



**Executive Committee
(2019-2020)**

President:

Brian Whitcomb

Past-President:

Courtney Lynch

President-Elect:

Lauren Wise

Secretary:

Sarah Keim

Treasurer:

Neil Perkins

Members-at-Large:

Anne Marie Jukic

Michael Kramer

Claire Margerison

Nicole Talge

**International
Representative:**

Natasha Nassar

Student Representative:

Krista Wollny

Administrator:

Sue Bevan

SPER Winter Newsletter

President's Corner

At this point in February, it is roughly 4 months from the SPER's 33rd Annual Meeting in Boston, and 8 months since last year's meeting in Minneapolis. I want to share updates on: 1) what the SPER executive committee has been working on; 2) planning for the Annual Meeting in Boston; and, 3) upcoming events.



(1) Mid-year SPER activities

As part of efforts to increase opportunities for involvement and participation with SPER – both during the year as well as at the annual meeting – existing and newly created SPER committees have been active [<https://sper.org/committees/>]. The *Communications Committee*, chaired by Nicole Talge, has been active with email, social media, and newsletters like this one, to spread news about SPER and provide opportunities for communication with the membership. The *Digital Engagement Committee*, chaired by Anne Marie Jukic, has organized several excellent webinars already, with several more planned. Attendance at the webinars has been high, and we hope you are enjoying these presentations. The *Outreach Committee*, chaired by Claire Margerison, has been working on efforts to provide wider opportunities for participation. In particular, the committee has been busy overseeing efforts toward Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and has several initiatives in place to make all members feel welcome at the meeting in Boston. The *Student and Post-doc Working Group*, chaired by Krista Wollny and supported by last year's Student Representative, Stephanie Leonard, has been busy planning various activities for student involvement with the Society, including a morning roundtable session and social event at the meeting in Boston. All four of these groups continue to welcome volunteers to get involved; for more information about the committees check out this page on our website:

<https://sper.org/committees/>.

(2) SPER's 33rd Annual Meeting - Boston 2020

Preparation for the annual meeting is underway, and SPER 2020 in Boston promises to be an exciting – and big – meeting. We received 333 abstract submissions – the largest number we've received to date. Reviews of the abstracts are underway – a big thank you to all of our abstract reviewers. The meeting continues the trend of providing more opportunities for participation, including the planning of the meeting through service on the Program Committee, who are acknowledged elsewhere in the newsletter, and includes students, postdocs, faculty, and past presidents of SPER. I look forward to continue work with this group planning an exciting agenda for SPER 2020! An outline for the meeting is posted on our website, and we will make additional information/details about the meeting available as planning continues.

The program for SPER 2020 includes a combination of plenary sessions and parallel sessions on both days of the meeting – Monday, June 15 and Tuesday, June 16. Attendees will face some difficult decisions about which sessions to attend, but we are excited about the opportunity for greater member involvement and to present more exciting research, as a result. Included in this meeting format and added content are 7 symposia proposed by members, which cover a range of topics, and promise to add substantially to the scientific program. Matt Gillman, Director of the Environmental Influences on Child Health Outcomes Program, and a leader in life course epidemiologic research, will deliver the keynote address. SPER 2020 will open with a great Advanced Methods Workshop. Sebastien Haneuse and Harrison Reeder will present “Semi-competing risks” (for more information: <https://sper.org/annual-meeting-2/advanced-methods-workshop/>). Thanks to Krista Wollny, SPER's Student Representative, for having coordinated this Workshop. Thanks, also, to Past Student Representative, Stephanie Leonard, and Enrique Schisterman for helping plan the Workshop. It is hard to believe, but it has been 15 years since Enrique organized the first Advanced Methods Workshop at the 2006 Meeting in Seattle!

Please note the upcoming deadline of March 6th (at 1PM Eastern) for SPER's Mentoring, Rising Star, and Student Prize Paper Awards. More information about the awards, submission material and requirements, and eligibility can be found on our website at <https://sper.org/sper-awards/>.

(3) Upcoming events

Elections: as described in more detail elsewhere in the newsletter, there are 5 positions on the executive committee that will be open for election this spring, including President, Treasurer, Member-at-Large, International Representative, and Student Representative. We are actively soliciting candidates for these positions. Please contact us if you have questions about the positions or process.

