Shu Xu, Ph.D.

Research Investigator
Demography of Aging, Disability and Care Program (DADC),
Survey Research Center (SRC),
Institute for Social Research (ISR)
University of Michigan
Affiliate: Michigan Center on the Demography of Aging (MiCDA),
Michigan Sensory Health and Aging Research Collaborative (Mi-SHARC),
and Center for Global Health Equity (CGHE)
shulixu@umich.edu

EDUCATION

2024 Ph.D. in Gerontology at the University of Massachusetts Boston
Concentration: Sensory health in later life; Healthy aging

2020 M.S. in Gerontology at the University of Massachusetts Boston

2016 M.A. in Chinese Literature & Linguistics at Remin University of China, China

2014 B.A. in Chinese Literature & Linguistics at Guangxi Normal University, China

AREAS OF SCHOLARSHIP

Sensory Health; Psychosocial Aspects of Aging; Mobility; Late-Life Wellbeing

EMPLOYMENT

10/1/2026—current
Research Investigator, Demography of Aging, Disability and Care Program, Survey Research Center, University of Michigan

6/1/2024—9/30/2026
Postdoctoral Fellow, with Dr. Joshua R. Ehrlich, Survey Research Center, University of Michigan

PUBLICATIONS

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

1. Wang, H., **Xu, S.** & Pei, Y. (2026). Childhood Speech Impairment and Dementia Risks among US Older Adults. *Journal of Language & Communication Disorders*, 61(4), e70274. https://doi.org/10.1111/1460-6984.70274

2. **Xu, S.**, Ehrlich, J., & De Lott, L. (2026). Visual Impairment and Driving in Older Adults: A Narrative Review. *Current Treatment Options in Neurology, 28(1), 11-11.* doi: 10.1007/s11940-026-00871-z

3. **Xu, S.,** Nguyen, M., Zhou, Y., Hu, M., Ehrlich, J., & De Lott, L. (2026). A Clinically Relevant Threshold of Impaired Contrast Sensitivity Among Older U.S. Adults. *JAMA Ophthalmology, 144(2), 121-128.* doi:10.1001/jamaophthalmol.2026.1570

4. Su, YJ., Alberth, A., Rataj, A., Stam, E., Stokes, J., & **Xu, S**. (2026). Chronic Diseases, Self-Rated Health, and Planned Retirement Age: The Moderating Role of Race and Ethnicity. *Research on Aging, 01640275261441521.*

5. **Xu, S.,** Clarke, P., Sun, M., & Ehrlich, J. (2025). The role of home environment hazards shaping visual impairment and falls among older adults. *JAMA Ophthalmology.* https://doi.org/10.1001/jamaophthalmol.2025.5057

6. Yuan, Y., Dube, C. E., **Xu, S.**, Lim, E., Qu, S., McPhillips, E., & Lapane, K. L. (2025). Exploring Chinese family caregivers' experience as they support loved ones with dementia transitioning into nursing homes: a qualitative study. *Research on Aging.* https://doi.org/10.1177/01640275251372074

7. **Xu, S.**, Burr, J. A., Song, Q., & Ehrlich, J. R. (2025). Sensory Difficulty, Social and Physical Activity, and Dementia Risk Among Older Adults. *Journal of Aging and Health*. https://doi.org/10.1177/08982643251364364

8. **Xu, S.,** Clarke, P., De Lott, L., Nguyen, M., & Ehrlich, J. (2025) Driving status, avoidance, and visual impairment among older adults in the United States. *Journal of Transport and Health.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2025.102036

9. **Xu, S.,** Burr, J., Song, Q., & Ehrlich, J. (2025). Visual difficulty, recurrent falls, and mortality risk among older adults. *Innovation in Aging.* https://doi.org/10.1093/geroni/igaf016

10. Prasad, A., Anthony, N., Jesdale, W., Nielsen, N., Naqvi, S., **Xu, S.,** Lim, E., Dube, C., Mack, D., & Lapane, K. (2025). Skin Ulcer Development and Change in Social Engagement among Nursing Home Residents. *Journal of the American Medical Directors Association*, *26(4), 105473.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jamda.2024.105473

