 2019-2020 academic year, the Curriculum Committee began work in each of these areas, focusing the greatest efforts towards developing a physician scientist curriculum and making improvements to existing MD/PhD courses. The success of this committee would not be possible without the tremendous contributions from the committee members. Special thanks for all the hard work and commitment to improving the MD/PhD curricular experience.

Initiatives for AY 2021-2022:

Physician Scientist Curriculum Development

The Curriculum Committee is focused on introducing more physician scientist curricular content to give students more focused training for the future careers. Over the academic year, the curriculum committee continued to work on several initiatives aimed to fill certain gaps in the existing MD/PhD curriculum. The major initiatives are outlined below:

1) **Physician Scientist Forum (PSF) & Thematic Case Files (TCF):** The Curriculum Committee worked closely with the MD/PhD program leadership to develop the PSF into a useful element of the program. Thematic Case Files (TCF) is a three part monthly series designed to enhance Physician Scientist training. In brief, each month focuses on a Monthly Clinical Theme and, over the three TCF weeks, attendees interactively solve clinical cases (week 1), learn about current research being done by students in the program (week 2), and examine a specific disease comprehensively utilizing the Five PSF Pillars (week 3). Each of the three TCF weeks in a series has a specific format with its own learning objectives. During AY21-22 the committee implemented six months of TCF covering the following topics: Internal Medicine, Surgery, Neurology, Psychiatry, Pediatrics, OB-GYN. Surveys were sent out after each session and feedback was used to refine the TCF formats to maximize student satisfaction. In response to feedback we modified session formats for quality improvement including developing the TCF worksheets, which contain all relevant clinical information for solving cases and are posted for use by students during and after PSF sessions.

2) **Physician Scientist Clinical Skills (PSCS):** Over AY 20-21 and AY21-22, The Curriculum Committee gathered from student feedback a need for more standardization of clinical experiences during the PhD years and improving the documentation of clinical skills used during clinical hours. The committee is looking into arrangements with certain clinical preceptors to provide reliable clinical experiences to MD/PhD students and

making it easier for students to schedule these sessions. This work has progressed and there are active conversations with Dr. Dave Hatem and Dr. Jon Kay to further these goals and solidify logistics. This work will continue in the next academic year and will be a priority for the committee.

Summary of Curriculum Committee Working Groups:

1) **Professionalism and Research Conduct (PARC).** In March 2020, the Curriculum Committee established the PARC Working Group with the goals of 1) identify where in the PARC class there is a need for improvement to make the class relevant to MD/PhD students 2) generate a report that outlines the current course format, opinions of current students and recommendations for how to modify the course. The working group met with the course director, Cynthia Fuhrmann, and discussed ways to improve the course for MD/PhD students. Some of these changes were implemented during the fall 2020 semester. The working group held a focus group with the MD/PhD students taking PARC to discuss their experience in the class.

2) **Clinical and Population Health Research Integration (CPHR).** The CPHR integration working group was established in September 2020 with the charge of 1) performing a comprehensive evaluation of the CPHR curriculum from the MD/PhD perspective; 2) Identify the greatest challenges faced by CPHR students in the MD/PhD Program; 3) Provide recommendations for curricular development and refinement. Based on the discussions of the working group, it was decided that more epidemiology and biostatistics was needed in the longitudinal MD/PhD program curriculum, as most students only encounter this material 1st year of medical school. Therefore, the CPHR working group spent the 2020-2021 academic year developing Clinical Research and Basic Competency around Key Epidemiological Skills (CRAB-CAKES), a 4-week curriculum was conducted during PSF sessions in July 2021. The CPHRi working group has also been working closely with Dr. Tjia, the CPHR MD/PhD mentor. CRAB-CAKES will run for the second iteration in July-August 2022.

Plans for AY 2022-2023

The Curriculum Committee will continue to focus on developing physician scientist curricula in the next academic year. Priorities for the upcoming academic year include:

- 1) CRAB CAKES in July-August '22
- 2) Sustainability of PSF and TCF sessions
- 3) Develop clinical skill standards for PhD year students
- 4) Formalize the integration Peer Mentorship, Career Development and Health Equity (in collaboratin and led by AEI) sessions into the PSF calendar.