Bylaws: we made some minor revisions to the SPER Bylaws in 2012 when the International Liaison was voted on to be officially added to the executive committee. However, our bylaws are largely

unchanged from when they were created early in the Society's time. We are currently working on a proposal for modifications to the bylaws for the sake of updates (e.g., eliminating reference to mailed ballots!) See our newsletter archive to read about the days when EC members spent time opening envelopes to tally votes) and good governance practices. As required by our current bylaws, this proposal will be posted along with the election to be voted on by the membership. Work on bylaws is not particularly exciting *per se*, but nevertheless, important for the well-being of the Society. I welcome questions or input about the changes we are working on.

Remember to check the website and follow our Twitter account @SPER_news to stay up-to-date with the organization. We are always happy for feedback and suggestions, so if you have ideas for how improve our organization, questions, or concerns, please feel free to contact me (bwhitcom@umass.edu) or other members of the executive committee (<https://sper.org/about-sper-2/executive-committee/>). And, thanks to all for submitting abstracts and symposia proposals, serving on committees, and/or volunteering to review abstracts and other submissions. It is great to see so many people involved with the society, and very much appreciated!

Lastly – a reminder to be sure you've renewed your membership for 2020 and to book your room at the conference hotel before it fills up.

Happy New Year!

Brian Whitcomb

SPER President, 2019-2020

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Thank you to the 2020 Annual Meeting Program Committee!

Jennifer Allsworth, University of Missouri-Kansas City
Helen Chin, NIEHS
Valery Danilack, Brown University
Leslie Farland, University of Arizona
Kelly Ferguson, NIEHS
Sonia Grandi, McGill University
Anne Marie Jukic, NIEHS
Russ Kirby, University of South Florida
Mark Klebanoff, Nationwide Children's Hospital

Rebecca Lacey, University College London
Kimberly McKee, University of Michigan
Pauline Mendola, NICHD
Susanna Mitro, Harvard School of Public Health
Natasha Nassar, University of Sydney
Emily Oken, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care
Robert Platt, McGill University
Elizabeth Widen, University of Texas at Austin
Krista Wollny, University of Calgary

Save the Date: 2020 SPER Annual Meeting

June 15-16, 2020

Boston, Massachusetts

Registration Information

Advanced Methods Workshop:

Register now for the 2020 SPER Advanced Methods Workshop, “Semi-competing risks: Accounting for death as a competing risk in public health research when the outcome of interest is non-terminal,” led by Sebastien Haneuse, Ph.D. and Harrison Reeder from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

This workshop will immediately precede the SPER Annual Meeting, from 12:00-2:30 pm

on Monday, June 15. To learn more about the Advanced Methods Workshop, please [click here](#).



Annual Meeting:

We are thrilled to continue (and extend!) several initiatives that were introduced at the annual meeting last year. These include:

- an extended program,
- concurrent contributed sessions (member-initiated),
- a symposium (member-initiated)

Registration fees for the Annual Meeting include admission to all sessions (plenary and poster), continental breakfast & box lunch, and refreshment breaks. **The annual meeting will begin following the conclusion of the Advanced Methods workshop at 3:00 pm on Monday, June 15.**

[Click here](#) to register for the Advanced Methods Workshop and the Annual Meeting! The deadline for early registration is **Monday, May 11**. Please join us!

Accommodations

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Sheraton Boston Hotel, the venue for our 2020 Annual Meeting. [Click here](#) to book your special-rate accommodations!

Fun Run 5K

Experience the history and beauty of downtown Boston by participating in our annual Fun Run! This SPER and SER-sponsored event will take place on the morning of Wednesday, June 17. If you are interested in registering for this event, please [click here](#). Hope to see you there!



2019 Award Nominations

Student Prize Paper Award (due Fri, March 6 at 1 pm ET)

SPER requests manuscript submissions for consideration for the annual Student Prize Paper Award. This competition is open to graduate and medical students, postdoctoral fellows, medical residents, research trainees, and clinical fellows interested in reproductive, perinatal, and pediatric epidemiology. The winner of the award will present the selected paper at the SPER Annual Meeting. An award of \$500 plus expenses for travel, two days lodging, and SPER Annual Meeting registration will be given to the author of the selected paper.