11. **Xu, S.** (2024). Death of family members and self-perceptions of aging among middle-age and older adults. *Research on Aging,* 47(3-4), 181-192. https://doi.org/10.1177/01640275241306702

12. Yuan, Y., Dube, C. E., **Xu, S.**, Lim, E., Qu, S., McPhillips, E., & Lapane, K. L. (2024). Exploring the social and cultural aspects of Chinese family caregivers' experience as they support loved ones with dementia transitioning into nursing homes: a qualitative study protocol. *BMJ Open*, 14(8), e085731. https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2024-085731

13. **Xu, S.**, Su, Y., Ehrlich, J., & Song, Q. (2024). Associations Between Self-Reported Visual Difficulty, Age of Onset, and Cognitive Function Trajectories Among Chinese Older Adults. *Journal of Aging and Health, 8982643241247251. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1177/08982643241247251*

14. **Xu, S.,** Jesdale, W., Nielsen, N., McPhillips, E., Dube, C., & Lapane, K. (2024) Social engagement, sensory impairment, and cognitive impairment among nursing home residents. *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics,* 122, 105397. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.archger.2024.105397

15. Silverstein, N. M., Montepare, J. M., Whitbourne, S. K., Lin, Y., & **Xu, S.** (2024) Evidence-based strategies for creating age-inclusive campuses. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education.* https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000575

16. **Xu, S.,** Wang, H., Song, Q., & Burr, J. (2023). Sensory impairment and depressive symptoms in later life during the COVID-19 pandemic: The role of perceived lack of social contact. *Aging and Mental Health.* http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13607863.2023.2242290

17. Lim, E., Nielsen, N.,... **Xu, S.,** McPhillips, E., & Lapane, K. (2023) Health effects of social connectedness in older adults living in congregate long-term care setting: A systematic review of quantitative and qualitative evidence. *International Journal of Older People Nursing*. e12577. https://doi.org/10.1111/opn.12577

18. Chiang, H., Lee, P., Chen, Y., Lin, C., **Xu, S.**, Lin, Y., Lin, Y., Su, Y., Shia, B., Chang Chien, W., & Ho, C. (2022). Low cardiorespiratory fitness, muscular fitness, and flexibility are associated with body fat distribution and obesity risk using bioelectrical impedance in Taiwanese adults. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health. 19*(14), 8858. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19148858

19. Ho, C., Lee, P., **Xu, S.**, Hung, C., Su, Y., Lin, C., Wu, M., & Chen, Y. (2022). Associations between cigarette smoking status and health-related physical fitness performance in male Taiwanese adults. *Frontiers in Public Health. 10:*880572. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2022.880572

20. Jansen, T., Man Lee, C., **Xu, S.**, Silverstein, N. M., & Dugan, E. (2022). The town-level prevalence of chronic lung conditions and death From COVID-19 among older adults in Connecticut and Rhode Island. *Preventing Chronic Disease*, *19*, E34. https://doi.org/10.5888/pcd19.210421

ARTICLES UNDER REVIEW

Xu, S., Reddy, K., Hu, M., Thomas, J., Gross, A., & Ehrlich, J. Association Between Visual Function and General Cognitive Performance in Older U.S. Medicare Beneficiaries: A Longitudinal Population Analysis (*under review*)

Reddy, K., **Xu, S.**, Zhou, Y., Hu, M., De Lott, L., Ehrlich, J. & Elam, A. Relationship of Eye Care Access to Vision Impairment among Older Adults in the United States (*under review*)

BOOK CHAPTERS, REPORTS, & OTHER PUBLIC WORKS

1. Burr, J., Pheiffer, C., & **Xu, S.** Healthcare Service Utilization in Later Life. In T. Hill, T. Chandola, & G. Garcia-Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of Social Epidemiology*. De Gruyter (2025).

2. Dugan E, Silverstein NM, Lee CM, Jansen T, **Xu S,** & Su YJ. (2023). *The 2023 Wyoming Healthy Aging Data Report.* Report prepared by the Healthy Aging Data Report Lab in Gerontology Institute of the University of Massachusetts Boston.