Mentorship Committee AY 22-23 Chairs: Vinny Azzolino & Eli Min AY 21-22 Chairs: Vinny Azzolino & Eli Min

Mentorship Committee members:

Vinny Azzolino	Eli Min	Melani Barbini
Michela Oster	Philip Feinberg	Ben Sallis
Bethany Berry	Ethan Loew	Kensei Kishimoto
Jane Chuprin	Carly Herbert	Jenny Powers

The MSC **Mentorship Committee** believes that faculty and peer mentorship is a vital component to UMass Chan MSTP student success. Our overarching goal is to ensure that each student receives outstanding mentorship throughout all stages of the program. We aim to help establish a mentoring system through the School of Medicine (SOM) to guarantee mentorship by trained, motivated physician scientists. We also aim to establish a wider network of UMass Chan faculty to naturally develop a mentor-mentee relationship to encourage MSTP students to further explore their medical and/or research interests. Additionally, our goal is to create an environment that fosters peer mentorship throughout the MSTP community.

Initiatives for 2021-2022:

The MSTP is establishing a new mentoring system through the SOM's Learning Communities (LC) to begin in the 2021-2022 academic year. Our goals have been, in conjunction with MSTP administration, to:

1. Formalize the use of MD/PhD-specific Individual Development Plans (IDPs) in annual LC mentor meetings 2. Establish a unique student-to-student mentorship program to welcome incoming first-years as they navigate settling into Worcester and the UMass Chan MD/PhD program.

3. Collaborate with other mentorship projects at UMass Chan to enhance mentorship opportunities for our fellow students.

Successes:

- Drafted, edited, and approved MD/PhD specific IDPs: The committee worked on writing, editing, and improving IDPs tailored to MD/PhD needs. The finalized version reflects collective inputs from our MSTP community at large.
- Established and implemented a new student-led mentorship program for incoming 1st year MD/PhDs: With tremendous help and initiative from Michela Oster and Melani Barbini, the mentorship committee was able to organize a student-to-student mentorship program focused on the unique needs of incoming 1st years. We established a matching program to form mentorship pairs/trios between incoming students and volunteer student mentors. Our goal is to help facilitate, situate, and orient students during a chaotic transition period juxtaposition to a rigorous course load.
- Increase the presence of MD/PhD mentorship program at UMass Chan: Mentorship committee helped organize the 1st UMass Chan LIGHT conference and actively participated in running the conference alongside fellow UMass Chan LIGHT students and faculty. These conferences focus on forming longlasting, meaningful mentorship and understanding the leadership role of a mentor.

Problems succeeding/foreseeable issues: Lack of student participation The committee has a persistent lack of participation from committee members. We will focus on making our projects more appealing and, hopefully, attract more involvement from our wonderful student body.

Plans for AY 2022-2023:

1) Establish a Surgical Interest Mentorship Program

There is a noticeable opportunity to further support students who are interested in a surgical specialty residency following MD/PhD training. We hope to establish a program where Surgical MD/PhDs can speak to their career paths and guide like-minded MD/PhD students. We would like to also facilitate students establishing a mentor-mentee relation with surgical mentors in their preferred specialties.

2) Expanding mentorship availability

We are hoping to revamp our mentorship program by expanding the available pool mentors to include more volunteer mentors from a variety of different research fields and medical/surgical specialties. This would help our student body form more organic relationships between mentors and mentees that can directly assist them in achieving their career goals.

Community Development Committee AY 22-23 Co-chairs: Jenny Powers & Abiola Ogunsola AY 21-22 Co-chairs: Jenny Powers & Abiola Ogunsola

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Social/Community Committee Members:

Jenny Powers Abiola Ogunsola Chantal Ferguson Jillian Belgrad Abigail Hiller Benjamin Sallis Philip Feinberg Sammy Tse Carly Herbert Emma Austen Holt Michela Oster Laël Ngangmeni

The goal of the MSC **Community Development Committee** is to bring our program members together across class years to engage in social events, and strengthen the camaraderie within Wolfpacks. The community development committee organizes and facilitates events on and off campus, welcomes incoming students, and designs program swag. The overall goal is to create programming that encourages MD/PhD students to feel continually connected with the MSTP community even across different stages of their time in the program. As a member of the committee, you will have the opportunity to plan social events and organize outings that bring our community together, celebrate each other in both small and big ways, and play a role in shaping our community on and off campus!

