Tran T. Phu-Duyen

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Education

08/2024 – current **PhD of Health Services Research (HSR) (concentration: Health Policy)**, *College of Public Health, George Mason University, USA.*
Courses completed: Philosophy of Science and Research Method, Health Care Databases, Advanced Stats in HSR, Data Mining in Healthcare, Causal Inference in HSR, Systematic Literature Review & Meta-Analysis for HSR, Advanced Health Economics, Advanced Empirical Methods in Health Policy Research, Social and Ecological Determinants of Health, Health Informatics Resesearch, Independent Study
Dissertation topic: Social Insurance, Retirement Security, and (Economic) Well-being. Research examining how U.S. social insurance policies affect retirement behavior, financial well-being, and health outcomes among older adults.
Committee members: Priyanka Anand (GMU), Sita Slavov (GMU, NBER), Alison Cuellar (GMU, NBER)

2023 – 2024 **Master of Public Policy (MPP)**, *University of Auckland, New Zealand*
Graduated with First Class Honours, Funded by Manaaki New Zealand Scholarship

2013 – 2017 **Bachelor Degree in Economics**, *University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam*
Valedictorian of the Planning and Investment Economics Class

Publications

Peer-reviewed Vo, T.T., **Phu-Duyen, T.T**, Nguyen, X.D, Truong, T.H. (2025). Trade liberalization and nutrition transition: how export influences households' macronutrient consumption in Vietnam. *Food Security*, https://doi.org/10.1007/s12571-025-01555-3

Vo, T.T., **Phu-Duyen, T.T**. (2023). Mental health around retirement: evidence of Ashenfelter's dip. *BMC Global Health Research and Policy*, 8(35). https://doi.org/10.1186/s41256-023-00320-3

Nguyen, T. H., Nguyen, V. D., **Tran, T.P.D.**, & Nguyen., V. V. (2018). Smart cities analysis framework: Case study of Southeast provinces (Vietnamese). *Journal of Asian Business and Economic Studies*, 29(6), 05–26, http://jabes.ueh.edu.vn/Home/SearchArticle?article_Id=f6690858-1c9a-464c-9ca3-20753e6fcdd1

Technical report **Phu-Duyen, T.**. (2023). Equitable Rates Relief: A comprehensive analysis of Rates Rebates, Postponement, and Remissions in New Zealand, focusing on seniors and Māori. *Prepared for Te Ara Ahunga Ora/Retirement Commission New Zealand (under older people's policy).* https://assets.retirement.govt.nz/public/Uploads/Research/2023/Duyen-Tran_TAAO_Equitable-Rates-Relief.pdf

Working Papers

Does Information Influence the Choice between Social Security Disability and Early Retirement? (Priyanka Anand, Tran T. Phu-Duyen, Sita Slavov)

Mental Health Effects of Raising Retirement Age in the US: Quasi-Experimental Evidence from HRS Data, 1994-2020 (Tran T. Phu-Duyen)

Retirement Financing and Health Outcomes Among Older Australians: How Saving for Retirement Also Saves Lives (Tran T. Phu-Duyen, Paula Lorgelly, Mohammad Salimifar)

Work in Progress

ACA Medicare Part D Coverage Gap Discounts and Labor Supply Among Older Americans (Tran T. Phu-Duyen) [Job market paper]

Employment

08/2024 – current **Graduate Research Assistant**, *Department of Health Administration and Policy*, College of Public Health, George Mason University
Advisor: Priyanka Anand
Tasks: analyzing data, perform ML model predictions, conducting literature review, writing manuscripts, and preparing presentation materials.

2/2024 – 7/2024 **Teaching Assistant**, *Faculty of Arts*, University of Auckland, New Zealand
Classes: SOCIOL 208 - Economy and Society, POLICY 743 - Economics, Budgets and Bureaucrats
Tasks: marking assignments, answering students' inquiries.

7/2023 – 11/2023 **Policy Research Officer (internship)**, *Retirement Commission*, Central Government, New Zealand
Tasks: Research independently on rates (tax) relief schemes in New Zealand, create a final report on the institution's website.

11/2019 – 12/2022 **Research Associate/Project Manager**, *Health and Agricultural Policy Research Institute (HAPRI), University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City (UEH)*
Tasks: Conduct Health Economics research, write grant proposals, organize academic conferences, coordinate international research projects, oversee media campaigns, manage a team of ten researchers.