3. Dugan E, Silverstein N, Lee CM, Jansen T, **Xu S,** & Su YJ. (2023). *The 2023 Mississippi Healthy Aging Data Report.* Report prepared by the Healthy Aging Data Report Lab in the Gerontology Institute of the University of Massachusetts Boston. Boston, MA.

PRESS COVERAGE

1. Fernanda Pires, *University of Michigan News* (2026), Faded letters, early warnings: A new clue for aging eyes. https://news.umich.edu/faded-letters-early-warnings-a-new-clue-for-aging-eyes/

2. Fernanda Pires, *University of Michigan News* (2025), Poor vision plus unsafe homes drive higher fall risk in seniors. https://news.umich.edu/poor-vision-plus-unsafe-homes-drive-higher-fall-risk-in-seniors/

3. WYPL-FM 89.3, *Eye on Vision* (2025): Vision Loss and Falls Leading To Greater Mortality Risk. https://eyeonvision.blogspot.com/2025/09/vision-loss-and-falls-leading-to.html

4. Fernanda Pires, *University of Michigan News* (2025), Seeing better, living longer: Eye care and fall prevention may extend lifespan in older adults https://news.umich.edu/seeing-better-living-longer-eye-care-and-fall-prevention-may-extend-lifespan-in-older-adults/

5. Fernanda Pires, *University of Michigan News* (2025), Off the road: 1 in 4 seniors quit driving due to sight issues. https://news.umich.edu/off-the-road-1-in-4-seniors-quit-driving-due-to-sight-issues/#:~:text=Older%20drivers%20with%20vision%20impairment,University%20of%20Michigan%20study%20finds; https://isr.umich.edu/news-events/news-releases/off-the-road-1-in-4-seniors-quit-driving-due-to-sight-issues/

6. Population Reference Bureau (2024), *Today's Research on Aging*, issue 43: Safer but Alone: How COVID-19 Protections Affected Older Adults' Mental Health. https://www.prb.org/resources/todays-research-on-aging-how-covid-19-protections-affected-older-adults-mental-health/

7. Watts, L. (2024, March 12), *The Gerontology Institute Blog*, Study: Older adults with visual and/or hearing impairments demonstrated resilience during pandemic. https://blogs.umb.edu/gerontologyinstitute/2024/03/12/study-older-adults-with-visual-and-or-hearing-impairments-demonstrated-resilience-during-pandemic/

RESEARCH GRANTS

2026-2028 — National Institute on Aging (NIA), Demography and Economics of Aging Coordinating Center (DECC) Cross-Center Pilot Grant (U24AG097134)
- *Sensory impairment, Psychosocial Factors, and Cognitive Trajectories in Older Adults*
- $64,102; Role: MPI, with Laura Zahodne

2025-2027 — National Institute on Aging (NIA), Michigan Center on the Demography of Aging (MiCDA) Pilot Grant (P30AG012846)
- *Visual impairment and valued social activity in older U.S. adults*
- $40,000; Role: PI

2026-2027 — Institution for Social Research (ISR) Next Generation: A. Regula Herzog Young Investigators Award
- Toward a Typology of Homebound Status Among Older Adults with Sensory Impairment
- $11,000; Role: PI

2026-2027 — National Institute on Aging (NIA), The Center to Accelerate Population Research in Alzheimer's (CAPRA) Pilot Project (Year 7)
- *The Impact of Hearing and Vision Impairment on Care Needs, LTSS Use, and Caregiver Well-Being in Dementia*
- $40,000; Role: PI
- Awarded; declined prior to activation due to having another P30 pilot award ongoing.