[Click here](#) for information on eligibility, how to submit applications, and how the applications will be evaluated.

Mentoring Award (due Fri, March 6 at 1 PM ET)

The SPER Mentoring Award recognizes the importance of dedicated and skilled mentors in the development of reproductive, pediatric, and perinatal epidemiologists at all levels. The nominees will be evaluated based on proficiency in mentoring skills, dedication to mentoring, and attention to advisee development technically, professionally, and personally in the field. Nominees should demonstrate effective people skills, motivate and inspire their mentees to excel, and should serve as a role model, teaching and demonstrating high standards of performance and integrity. A \$500 prize is awarded.

[Click here](#) for information on eligibility, how to submit applications, and how the applications will be evaluated.

Rising Star Award (due Fri, March 6 at 1 pm ET)

This award is to recognize early to mid-career investigators whose achievements and potential set them on a trajectory to become research leaders in the field of reproductive, perinatal, and pediatric epidemiology. Overall research contributors thus far, including publications, presentations, and influence on the field will be considered. An additional important consideration is the candidate's likely future role, as their career continues to evolve. SPER registration will be covered for the winner and a \$500 prize is awarded.

[Click here](#) for information on eligibility, how to submit applications, and how the applications will be evaluated.

Student/Trainee Poster Awards (Annual Meeting)

We are pleased to announce that the 5th Annual Student/Trainee Poster Awards will take place the 2019 Annual Meeting. Anyone who was a student or trainee when he or she completed the presented work is eligible (i.e., undergraduates, graduate or medical students; postdoctoral fellows; medical residents; research trainees; or clinical fellows). There will be 1 winner and 1 honorable mention per poster session.

Poster Judges Needed!

Get to know the next generation of pediatric and perinatal epidemiologists by volunteering to serve as a poster judge at the upcoming annual meeting! Your involvement would entail visiting up to five presentations during one of the two scheduled poster sessions. If you are able to help, please contact Krista Wollny (SPER Student Representative) at krista.wollny@ucalgary.ca. Thank you!

Coming Soon! Call for Executive Committee Nominations

Nominations will be sought soon for **President** (2020-2023), **Treasurer** (2020-2023) one **Member-at-Large** (2019-2024), **International Representative** (2020-2023), and **SPER Student Representative** (2020-2021). All terms will begin at the close of the June 2020 Annual Meeting.

Members of SPER are encouraged to nominate themselves or any other member of SPER to run for these positions, and help our Society achieve continued success through this opportunity for professional service.

Stay tuned for additional details about the upcoming election -- including position descriptions and information on how to nominate yourself or your colleagues!

Join a Committee! Opportunities for member involvement

Are you interested in getting more involved in SPER? Consider joining one of our 4 standing committees! They include the:

- **Communications Committee**, working to shape our social media presence and policy (as well as the newsletters!);
- **Outreach Committee**, spearheading efforts to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Society;

- **Digital Engagement Committee**, coordinating our online seminar series throughout the year (including two upcoming events in October);
- **Student and Postdoc Working Group**, planning student-focused events and promote student engagement with the Society.

[Click here](#) for our “Committees” page on the SPER website where you can find more information about these groups as well as links to join them!

Membership Renewal Time!

It's time to renew your SPER membership for 2020! Benefits include discounted registration rates for the annual meeting; access to the online jobs and fellowships board; participation in the electronic mailing list; subscription to *Paediatric and Perinatal Epidemiology* – and more! If you would like to join SPER (or know a colleague who does), [click here](#) to complete the membership application.

Looking for a job or fellowship? Recruiting for a position?

Explore the SPER jobs & fellowships bank! It currently has 8 listings, which include advertisements for postdoctoral fellowships and professorships. Check back regularly for timely access to these opportunities!

If you are looking to hire an epidemiologist with expertise in perinatal and/or pediatric health and would like to advertise your position on the SPER website, please [click here](#) to submit your contribution.

Follow SPER!

Keep a look out for our Winter newsletter months from now, and in the meantime, check our website or follow us on Twitter/Facebook for society updates!



@SPER_News



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