Initiatives for AY 2021-2022:

Successes:

- Continued the Wachusett pinning ceremony
- Established Wolfpack breakfasts and dinners
- End-of-year picnic to celebrate 2022 Graduates
- Coordinated Wachusett swag order
- Hosted a virtual trivia night for current and prospective students during the MSTP retreat
- Established and oversaw MD/PhD Program Ambassador Program and held a total of 12 Q&A sessions for applicants
- Secured funding for Wolfpack dinners, Wachusett pinning ceremony, graduation gifts and the end-of-year picnic
- Collaborated with the AEI committee to host 2 volunteering outings at the Community Harvest Project

Problems succeeding/foreseeable issues:

- Getting current students engaged with our committee so we have more ideas and more people to help plan and execute events
- COVID restraints and Zoom fatigue made it difficult to plan events that were exciting and enticing to our colleagues

Plans for AY 2022-2023:

- Hold Wolfpack dinners, once per semester
- Establish traditions for milestones (new student welcome; qualifying; defending)
- Plan general off-campus social events once per semester
- Continue swag orders for the Fall
- Continue collaborations with the Mentorship and AEI committees

Communications Committee AY 21-22 Co-Chairs: Michelle Aa. Narvaez Ramos AY 21-22 Co-Chairs: Amy Cheung & Yen Anh Nguyen

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Communications Committee Members

Yen Anh Nguyen Amy Cheung Michelle A. Narvaez Ramos Ayush Kumar

Laël Ngangmeni Madi Marasco

This past year the **Communications Committee** focused on highlighting information on the program that targets prospective students. We have added entries to the Student Section of the MD/PhD website that showcases our graduates' success and the peer mentor program.

We launched the Instagram and Twitter accounts for the program, both of which focus on our community and accomplishments in an informal and more accessible way. Contents featured on the accounts include photos from events organized by the Community Development Committee, annual traditions (pinning ceremony for first years, research retreat), and activities organized by the AEI committee.

Overall, our goal is to provide another means through which we can enhance our sense of community through more engaging forms of communication. We have accomplished a part of this goal and look forward to increasing our social media presence and engagement with our audience–the student body and prospective students.

Initiatives for AY 2021-2022

Successes:

- Launching social media accounts
- Since launching in October 2021, we have obtained 161 followers on Instagram and, 151 followers on Twitter.
- Posting frequency is about 2 posts every month. (18 posts on Instagram total)
- Interaction with other MD/PhD programs on social media (UCLA-Caltech MSTP), accounts of other groups at UMass Chan (Learning communities, interest groups, etc.)

Problems succeeding/foreseeable issues:

- Limited number of committee members. We would like to have members from different years to ensure continuous momentum for the committee.
- Posting consistency and planning posts ahead of time
- Getting updates of our students' achievements easily

Plans for AY 2022-2023:

- 1) Establish a sustainable workflow so these social media accounts can be manageable (dividing roles)
- 2) Collaborate with other committees to highlight their events
- 3) Take advantage of stories and highlight features on Instagram for announcements, notifications, reminders to increase activity and presence
- 4) Set up posting calendar, make templates on Canva
- 5) Form for submitting photos and updates for post or story requests

We welcome anyone who wishes to join us and share their ideas on our current projects or even new ones.

Action for Equity & Inclusion (AEI) Committee AY 22-23 Co-Chairs: Sarah Lee & Lauren Shumate AY 21-22 Co-Chairs: Laël Ngangmeni & Akshay Alaghatta

AEI Committee members:

Akshay Alaghatta (co-chair) Kenley Preval	Laël Ngangmeni (co-chair) Philip Feinberg	Tomás Rodriguez Abiola Ogunsola
Yen Anh Nguyen	Pryce Michener	Nick Peterson
Jane Chuprin	Grace Masters	Chantal Ferguson
Jillian Belgrad	Webb Camille	Sammy Tse
Abbi Hiller	Carly Herbert	Allison Maebius
Hye In Sarah Lee	Lauren Shumate	Michela Oster

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The MSC **AEI Committee** was created in 2020 in response to growing social unrest in our nation and the renewed campus-wide commitment to efforts for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Incorporating input from our MD/PhD community received at program-wide Listening Sessions, AEI Committee set out to focus and launch efforts centered on issues related to racism and injustice. We hope to impart on each member of our community the need, desire, and commitment to "Question. Act. Change." Our aim is to normalize discussion and growth around these topics in such a way that results in life-long commitment to anti-racism and the fight for true justice and equity for all. To this end, we organize program- and campus-wide PSFs on various topics related to Racism & Injustice, hold Book Club meetings, work with program and school administration to support recruitment & retention of URiM applicants, and partner with organizations to volunteer and advocate for structural change towards equity in the greater Worcester community.