AWARDS, HONORS

2025 — *Coordinating Center Professional Development Funds*, The Centers on the Demography and Economics of Aging Coordinating Center (CC), University of Michigan ($2,000)

2024 — *Institute for Social Research (ISR) PSC Research Award*, Population Studies Center, University of Michigan ($750)

2024	*UMPDA Travel Award*, University of Michigan
2024	*Gerontology Dissertation Book Award*, Department of Gerontology, University of Massachusetts Boston
2022	*Dean's Office Student Success (DOSS) Travel Grant*, McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies, University of Massachusetts Boston
2021-2024	*Health Science Section Travel Award*, Gerontological Society of America (GSA)
2021	*Dean's Office for Student Support Summer Enrichment Award*, McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies, University of Massachusetts Boston ($3,000)
2019	*Scholarly Support Fund*, Graduate Employee Organization, University of Massachusetts Boston
2019; 2023	*Professional Development Grant*, Graduate Student Organization, University of Massachusetts Boston

PRESENTATIONS

INVITED

1. **Xu, S.** (2025, Nov). Sensory Impairment in Later Life. Invited Speaker, PSC Brown Bags Series. Ann Arbor, MI.

2. **Xu, S.** (2025, Oct). The Central Role of Home Hazards in Shaping the Association of Visual Function and Falls Among Older Adults. Invited Speaker, the National Health and Aging Trends Study (NHATS) and the National Study of Caregiving (NSOC) 2025-2026 webinar series. Online.

3. **Xu, S.** (2024, Mar). Caring, Caregiving, Growing together: Living with dementia, Guest speaker, Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center. Boston, MA.

4. **Xu, S.** (2023, Oct). Aging and Demographic Change. Guest speaker, University of Massachusetts Boston. Boston, MA.

5. **Xu, S.** (2019, Dec; 2020, Dec; 2021, May; 2022, May; 2023, May). Aging in China. Guest lecturer, GR160 Global Aging, University of Massachusetts Boston. Boston, MA.

6. **Xu, S.** (2023, Jan) Sensory impairment during COVID-19. Guest speaker, SENSE NETWORK. Michigan Center on the Demography of Aging.

7. **Xu, S.** (2021, Aug) The Connecticut Association of Senior Center Personnel (CASCP), *Healthy Aging Data Report*, Training for Senior Centers, AARP Webinar.

CONFERENCES

1. **Xu, S.**, Nagarajan, N., Sun, M. J., & Ehrlich, J. R. (2026, May). High Fall Risk, Low Safety Adoption: The Unmet Need for Grab Bars Among Older Adults with Visual Impairment. ARVO Presentation. May. Denver, CO.

2. **Xu, S.,** Deal, J. A. & Ehrlich, J. R. (2025, Nov). Sensory Loss and Mobility in Aging: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Challenges and Interventions. GSA Symposium Chair. Boston, MA.

3. Thomas, J., **Xu, S.,** & Ehrlich, J. R. (2025, Nov). Exploring the Longitudinal Association Between Visual Function and Memory Performance Among Older Adults. GSA Presentation. Boston, MA.

4. Sun, M., **Xu, S.,** Clarke, P., Mumby, R. A., & Ehrlich, J. R. (2025, May). Interaction of Vision and Environment on Recurrent Falls. ARVO Presentation. May. Salt Lake City, UT.

5. **Xu, S.** (2025, April). CAREGIVER BURDEN AMONG CAREGIVERS OF OLDER ADULTS WITH SENSORY DIFFICULTIES. PAA Presentation. Washington, DC.

6. **Xu, S**. & Wang, H. (2024, Nov). Visual impairment and valued social activities among older adults. GSA Presentation. Seattle, WA.

7. Yuan, Y., Dube, C. E., **Xu, S.**, Lim, E., Qu, S., McPhillips, E., & Lapane, K. L. (2024, Nov). Chinese Family Caregivers' Experience Supporting Family Members With Dementia Transitioning Into US Nursing Homes. GSA Presentation. Seattle, WA.

8. Wang, H., **Xu, S**. & Pei, Y. (2024, Nov). Childhood Speech Impairment and Dementia Risks among US Older Adults. GSA Presentation. Seattle, WA.

9. **Xu, S**. & Wang, H. (2024, April). Onset age of visual difficulty and mental health among Chinese older adults. PAA Presentation. Columbus, OH.

10. **Xu, S.**, Huang, A., Zhou, Y., Ehrlich, J. Concurrent vision and hearing impairments, social isolation, depression, and anxiety: Findings from the NHATS (2023, Nov). GSA presentation. Tampa, FL.