Presentations

2025 AUPHA Annual Meeting (Columbus, OH), 14th Australasian Workshop on Econometrics and Health Economics (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), iHEA Congress (Bali, Indonesia), APHA Annual Meeting (Washington D.C.), SEA Annual Meeting (Tampa, FL)

Leadership & Service

04/2026 – Present **Vice President**, AcademyHealth Student Chapter at George Mason University

04/2026 – Present **Organizer/Lead**, PhD Health Service Research Colloquium, Department of Health Administration and Policy, George Mason University

7/2023 – 7/2024 **Postgraduate Mentor**, Student Development and Engagement, Faculty of Arts, University of Auckland

Research Grants

2023 – 2025 **Project**: The impact of local healthcare quality on domestic immigration decision: the case of Vietnam. **Sponsor**: Ministry of Education and Training, Vietnam. **Amount**: $16,411. **Role**: Key researcher

2020 – 2023 **Project**: The impacts of trade liberalization on intra-household allocation and nutrition transition in Vietnam. **Sponsor**: National Foundation for Science and Technology Development (NAFOSTED), Vietnam. **Amount**: $30,633. **Role**: Key researcher

Awards and Honors

2025 Runner-up, AUPHA Doctoral Essay Contest. *Essay: Mental Health Effects of Raising Full Retirement Age in the US: Quasi-experimental Evidence from HRS Data, 1994-2020*

2025 Leader of Tomorrow (top 100 global essay competition), 54th St. Gallen Symposium, Switzerland. *Essay*: *Pawn Promotion in the Global Endgame: Aging Population and the Risks of Neglecting Elderly Care for Power in Developing Nations*

Skills

Research Causal inference, econometrics, impact evaluation, systematic review, questionnaire/survey/interview design

Programming Stata, Python, R, SQL

Professional Associations

2026 – present AcademyHealth

2025 – present American Public Health Association (APHA)

2024 – present International Health Economics Association (IHEA)

2024 – present American Society of Health Economists (ASHEcon)

2024 – present Association of University Programs in Health Administration (AUPHA)

Other training

01/2023 Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) Public Policy Seminar on Southeast Asia's economic integration amid global turbulence, at YSEALI Academy, Fulbright University Vietnam.

08/2022 **International Development Studies** (online, 15-credit Master course), University of Oslo (UiO) Summer School, Norway. Funded by UiO summer scholarship.

03/2022 **Management of Development Projects and Programmes** (online, funded by Orange Knowledge Programmes (OKP) scholarship, MDF Training & Consultancy, the Netherlands.

Last updated: May 18, 2026

Explanation of Interest
NBER Mentoring Program on Aging and Health Economics Research

Tran T. Phu-Duyen

I am a rising third-year PhD student in Health Services Research. Broadly, my research examines how social insurance programs influence the economic and health well-being of older adults. My job-market paper studies the impact of the Affordable Care Act (ACA)'s gradual elimination of the Medicare Part D coverage gap on retirement timing and labor supply among adults aged 62 and older. I examine whether the policy operates through financial channels, by reducing out-of-pocket prescription drug costs, and through health channels, by improving medication access and health outcomes. I use HRS-CMS LINKAGE data for this paper. My second dissertation paper examines how information affects benefit-claiming behavior among older Americans, using HRS linked to SSA data. I employ Social Security statement receipts as an information shock to study whether increased knowledge about retirement and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits changes the likelihood of applying for SSDI and/or early retirement benefits. This paper is being prepared for journal submission. Across these projects, I use quasi-experimental methods. For my third paper, which is in its infancy, I am exploring research questions related to long-term care for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. This summer, I plan to build a long-term care efficiency index and compare cross-country differences, using harmonized international aging datasets available through the Gateway to Global Aging Data.

I am interested in the mentoring program because I am currently at a critical stage of my doctoral training, where I am refining research designs and conducting preliminary analyses. As my department has only a few students and faculty working directly on my areas of interest, I would greatly benefit from guidance from NBER scholars specializing in aging, health economics, and social insurance research. In particular, I would value comments on my empirical designs, especially on refining identification strategies and improving causal inference in my job-market paper. Right now, the quasi-randomization relies on Low Income Subsidy (LIS) and non-LIS categories, with one affected by the ACA component related to Part D and the other not. However, I find it challenging to make the case that the treated and control groups are closely comparable, since they are essentially people in poverty and those who are not. This gap persists in the literature, and I would love to discuss it with my prospective mentors and peers in the program. More generally, I would also like to hear the mentors' thoughts on possible extensions to this paper, given their expertise in the field, so that the paper is strong enough to set me up for the job market in 2028. Besides, I would also appreciate guidance on refining my third dissertation paper and framing my dissertation as a coherent research agenda for the academic job market. Equally important, I am excited about the opportunity to build relationships with mentors and peers who share similar research interests.

Following the program, I plan to finalize and defend my dissertation proposal in December 2026, complete my dissertation in Fall 2027, and enter the academic job market thereafter. I hope the mentoring program will strengthen my dissertation and help me build long-term mentorship and professional networks within the aging and health economics research community.