Initiatives for 2021-2022:

Successes:

- 2 Racism & Injustice PSFs
- 2 Book Club meeting
- 2 URiM Q&A sessions for MD/PhD applicants
- Community Harvest Project volunteering days
- Incorporation of Wolf Packs to strengthen community bonds

Problems succeeding/foreseeable issues:

- Engaging people in the planning process and recruiting speakers was, at times, difficult. Especially because some of the topics we'd like to address are so sensitive and specific.
 - We'll work on setting a schedule for the year early and planning things much more in advance to ensure that there are no last-minute cancellations.
- Balancing having a set plan for the year with paying attention to on-going issues and helping our community be engaged and respond accordingly will be the goal (and challenge).
- Improving/increasing organization and productivity of AEI sub-committees.
- Getting feedback after events and receiving program-wide input consistently to ensure that we're meeting our community's needs.
- Health equity is very broad, and it is a challenge to cover as much as possible while making sure we explore topics in depth.

Plans for AY 2022-2023:

MD/PhD Student Experience & Advocacy

• Improve the student experience – through institutional reform and education

- Continue 2 Book Club sessions and Racism & Injustice PSFs address white supremacy in medicine, disability rights, mental health during STEM training, leaky pipeline of URMs in academia.
- Build a partnership with the DRIVE Initiative to increase faculty capacity around racism, bias, and difficult conversations.
- Create a climate survey to "keep a finger on the pulse of the program" by evaluating student satisfaction, documenting student experiences, and gathering feedback. This will allow us to measure growth and success across the years and continue to improve MD/PhD initiatives, culture, and relationships with faculty/administrators.
- Create an anonymous feedback system open year-round between students and faculty to allow for accountability and growth in the program and throughout the PSFs.

Recruitment & Retention of URiM students & faculty

- Work with MD/PhD directors, DIO, and SNMA to increase recruitment/retention of URiM students (e.g., attend URM SNMA tea sessions, organize MSTP URIM Q&A sessions, revisit program benefits and incentives for students with MD/PhD directors).
- Work with the UMass Admissions team and increase outreach to undergraduate programs, pipeline programs, MSTP/medical school fairs (e.g. NIH).
- Collaborate with the Mentorship Committee to increase diversity of faculty mentors in the MD/PhD program.
- Create ongoing communication with other groups focused on increasing/supporting diversity across institutional levels (e.g., Vice Provost for Health Equity, SNMA, APAMSA, LMSA, WC4BL, MENASA, MASALA, NAIH, Assistant Vice Provost for Outreach and Recruitment, various faculty members, and more).

Community Engagement

• Further develop the Wachusett Legacy Project by increasing participation in community service with Community Harvest Project.

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<u>NIH F30</u>:

Julianna Buchwald	F30, NIDDK
Samantha Tse	F30, NIDDK

<u>NIH F31</u>: N/A

Previously Awarded, Still Active, or Completed:

Kevin Gao	F30, NIAID
Kevin O'Connor	F30, NCI
Ameer Elaimy	F30
Amy Cheung	F30
Eric Ding	F30
Chantal Ferguson	F30
Alec Gramann	F31
Peter Lee	F30
Patrick Paul Lowe	F30
Nicholas Peterson	F30
Asia Matthew	F31
Ankur Sheel	F30
James Shen	F30
Noah Silverstein	F30
Jordan Leigh Smith	F30
Apurv Soni	F30
Rachel Stamateris	F30

Alec Gramann Annie Hien Benjamin Helfand Eric Schmidt Jordan Smith Michael Kiritsy Peter Cruz-Gordillo Samson Jolly Dermatology (U Texas Southwestern) Neurology (Boston U) Internal Medicine (Brown U/Rhode Island Hospital) Radiology-Diagnostic (UMass Chan) Neurosurgery (Oregon Health & Science U) Internal Medicine (Duke U) Neurosurgery (Oregon Health & Science U) Internal Medicine (UMass Chan)