11. Lin, Y. & **Xu, S.** (2023, Nov). Study methodology and sample selection to develop age-inclusive strategies. GSA presentation. Tampa, FL.

12. Fassi, J., & **Xu, S.** Creative activities and cognition among older adults: Does education moderate the benefits of creative activities? (2023, Nov). GSA presentation. Tampa, FL.

13. Su, Y., Jansen, T., Lee, C., **Xu, S.**, Silverstein, N., & Dugan, E. (2023). Rates of vision and hearing impairment related to cognitive difficulties among older adults in Mississippi Counties: Findings from the Healthy Aging Data Reports. Mississippi First Healthy Aging Summit. Jackson, MS. https://mpha2.wildapricot.org/event-5234115

14. Su, Y., **Xu, S.,** & Avila, J. (2023, May) The effect of smoking, drinking, and sleeping behavior on the cognitive function of U.S. older adult. AGS presentation. Long Beach, CA.

15. Lim, E., Nielsen, N., ... **Xu, S.,** McPhillips, E., & Lapane, K. (2023, May) Health effects of social connectedness in older adults living in congregate long-term care setting: a systematic review of quantitative and qualitative evidence. AGS presentation. Long Beach, CA.

16. **Xu, S**., Song, Q., & Burr, J. (2022, Nov) Vision difficulty and dementia among older Medicare beneficiaries. APHA presentation. Boston, MA.

17. **Xu, S.,** Lee, C., Su, Y., Jansen, T., Silverstein, N., & Dugan, E. (2022). Glaucoma, cataract, and emotional distress in New England: Findings from the Healthy Aging Data Reports. GSA presentation. Indianapolis, IN.

18. **Xu, S.,** & Su, Y. (2022). Sensory impairment, cognitive function, and depression among Chinese older adults. GSA presentation. Indianapolis, IN.

19. Jansen, T., Lee, C., **Xu, S.**, Su, Y., Silverstein, N. & Dugan, E. (2022). The association between chronic lung conditions and COVID-19 mortality among 65+ in Connecticut and Rhode Island. GSA presentation. Indianapolis, IN.

20. Jansen, T., Silverstein, N., Dugan, E., Lee, C., **Xu, S.** & Su, Y. (2022) Bridging silos: Evaluation of an innovative regional senior transportation service. GSA presentation. Indianapolis, IN.

21. **Xu, S.**, Wang, H., Song, Q. & Burr, J. (2022, April) Sensory impairment, social contact and depressive symptoms among older adults during the COVID-19 pandemic. PAA presentation. Atlanta, GA.

22. **Xu S.** (2021, Nov). The association between vision acuity, sleep duration, and physical activity among US adults aged 50 years and older. GSA presentation. Online.

23. **Xu, S**., Jansen, T., Lee, C. M., Karakida, M., Porell, F., Dugan, E., & Silverstein, N. (2021, Nov). Eye and visual health in New England: Findings from the Healthy Aging Data Reports. GSA presentation. Online.

24. Jansen, T., Lee, C. M., **Xu, S.**, Karakida, M., Porell, F., Silverstein, N., & Dugan, E. (2021, Nov). Older adult behavioral health issues in New England: Findings from the Healthy Aging Data Reports. GSA presentation. Online.

25. Karakida, M., Lee, C. M., Jansen, T., **Xu, S.**, Porell, F., Silverstein, N., & Dugan, E. (2021, Nov). Multimorbidity among diverse communities in New England: Findings from the Healthy Aging Data Reports. GSA presentation. Online.

26. Lee, C. M., Jansen, T., **Xu, S.**, Karakida, M., Porell, F., Silverstein, N., & Dugan, E. (2021). Spatial Distribution of COVID-19 and Comorbidities in New England. GSA presentation. Online.

27. **Xu S.** (2020, Nov). The association between recent family death and self-perceptions of aging among middle-aged and older adults. GSA presentation. Philadelphia, PA.

