

CURRICULUM VITAE

Melanie J. Nicholls
School of Social Work
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EDUCATION

2022 Ph.D.	University of California, San Diego Joint Doctoral Program in Interdisciplinary Research on Substance Use
2016 MSW	University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign Social Work, concentration in Mental Health
2015 BA	Augustana College, Rock Island, IL Major Concentrations: Psychology, Sociology (Social Welfare) Minor Concentration: Women and Gender Studies

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Fall 2023-Present San Diego State University	Assistant Professor School of Social Work, College of Health and Human Services
Spring 2021 San Diego State University SW 381-Social Work Practice Skills: Micro	Instructor of Record School of Social Work, College of Health & Human Services
Fall 2020 San Diego State University SW 758: Motivational Interviewing	Teaching Assistant School of Social Work, College of Health & Human Services

COUNSELING POSITIONS

2022-Current LCSW	Mental Health Therapist Lifestance San Diego, CA
2021-2022 LCSW	Mental Health Therapist Family Health Centers of San Diego La Mesa, CA
2019-2020	Residential Staff BrightQuest Treatment Centers La Mesa, CA
2016-2018 LSW	Addiction Counselor Rosecrance Harrison Campus Rockford, IL

LICENSURE

2021	California Licensure, Clinical Social Work License Number LCSW104819
2018	Illinois Licensure, Clinical Social Work (Active 2018-2020)

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

REFEREED JOURNAL ARTICLES

1. Urada LA, Marienfeld C, Partch M, Garfein RS, Strathdee SA, **Nicholls MJ**, Weitensteiner A, Zuniga ML, Davidson P, Pitpitan E. "Bupe by the Book": A study protocol for a pilot randomized controlled trial of library-facilitated telehealth to increase buprenorphine treatment among unstably housed individuals. Preprint. *Res Sq.* 2024;rs.3.rs-5507141. Published 2024 Nov 25. doi:10.21203/rs.3.rs-5507141/v1
2. **Nicholls MJ**, Almeida A, Castello J, Doherty B, Gann D, Lenyoun K, Trillo-Park S, and Borquez A. The "MOUD Hub," a comprehensive online resource on Medications for Opioid Use Disorder: Protocol for a feasibility study assessing reach and user acceptability. *JMIR Research Protocols*. Accepted 8/27/2024.
3. Smith LR, Perez-Brumer A, **Nicholls M**, Harris J, Allen Q, Padilla A, Yates A, Samore E, Fowler R, Kuo I, Lake JE, Denis C, Goodman-Meza D, Davidson P, Shoptaw S, and El-Bassel N for the HPTN 094 study protocol team. A data-driven approach to implementing a complex intervention in local communities in the HPTN 094 study. *Implementation Science*, Accepted 04/22/2024.
4. Urada LA, **Nicholls MJ**, Faille SR. Homelessness at the San Diego Central Library: Assessing the potential role of social workers. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* **2022**, 19, 8449. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19148449>
5. **Nicholls MJ**, Urada LA. Homelessness and polysubstance use: A qualitative study on recovery and treatment access solutions around an urban library in Southern California, USA. *Health & Social Care in the Community*. **2021** May. DOI: 10.1111/hsc.13424
6. Gonzalez, C, Brouwer, KC, Reed E, **Nicholls MJ**, Kim J, Gonzalez-Zuniga PE, Gaeta-Rivera A, Urada LA. Women Trading Sex in a U.S.-Mexico Border City: A Qualitative Study of the Barriers and Facilitators to Finding Community and Voice. *Sexes* **2020**, 1, 1-18.

Manuscripts under Review

1. **Nicholls MJ**, Weitensteiner A, Urada LA, Smith, LR. (Submitted). California substance use treatment facility characteristics associated with offering medically assisted treatment for alcohol and opioid use disorders. *Substance Abuse Treatment, Prevention, and Policy*.
2. **Nicholls MJ**, Mittal ML, Urada LA. (Submitted). Perceptions of barriers and facilitators to implementing MOUD: A qualitative study guided by the EPIS Framework. *Health & Social Care in the Community*.

Manuscripts in Development

1. **Nicholls MJ**, Urada LA, Smith, LR. The research to practice gap: Exploring substance use providers' attitudes toward evidence-based practice.
2. **Nicholls MJ**. Understanding the needs of mental health practitioners who work with severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI) in San Diego County.
3. **Nicholls MJ**. Social work education and support of people with severe and persistent mental illness: A qualitative analysis of MSW student and MHP experiences

REFEREED PROCEEDINGS

1. **Nicholls, MJ**. Exploring the Barriers and Facilitators Mental Health Practitioners in San Diego County Face When Working with People with Severe and Persistent Mental Illness. 30th Annual Society of Social Work and Research (SSWR) Conference. January 14-18, 2026; Washington, DC. [Submitted]
2. Urada, L.A., Marienfeld, C., Partch, M., Garfein, R.S., Strathdee, S.A., Jump, J., Weitensteiner, A., **Nicholls, M.J.**, Davidson, P., Farris, W., Pitpitan, E. Library-delivered telehealth to increase buprenorphine treatment use among unstably housed patrons using opioids: Final results of a pilot randomized controlled trial. The College on Problems of Drug Dependence 87th Annual Scientific Meeting, June 14-18, 2025; New Orleans, Louisiana. Poster presentation.
3. **Nicholls, MJ.**, Smith, L., & Urada, L. California Substance Use Disorder Treatment Facility Characteristics Associated with Offering MOUD. [Poster Presentation]. 45th Annual Meeting & Scientific Sessions Society of Behavioral Medicine (SBM); March 13-16, 2024; Philadelphia, PA
4. **Nicholls, MJ.** & Urada, L. Perceptions of Barriers and Facilitators to Implementing MOUD: A Qualitative Study Guided by the EPIS Framework. [Oral Presentation] 28th Annual Society of Social Work and Research (SSWR) Conference. January 10-14, 2024. Washington, DC.

5. **Nicholls, MJ.** The Research to Practice Gap: Exploring the Attitudes Toward Evidence-Based Practice in Substance Use Providers. California State University Grad Slam Competition 2022. Hosted by California State University Bakersfield. May 6, 2022. Virtual Presentation. [Made it to the final round]
6. **Nicholls, MJ., & Urada, L.** The Research to Practice Gap: Exploring the Attitudes Toward Evidence-Based Practice in Substance Use Providers. [Oral presentation]. 36th Annual California State University Student Research Competition; April 29 & 30, 2022; San Francisco, CA. Virtual Presentation. [182 projects were presented state wide]
7. **Nicholls, MJ., & Urada, L.** The Research to Practice Gap: Exploring the Attitudes Toward Evidence-Based Practice in Substance Use Providers. [Oral presentation]. 15th Annual Student Research Symposium at San Diego State University; March 4 and 5, 2022; San Diego, CA.
8. **Nicholls, MJ. & Urada, L.** The Research to Practice Gap: A Quantitative Exploration of Health Inequity in Substance Use Treatment Centers in California. 26th Annual Society of Social Work and Research (SSWR) Conference. January 12-16, 2022. Washington, DC.
9. **Urada, L. & Nicholls, MJ.** Homelessness and Human Trafficking in Public Spaces: A 2019 Assessment at the San Diego Central Library. [Oral Presentation and Panel]. Human Trafficking-RADAR Research Conference 2021; October 15, 2021; Virtual Conference.
10. **Urada, L. & Nicholls, MJ.** Homelessness in public spaces: An assessment at a large public library in San Diego. [Oral Poster]. SSWR 25th Annual Conference-Social Work Science for Social Change; January 22, 2021; Virtual Conference.
11. **Nicholls, MJ. & Urada, L.** Substance use type and its association with perceived benefits to mobilizing among women in the sex trade. [Poster Presentation]. 12th International Women's and Children's Health and Gender (InWomen's) Group Conference; June 19, 2020; Hollywood, FL.
12. **Nicholls, MJ., & Urada, L.** Homelessness and Polysubstance Use: A Qualitative Study on Treatment Access Solutions. [Oral presentation]. 34th Annual California State University Student Research Competition; April 24 & 25, 2020; East Bay, CA.
13. **Nicholls, MJ., & Urada, L.** "Two people overdose a day here": A qualitative study exploring solutions for opioid overdoses at a public library" [Oral Presentation]. 41st Annual Meeting & Scientific Sessions Society of Behavioral Medicine (SBM); April 1-4, 2020; San Francisco, CA.
14. **Nicholls, MJ., & Urada, L.** Homelessness and Polysubstance Use: A Qualitative Study on Treatment Access Solutions. [Oral presentation]. 13th Annual Student Research Symposium at San Diego State University; February 29, 2020; San Diego, CA.