28. **Xu, S.**, Wang, H., & Connelly, C. (2019, Nov). Hearing impairment, depression, and the role of social activity among Chinese older adults. GSA presentation. Austin, TX.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2024 – 2026	Postdoctoral Research Fellow University of Michigan Funded by 1R01EY034479-01A1 (PI: J. R. Ehrlich, *Vision Impairment in the National Health and Aging Trends Study: Epidemiology, Social Determinants of Health, and Adverse Late Life Outcomes*)
2022 – 2024	Graduate Research Assistant University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School Research focus: *The Epidemiology of Gerontology* Funded by NIA R01 AG071692 (PI: K. Lapane, *Social Connectedness and Social Isolation in Nursing Home Residents*)
2022 – 2023	Graduate Research Assistant for Professor Nina Silverstein University of Massachusetts Boston Research projects: *Moving from Age-Friendly Principles to Practices in U.S. Higher Education* Funded by the Retirement Research Foundation
2021 – 2022	Graduate Research Assistant for Professor Elizabeth Dugan and Professor Nina Silverstein University of Massachusetts Boston Research projects: *MART COA Sub-Regional Validation Study* Funded by the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority
2019 – 2022	Graduate Research Assistant for Professor Elizabeth Dugan University of Massachusetts Boston

Research projects: *Healthy Aging Data Reports for Connecticut and Rhode Island*
Funded by the Tufts Health Plan Foundation

2019 Summer — Graduate Research Assistant for Professor Jeffrey Stokes
University of Massachusetts Boston
Research area: *Generational Family Patterns and Well-Being*

2014 – 2016 — Graduate Research Assistant for Professor Zhiying Lu
Remin University of China
Research projects:
• *Research on Unearthed Loulan Documents*
Funded by China National Social Science Key Project Fund
• *Study on Jieyong Edition, The Chinese Character Dictionaries Written by Japanese in History*
Funded by China National Social Science Key Project Fund

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2019 – 2021 — **Teaching Assistant**, University of Massachusetts Boston
GERON 160 Global Aging and the Life Course, Undergraduate
GERON 325 Applied Research in Aging, Undergraduate
GERON 640 Organizing & Managing Senior Transportation, Graduate
GERON 260 Health and Physical Aspects of Aging, Undergraduate

PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNIRY SERVICE

Conference Session Organizer

- *Sensory Impairment and Participation in Later Life: Social and Cognitive Dimensions. 2026 Gerontological Society of America (GSA). National Harbor, MD.*
- *Sensory Loss and Mobility in Aging: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Challenges and Interventions. 2025 Gerontological Society of America (GSA). Boston, MA.*

Editorial Board Member

- *Research on Aging*

Manuscript Reviewer (ad hoc)

- *Innovation in Aging; Journal of Transport and Health; The Gerontologist; The Journals of Gerontology, Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences; Journal of Applied Gerontology; Public Health; Journal of Affective Disorders; American Journal of Preventive Medicine; Social Science & Medicine; Disability and Health Journal; BMC Geriatrics; MBC Public Health*

Abstract Reviewer

- Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America (Health Sciences Section, 2021, 2022, 2025)

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING
(Application-based training programs with selective admission)

2026 July	**NIA D&E Research Brief Writing Workshop:** A two-day online workshop Instructor: Rachel Yavinsky (Population Reference Bureau (PRB))
2026 July	**PCODR Topical Workshop** (pragmatic trial INtegrated Services for Pain: Interventions to Reduce Pain Effectively): A two-day in person workshop Instructor: Lauren A. McCormack (UNC Chapel Hill), Laura K. Wagner (RTI International)
2026 May	**HCAP-XC 2026 Course:** A five-day in person training Instructor: Lindsay Kobayashi (University of Michigan) & Richard Jones (Brown University)
2025 July	**Latent Variable Models:** A five-day in person training Instructor: Matthew Diemer ICPSR Summer Program, University of Michigan
2022 August	**2022 NHATS & NSOC Workshop:** A three-day virtual workshop for data users The NHATS/NSOC team, University of Michigan

Software Skills

STATA, MPlus, R Studio, SAS, SPSS, NVivo