SCHOLARLY AWARDS

1. President's Award, \$500, qualified for the 36th Annual Student Research Competition for CSUs for **Nicholls, MJ.** The Research to Practice Gap: Exploring the Attitudes Toward Evidence-Based Practice in Substance Use Providers
2. 2022 College of Human and Health Services Student Travel Award-\$500
3. 2022 Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) Doctoral Student Travel Award for \$500.
4. Society of Behavioral Medicine Annual Meeting- Meritorious Abstract & Citation Awards, 2020 for **Nicholls, MJ., & Urada, L.** "Two people overdose a day here": A qualitative study exploring solutions for opioid overdoses at a public library"
5. InWomen's Conference Travel Award- \$700
6. Winter 2020 GSA Travel Grant from University of California San Diego-\$300
7. Student Success Fee Travel Grant from San Diego State University (SDSU)-\$1,000
8. President's Award, \$550, qualified for the 34th Annual Student Research Competition for CSUs

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

1. NSF I-Corps Hub: Desert and Pacific Region Program (**Applied on June 18, 2025**)
2. Discovery to Impact: A Workshop on Advancing Innovation from Campus to the World (April 11, 2025)
3. Bouvier Grant Group Minority Serving Institutions Partnership Program (2025)
4. Mental Health Leadership: Transformation through Innovation through the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, November 12-15, 2024. Received Certification.
5. The Grants Research and Enterprise Writing (GREW) Workshop, September 2021-October 2021
6. Betty Ford Center Medical Education Family Program Training, January 14-16, 2019

GRANTS SUBMITTED (FUNDED)

1. \$7,500-Understanding the Needs of Mental Health Practitioners Who Work with Severe and Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI) in San Diego County. SDSU Seed Grant, January 2024-December 2024
Role: PI (Melanie Nicholls)
2. \$431,650, NIDA (R21DA056805), “Bupe by the book: Developing and testing a tele-buprenorphine intervention in public libraries with unstably housed persons with opioid use disorder.” 7/15/22-6/30/25
PI: Lianne Urada, PhD
Role: Co-I (Melanie Nicholls)
3. \$10,000 (approx.), “Homelessness in public spaces: An assessment at a large public library in San Diego,” SDSU Social and Economic Vulnerabilities Initiative Research Fellowship, 1/1/19-6/1/19.
PI: Lianne Urada, PhD
Role: Co-I (Melanie Nicholls)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION

1. Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) Member
2. Society of Behavioral Medicine (SBM) Member
3. Psi Chi National Honor Society
4. Order of Omega National Honor Society
5. Mortar Board
6. Omicron Delta Kappa Honor Society
7. Alpha Kappa Delta (International Honor Society of Sociology)
8. Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society
9. Alpha Delta Mu (National Social Work Honor Society)

TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

Student Mentoring

2025-2026	Oli Chen (MSW, San Diego State University, School of Social Work) Thesis: TBD Role: Chair
2025-2026	Jordan Dixon (MSW, San Diego State University, School of Social Work) Publishable Paper: TBD Role: Chair
2024-2025	Ashley Wright (MSW/MPH, San Diego State University, School of Social Work) Thesis: Exploring Sense of Identity and Mental Health Outcomes Among Student-Athletes at SDSU: Implications for Integrated Support and Interventions Role: Chair
2024-2025	Jesus Serrato (MSW, San Diego State University, School of Social Work) Publishable Paper: The Associations Between Different Types of Substance Use and Homelessness among U.S. High School Youth: A Cross-sectional study using the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) dataset Role: Chair
2024-2025	Mayra Lam Yuen (MSW, San Diego State University, School of Social Work) Publishable Paper: Exploring the Associations Between Chronic Pain and Mental Health Among Unhoused Individuals using Opioids and other Substances: A Cross-Sectional Study in Public Libraries Role: Committee Member
2024-2025	William Farris (MSW, San Diego State University, School of Social Work) Publishable Paper: Exploring the Association Between Prior Treatment and Stages of Change in Substance Use Role: Committee Member
2024-2025	Andrea Ross (MSW/MPH, San Diego State University, School of Social Work) Thesis: Telehealth Buprenorphine Treatment at a Public Library for Opioid Use Disorder Among Individuals Who are Unhoused: A Qualitative Analysis of the Barriers to Treatment, Knowledge of Resources, and Importance of Social Support and Setting Role: Committee Member

Participation in Teaching Training

2025	Center for Inclusive Excellence: Cultivating Empathy: An Economist's Approach
2025	SDSU New Faculty Success Program
2024	Center for Inclusive Excellence-Training: Setting Up for Success-Classroom Focus

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

YEAR	COURSE #	NAME	CREDITS	MODE	#	SCORE
Spring 2025	SW739.04	Advanced Seminar in Direct Practice with Families	3	In-Person	17	5.00
Fall 2024	SW797.02	Research	3	Hybrid	2	5.00
Fall 2024	SW391.02	Methods of Social Work Research	3	In-Person	43	4.57
Spring 2024	SW739.01	Advanced Seminar in Direct Practice with Families	3	In-Person	24	4.90
Fall 2023	SW391.02	Methods of Social Work Research	3	In-Person	45	4.42

RESEARCH POSITIONS

1. Post-Doctoral Researcher
Bupe By the Book NIDA (R21DA056805)
Supervisor: Dr. Lianne Urada
Starting January 2023-August 2023
2. Research Assistant
HPTN 094 Implementation Science Team,
Supervisor: Dr. Laramie Smith
October 2020-January 2022
3. Research Assistant
Supervisor: Dr. Lianne Urada
School of Social Work, San Diego State University
August 2018-Present
4. Research Assistant
Supervisor: Dr. Salvador Espinosa
School of Public Affairs, San Diego State University
August 2018-December 2020
5. Research Assistant
Supervisor: Ph.D. Candidate Julia Kim
Department of Food Sciences and Human Nutrition
University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign
July 2015- May 2016

SERVICE

Service for the Department, College, and University

Spring 2025	Panelist for Social Work Month with LSSWA
Spring 2025	Judge for 2025 SDSU Student Symposium
Spring 2025	Volunteer Judge for Pre-Symposium Workshop for 2025 SDSU Student Symposium and Grad Slams
Spring 2024	Panelist for Social Work Month with LSSWA
Spring 2024	Judge for 2024 SDSU Student Symposium
Spring 2024	Guest Lecturer for Field Instructor Appreciation Event
2019-2022	Aztecs for Recovery, San Diego State University
2019-2022	JDP IRSU Student Council Member, San Diego State University/UC San Diego
2020-2021	Big Ideas Selection Committee at San Diego State University
2020	Judge for the Fall 2020 Interprofessional Education Workshop, Saturday November 16, 2019
2020	Reviewer for Master's Thesis, San Diego State University, School of Social Work

Service for the Profession

2025	Reviewer, Health & Social Care in the Community
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2024	Abstract Reviewer for Society of Behavioral Medicine Conference
2023	Reviewer, Drug and Alcohol Review
2023	Reviewer, Harm Reduction Journal

Committees

2023-Present	Direct Practice Task Group
2023-Present	Student Affairs Committee
2023-Present	Admissions Committee